

TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE

October 21, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Present: Bob Hanson, Ed Juengst, Alan Zeller, Valerie Jenkins, Leandra MacDonald, Lindsay Dreyer and Carl Mabbs-Zeno

Staff Present: Danica Melone and Laura Norton, Office of Planning & Building and Lilly Gilligan, Finance Director

Chair Hanson called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and introduced the Members and Staff.

Minutes: A motion was made/seconded (Zeller/MacDonald) to approve the Minutes of October 14, 2021 as written with all in favor.

Administration:

Assessing Department:

Town Administrator Nicole MacStay began by telling the members the current assessing data base is 10 to 12 years old. “Our program is web-based and runs on Internet Explorer (“which will no longer be supported by Microsoft in 2022.”) She went on to say Peterborough was the only municipality in the state uses IAS “which lacks several basic features that are crucial to our property database management.” Ms. MacStay concluded by noting the database is constantly used by the public, appraisers and realtors, “but is limited in search functions and reporting and querying capabilities.”

When Chair Hanson asked if Ms. MacStay had a replacement system in mind Ms. MacStay noted she had 3 quotes for a more modern, functional software system and that they were leaning toward a system with a robust GIS interface. A brief discussion about the subscription model and fees followed.

Fire & Rescue:

Ambulance Replacement:

Chief Ed Walker noted this purchase would replace the 2015 Mercedes/Demers model. “It has 6 years of service and responded to over 2800 calls with over 220,000 miles on it” he said adding “it is our oldest response vehicle and has been moved to the fifth spot.” A brief discussion about how revenue is generated and reimbursements received (patient transport (911 calls), patient transfers and annual community coverage, including Sharon, Dublin, Temple, Hancock and Francestown) followed. Chief Walker concluded that the replacement cot also included radios, lettering, stretcher, power-load system and necessary hardware.

Cardiac Monitors:

“These are required by law” began Chief Walker adding “we currently have 4 Zoll X-Series machines.” Chief Walker noted an increase in repair requests (they are 6 years old) resulting in both down time and maintenance costs. He also noted the current machines could be used as a trade-ins or sold on Municibid (an online government auction site).

Turnout Gear Dryer:

Chief Walker noted occupational cancer (carcinogen exposures) has become one of the most significant risks facing firefighters and emphasized the need for regular and thorough cleaning of their gear. “We have a washing machine (called an extractor) that can clean 3 sets of gear in 2 hours and a drying rack that can take 12 hours to dry” he said. He concluded by noting the second dryer will allow firefighters to get back into service quickly and that the intention is to move this machine to the new facility when completed.

When asked where he would put the new machine Chief Walker explained they could accommodate the new machine by moving some hose racks for the time being.

Refurbish Engine I:

“This engine has been in service since 2012, it is the older sister of Engine II (2016) and it is beginning to show a bit of wear” said Chief Walker. He went on to note the attention would be paid to the cab, drive train, chassis, fire pump and other related equipment replacement such as replacement of the Jaw of Life, hand lights and radios. would be done in two phases (5-6 weeks each) to minimize the time the pump was not available to the department. Noting an earlier refurbishment to the Ladder truck had worked well “so we are taking the same approach” he said.

New Fire Station:

“We have been talking about this for 20 years” said Chief Walker as he gave a brief history and cited \$50,000 in 2016 for an assessment study by Warren Street Architects (Concord, NH) who did some preliminary plans before a campus approach (DPW, Fire and eventually Police) was determined to be the best option. A brief discussion about the existing buildings, the location of the Peterborough Community Center and the establishment of the Fire Station /Municipal Campus Task Force (with 14 representatives from the public and town boards) followed.

Chief Walker concluded by noting the architectural firm chosen (from a field of 12) was HKT (Boston, MA) “largely due to their experience with fire and DPW facilities and working with communities like ours” he said.

Chief Walker concluded that he did not have solid numbers (yet) but the architect was committed to getting those numbers to him for inclusion in the final budget and warrant discussions with the Budget Committee and the Board of Selectmen. In closing Mr. Jeungst asked about the old motor pool building on the site and the status of its potential use for the fire facility with Chief Walker replying, “after further investigation the best part of that building is the land it sits on” and that it was not feasible (actually more expensive) to incorporate it into the plan.

