

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Meeting  
December 13, 2023  
Approved Minutes

Present: Gary Scholl, Gail Cromwell, Tim Fiske, Andy Paul, Bill Ezell

The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m.

**1. Library CIP request**

Library Director Beth Crooker and Trustee Gretchen Whitcomb met with the committee to review the capital improvement plan for the Library. The carpeting is in need of replacement and the Trustees had received a quote of \$7,000 in 2022; Whitcomb agreed to get updated quotes.

Whitcomb posed the question of the condition of the Library roof. The North roof was last replaced in 2000 and should probably be looked at to see if replacement is needed in 2025.

The committee discussed the condition of the furnace, which has last been serviced in 2022 and is due for annual service. The committee discussed possible strategies for replacing the furnace should it fail, including possible use of trust funds. The committee suggested the Library Trustees obtain quotes for a new furnace for planning purposes, as well as heat pump systems as a possible alternative. The CIP will push the furnace to 2025 and monitor the situation.

**2. Fire Dept. Airpacks**

Gary Scholl reported that Fire Chief George Clark indicated that the airpacks scheduled for replacement every 10 years actually have a 15-year lifespan. Replacement is now scheduled for 2029 at a projected cost of \$86,553.

**3. Updating CIP target figure**

Scholl also reported meeting with Road Agent Kent Perry and received updated replacement costs for major equipment, including dump trucks, grader and backhoe. With costs significantly higher than anticipated just a few years ago, Scholl suggested the committee should consider raising our \$275,000 annual target for CIP, with the goal of achieving a consistent ongoing investment for capital expenditures to maintain a level tax impact. After some discussion, the committee decided to adopt a \$290,000 target for 2024, with the possibility of increasing it 2% annually thereafter. The committee will continue to monitor costs and adjust accordingly.

#### **4. Highway Department CIP request update**

The committee met with Road Agent Perry to discuss two highway department issues:

**Chipper:** Perry reported that he is in the process of negotiating the purchase of a used chipper from local equipment rental company Balcom Bros. Stay tuned.

**Paving plan:** Perry had earlier submitted a revised 10-year paving plan to the committee, reordering some priorities. Scholl asked why the plan seems to change every year; Perry replied that changes are based on his assessment of the road conditions year to year. The revised plan for 2024 calls for paving on Boutwell Hill, Gambol Brook, Hedman Lane, and Glen Farm, for a total of \$114,347. In addition, Scholl had requested Perry quote repaving the section of Hadley Highway between Mansfield Road and Boutwell Hill, which is in very poor condition. Perry received a quote for \$83,604. Gail Cromwell questioned whether this would be enough to cover the cost given the roads poor condition. The committee will consider this request prior to advising the Select Board.

The committee also reviewed with Perry a requested cost comparison between paving and sanding/sealing. While sanding/sealing is less costly, paving would last longer. While the total estimated cost over 15 years is roughly the same, Perry advised that investing in paving would preserve the road more effectively. He said his strategy is to preserve the roads in good condition and get to the roads already in poor condition as resources allow.

#### **5. Approval of minutes**

The minutes to the November combined CIP/BAC meeting were approved with the addition of note that the October minutes were approved on Nov 8.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 to make way for the BAC meeting.