

MEREDITH CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date: September 7, 2005

Members Present: Peter Brothers, Chairman
Bill Bayard, Vice Chairman, Planning Board Representative
Jack Carty, School Board Rep
Frank S. Michel, Selectmen's' Rep
Lou Kahn, Alternate Planning Board Representative
Miller Lovett
Scott Nolan

Members Absent: Tony Candage
Mark Flanders

Staff Present: Carol M. Granfield, Town Manager
John Edgar, Town Planner
Brenda L. Vittner, Director of Administrative Services

Call to Order: Chairman Brothers called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, at the Meredith Town Hall Annex. Chairman Brothers updated the Committee that the minutes from the June 29th meeting were not mailed out with the packets and that to allow the Committee time to review the minutes that they would be distributed and would be reviewed the next meeting. The packets included updated summary sheets that will be needed for the project considerations before the Committee.

Discussion of Program Worksheets and Bar Graph: John Edgar handed out a bar graph to the Committee for review. The bar graph is an illustration of historical spending; amounts that were appropriated by the School and Town for Capital projects, inclusive of debt service and an illustration of future spending, inclusive of debt service based upon the project requests and updates that were presented in the Spring. The graph indicates where proposed requests are above program capacity as well illustration of the years where there is project capacity. The graph is provided for illustrative purposes only and is not recommendation of projects or debt service.

Bill Bayard requested more clarification between budgeted spending and actual spending. John and Brenda indicated that the bar graph indicated only amounts that were budgeted and voted upon at Town Meeting. Bill Bayard noted there was a significant change in approved appropriations in 2005 of \$1.3 million to requested CIP spending in 2006 of \$1.99 million. For purposes of clarification on the historical data provided, Bill Bayard wanted to point out the potential distinctions between budgeted amounts, appropriated amounts and actual spending. Frank Michel observed that while the 2005 capacity was \$1,87,000 the CIP Committee recommended \$1,500,000 the actual budgeted amount was \$1,300,000.

John Edgar handed out the 2006 CIP Worksheet to the Committee. The worksheet is again for illustrative purpose and makes the assumption that all projects requested are listed on worksheet. For discussion purposes the left hand column has two types of font. The non-italic font indicates that the projects are already included in the CIP plan of 2005-2010. The italic font indicates projects that have not been scheduled previously, new projects, or updated projects based upon the Committee's request for new information this past spring. John drew the Committee's attention to a few items on the worksheet to illustrate how the design of the worksheet will enable the Committee to make informed decisions. Illustrative examples included the Stevens Avenue project, Road Project Aggregates, Fire Department Pumper Truck and the Police Department Building.

Brenda advised the Committee that Bob Hill had provided an update for the High St/Waukewan Avenue project just prior to this evening's meeting. Although this project had been scheduled in 2004, due to budgetary constraints, the project funding was split between 2004 and 2005 for a total of \$350,000. The engineering is complete and the project was bid in Spring 2005, however the bid resulted in only one vendor with an exorbitant price tag. After further review the Water/Sewer Department and DPW have concluded that an additional \$350,000 is needed in 2006 to make this project feasible. Carol Granfield updated the Committee concerning this project based upon a meeting with Bob Hill and Mike Faller earlier in the day. The water department will be replacing approximately 500' of water line between the Price property and Swasey Park this year. She has suggested bundling some projects together.

Frank Michel had a few questions concerning department updates and asked if Carol had received any project updates. Carol indicated she had not except for the meeting she had earlier in the day. Brenda Vittner indicated that she had received a written update from Vint Choiniere in reference to the bathhouse and grant funding possibilities. Brenda also had an earlier discussion with Chuck Palm that he was continuing the survey and review of the property where the current downtown Fire Station is located and the amount on the updated project ID form would stand for now. Carol also indicated that she was reviewing information in reference to two possible additional public bathroom facilities one at Hesky Park and one at Shep Brown's. Frank Michel indicated that there were no project ID forms at this time and would not be under consideration for this CIP cycle.

John Edgar continued the worksheet discussion and brought to the attention of the Committee the funding issues with Water & Sewer projects. The projects listed on the worksheet for Water & Sewer did not include any offsetting revenue. Brenda and John did not want to make any assumptions concerning revenue, as this was a Town Manager and Board of Selectmen issue. Bill Bayard asked whether any of the projects would be funded at 50% from the Water & Sewer department as other prior projects have been. At this time, the answer was no, however the Town Manager and Board of Selectmen were looking at Water fee structures and the determination of water rates. Lou Kahn asked who had the authority to determine water rates. John Edgar indicated that it was the Town Manager and Board of Selectmen. Bob Flanders brought up the issue of impact fees; however John Edgar cautioned the Committee about impact fees, in that an ordinance would need to be developed to include a significant amount of analysis and brought before Town Meeting for a vote. There would be a six-year window for an impact fee and if funds that were collected are not used, they need to be returned with interest to the contributors.

Jack Carty indicated that the number for the auditorium renovation as included on the current worksheet might change dramatically. The superintendent is looking at other options and grant funding to enable the renovation. Also, the parent company that did the original install of the seating in the auditorium has been in to review the seats and has determine that they can be repaired instead of replaced. The light and sound systems have been reviewed and there is currently an RFP being prepared to address this issue. Jack is uncertain when a better number would be available. At this time, the number received in the spring will be carried on the worksheet.

Miller Lovett had a few questions, first of which was concerning the capacity formula. John Edgar indicated the prior CIP plan and would provide Miller with a copy. John Edgar explained that when the Committee looked back at 2003 in 2004, a review was conducted of growth in budgets, growth in capital needs and the CIP growth in relation to the budgets. Peter Brothers spoke to the issue of needs, and that the Committee consistently review needs versus wants, evaluated requests and tried to remain reasonably conservative yet assure that capital items were taken care of.

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John Edgar indicated that if the Committee could chose to either raise or lower the bar (self-imposed capacity level) that any member could suggest a change and then should be able to defend the rationale for the change.

Carol Granfield spoke to the issue of the upcoming 2006 Budget. Carol indicated that there probably would be significant increases in the Town's operating budget due to the following factors; increased energy costs, the Community Center operating and maintenance costs, insurance costs, additional personnel costs. There will be a hard look taken at capital needs and projects as part of the 2006 Budget process.

Miller Lovett felt that it was very important for the Town Manager and the Board of Selectmen to share their thinking relative to the operating budget and capital spending with the Committee for them to make an informed decision.

In anticipation of next week's meeting (9/14/05), Peter Brothers asked the Committee to carefully review the data as provided on the worksheets and try to prioritize the needs. Frank Michel spoke about the self-imposed cap for capacity and that the CIP plan is a planning tool utilized by the Board of Selectmen during the budget process. John Edgar reemphasized the need to prioritize and be reasonable about capital needs in the budget process and reduce the possibility of deferring of capital projects. Frank Michel indicated that he embraced the idea of a 10-year plan based upon the 10-year illustration that has been presented. John Edgar also cautioned against filling a plan just to try to meet capacity.

Peter Brothers indicated that the Police Department Building would be up for discussion at the next meeting. Bob Flanders spoke that 2006 was going to be a tough budget year and reminded the Committee that the Space Needs Report indicated that a new police station was a high priority due to safety issues. Frank Michel indicated that the Board of Selectmen viewed the CIP process as very important and that at prior Board of Selectmen workshops, a definitive decision concerning a new police station has not be decided.

Adjournment: Frank Michel made a motion to adjourn at 9:15 pm, Bill Bayard seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda L. Vittner

September 8, 2005

Approved: September 15, 2005