Department of Public Works - Highway:*Downtown Stormwater Separation:*

Mr. MacLean gave a brief history the process of identifying of all storm pipes and catch basins in the stormwater systems.

Sidewalks:

“I told you last year with the completion of the Downtown areas, we were preparing to move out into the neighborhoods and begin rehabbing those sidewalks” adding (to Ms. MacDonald’s pleasure) “High Street and Elm Street are high priorities.”

Grove Street Bridge Refurbish:

Mr. MacLean noted the bridge has shown some distress over the past few years. “It has a deck rating of 6, superstructure of 6 and substructure of 6 (satisfactory condition). It is in pretty good shape for its age but it has shown some distress and to avoid replacing it in 8-10 years, repairs are needed.” He noted the last improvements to the bridge was some decking work done in 2011. He told the

members an engineering firm had been engaged to assess its condition and provide an estimate for repairs (\$250,000 in 2020 dollars) and that estimated that estimate to have risen to about \$325,000 in today's dollars.

Mr. Zeller inquired about the status of the Route 101 Bridge and when that work was to begin. Mr. MacLean gave a brief explanation of the predicted and extremely tight schedules of the opening a single lane to traffic on the Main Street Bridge and the commencement of the Route 101 Bridge work.

Elm Street Bridge:

Mr. MacLean noted the Elm Street Bridge was rebuilt in 2003 and that as of 2020 had a deck rating of 7, superstructure rating of 7 and substructure rating of 6. He told the members an assessment of the structure was in process with an estimate of \$250,000 for repairs, "primarily as a result of water infiltration."

Pavement Management Program:

Mr. MacLean reviewed the repair and preservation types of work that included *reconstruction* (full flexible pavement materials reapplied as a base course); *reclamation* (a pre-determined percentage of full flexible pavement materials reapplied as a base course); *rehabilitation* (shim and overlay, mill and overlay); *preventative maintenance* (chip seal) and *routine maintenance* (crack seal, ditching & drainage, patching and painting). He concluded by reviewing Peterborough's Road Surface Ratings which have gone from 70.45 in 2017-2018 to 76.86 in 2020/2021. When Mr. Mabbs-Zeno sked what the percentage goal was Mr. MacLean replied, "we are aiming for 80% but our real goal is to catch up and keep up with the road maintenance with long range planning for weather related issues affecting the infrastructure." He then spoke very briefly about Peterborough's Hazard Mitigation Plan, considering the 20-year storm to be the 5-year storm and eliminating traditional flooding spots.

2021/2022 Paving Season:

With the information covered above Mr. MacLean noted the streets and roads scheduled to be addressed in the spring of 2022 noting potential Covid constraints.

Highway Vehicle Capital Reserve:

Mr. MacLean note the plan for a new 6-wheel plow truck while retaining the 10-wheel as a backup/hauling truck (currently there is no backup truck at all).

Department of Public Works – Recycling:

Storage Trailer Replacement and Cold Storage:

Mr. MacLean began with “if you do any kind of a site walk, this one would be good one to see. These containers are 20 to 30 years old and in disrepair.” He pointed out the inadequate storage (due to bails full of snow, ice and water) diminishes revenues because of smaller loads and in inability to meet the needs of the flow of recycle goods. He told the members that maintenance has been done “but these containers are beyond their useful life.” Mr. MacLean also pointed out a graphic of the type of structure he hoped to replace them with. He noted there would be an offset by the Reclamation Fund.

Glass Processing Bucket Attachment:

“This is an attachment to crush glass for use as base material” said Mr. MacLean adding “there also, would be an offset by the Reclamation Fund.”

Winter OPS Expendable Trust:

Me. MacLean noted \$53,890 in the trust “and we are asking for \$5,000 more this year.”

Department of Public Works - Utilities:*Vehicle Capital Reserve:*

“We have \$75,000 in FY23 to this fund to replace the Vactor” said Mr. MacLean adding “this is the Swiss Army of tools that we use all the time. We are starting to see through the tank now so it is ready to go.”

Cheney Lift Station Motor Replacement:

Utilities Supervisor Nate Brown briefly reviewed the costly replacement estimate done in 2019 and the response of seeking an alternative plan for a consistent and practical return on investment for the facility. He noted the evaluation of what they call “the can” was structurally sound and supported the replacement of motors only.

Cheney Booster Pump Replacement:

Mr. Brow noted these (two) pumps are original to 1976 are supposed to pump 550 gallons of water a minute from the Cheney/Sand Hill tank pressure zone to the Cunningham Tank pressure zone. “Currently they pump about 350 gallons a minute” he said adding “and we tried to rebuild one of the pumps but found out most of the parts are longer available.”

Replacement of Muffin Monster (waster grinder):

Mr. Brow explained the Muffin Monster is a waste grinder located at the Pheasant Road pump station. Noting that all wastewater flows through the Muffin Monster before being pumped the treatment facility “it basically handles things that should not have been flushed” he said. Mr. Brown told the members the current girder is beginning to show signs of failure with diminished function. He concluded by noting without the grinder the pumps would have to unplugged and cleaned out manually on weekly basis.

Chair Hanson thanked Mr. MacLean and Mr. Brown. He noted a **Site Visit** was scheduled for Wednesday, October 27, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. at the Recycling Center.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, October 28, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton

Office of Building & Planning

Special Presentation by Finance Director Lilli Gilligan

After a short break and as several members of the Budget Committee filtered into the meeting room, Mr. Mabbs-Zeno reiterated the overlap between the CIP and Budget Committees and the importance of understanding town debt processes (bonding and debt services). He thanked Ms. Gilligan for attending this CIP/Budget Committee Workshop and noted he had prepared four specific questions for Ms. Gilligan to address with the potential for other questions or concerns arising. “This is not a presentation; it is just a workshop to help us understand the process and fill in the gaps” he said.

Mr. Mabbs-Zeno read the four questions:

1. *Why are bonds held by the town costing different interest rates and why are the bond not refinanced to lower rates or merged into one bond?*
2. *What does the town need to do to maintain a good bond rating (i.e. the lowest available interest rate)?*

3. What factors guide the town I deciding o the length of the bond?

4. What ways does the town have to meet costs other than from current taxes?

Ms. Gilligan began with a brief introduction and biography of her expertise and experience.

In response to the first question by noting the town has 13 bonds ranging over many years (2009 to 2020) that have fluctuating rates and specific times to renegotiate. “For instance, the New Hampshire Municipal Bond Bank (where we have five bonds) only reopens for refinancing every ten years.”

Ms. Gilligan went on to note that the attempt when bonding is to get the best interest rate at the time (current bond payments this year total \$1,765,662), she was currently refinancing four bond for a savings of \$346,995 and anticipating future refinancing saving of totaling \$54,024 for a total savings of \$895,019 by January.

Responding to the second question Ms. Gilligan noted the answer to the question of maintaining good bond ratings “the answer is nothing. You can be deemed a bad risk based on past activities” adding “things like not collecting property taxes and overdue liens or not setting your tax rates in timely manners or losing money through cybercrimes.”

When questions about the cybertheft began Mr. Zeller interjected “from what I have read it appears we are running out of options to get our money back from the cybertheft” and asked if there was anything else that could be done.

Town Administrator Nicole MacStay briefly explained a recent emergency expenditure and over expenditure public hearing (basically a request permitted by DRA to use the fund balance) that had taken place where an appropriation of \$2,347,310.12 was discussed and approved. “This was done in anticipation to not being able to meet the town’s needs as an option **should** the town find itself in a cash crunch at the end of the year,” said Ms. MacStay.” She also noted the appreciated effort the state has made (“they have shown a good understanding of our current situation”) to facilitate timely reimbursements to the town, “as it can take the 9 to 12 months to reimburse you when you are paying for a project as a municipality.”

Ms. MacStay concluded by noting how the fund balance has been used in the past “and we are looking at how to build back that money”, noting the savings on the refinancing of the bonds was an excellent start.

In response the third question Ms. Gilligan began with “basically you never want to bond longer than the life of what you are bonding.” She noted for instance bonding repairs to the town pool that will last 8 years “you wouldn’t take out a 15-year bond. It really depends on the situation.”

For the last question Ms. Gilligan noted that the town water/sewer costs were covered by the users, and the connector road to MCH was paid for with hospital funds. A brief discussion about TIF monies followed and how those districts can build infrastructure, beautify and maintain the projects developed with TIF funds. It was noted that the Recycling Center, while mainly supported by tax dollars also had money generating sources.

Ms. Jenkins asked about debt ceiling with Ms. Gilligan noting the town did not have one.

The workshop ended at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton

Office of Planning & Building
