**Capital Expenditures Committee**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, June 2, 2014, 6:00 PM**

**Lower Conference Room, Dedham Town Hall**

**Members Present:** John Heffernan, Michael Podolski, Amy Paxson, Peter Springer and Susan Fay

Mr. Heffernan called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Meeting Minutes:

Mr. Podolski made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from April 4th, 2013, seconded by Mr. Springer.

Mr. Podolski made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from April 9, 2013, seconded by Mr. Springer.

Mr. Podolski made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from April 10, 2013, seconded by Ms. Paxson.

Ms. Paxson made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from April 22, 2013, seconded by Mr. Podolski.

Mr. Podolski made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from January 7, 2014, seconded by Mr. Springer.

Ms. Paxson made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from February 10, 2014, seconded by Mr. Podolski

Mr. Podolski made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from April 7, 2013, seconded by Ms. Paxson.

6:03 PM - Ms. Fay arrived to the meeting.

6:05 PM- Public Comment Period:

Kenneth Bragg commented on the Committees town meeting recommendations, congratulating the Committee for their efforts.

Mr. Heffernan responded that he thinks it went well.

Methodology & Calendar:

Mr. Heffernan commented that he believes the CEC started the process too late last year which is why they are here starting the discussions earlier.

Ms. Fay commented that she believes it would be helpful to create a document that summarizes the CEC’s decisions. She further explained that this would better prepare Committee members when they report to the Finance Committee as it can be difficult to remember all of the details.

Mr. Heffernan agrees that it is difficult to be prepared for all of the questions that come up when presenting recommendations to the Finance Committee. Mr. Heffernan commented that he believes things went smoothly considering it was the first year they were separating operating capital.

Ms. Paxson agreed that it is important to have that rationale behind the recommendations that the Committee makes.

Ms. Paxson commented that she believes communication with the Finance Committee can be streamlined.

Mr. Heffernan agreed that instructions to the Finance Committee are going to be important.

Mr. Podolski commented that he would like at least two days between when he finds out what is recommended to be funded by the Town Manager to match it up to what the Capital Expenditures Committee proposes to be funded. He explained that this year he only had 15 minutes to review this information. Mr. Podolski explained that he will not participate if it happens that way in the future. He thought that the CEC’s job was to recommend what should be funded, not to be presented with a recommendation of what should be funded. He added that he believe with more time to review the information, the CEC could have made more intelligent choices.

Ms. Fay commented on how the Gateway to the Manor project never had the chance to be heard by the CEC. Ms. Paxson and Mr. Heffernan confirmed that CEC decided not to fund but they did not come present to CEC either.

Mr. Heffernan commented on “safety issues” explaining that requests have come up as safety issues later in the process when they were not going to be funded. He would like the CEC to be prepared to evaluate and rate on safety.

Ms. Paxson added that if it is truly a safety issue the data should be presented to back that up.

Mr. Springer asked for clarification on phone calls from the public and what he was allowed to discuss. Mr. Heffernan confirmed information from CEC meetings are public information so he should feel free to discuss this information.

Ms. Paxson commented on meeting with departments. She explained that it was an improvement this year but she thinks the process could be formalized a bit. Ms. Paxson explained that she does not think it is necessary to have one CEC member go out and meet with a department and then have that department come in and present that same information all over again.

Ms. Fay commented that it could work well if the Departments came in first, then the CEC could schedule a visit afterward if needed.

Mr. Heffernan presented the Committee with a draft schedule created by Chris Howell. He commented that it is important to help everyone understand that the process will start earlier.

Mr. Podolski commented on getting information on fund sources earlier. Mr. Podolski referenced the draft schedule which noted that report to CEC for available funding for upcoming year and if it will be available in September as referenced. Mr. Howell said he can present this information as soon as it is needed; it is just a policy issue that needs to be addressed. He explained that this information is difficult to predict.

Mr. Heffernan commented that he would be fine with getting a preliminary conservative number as Mariellen Murphy used to give, or waiting a month or two later to get another number. Mr. Howell confirmed that the Committee will have an initial idea of what funds are with at least a range.

Ms. Paxson confirmed with Mr. Howell that departments are aware of the new process.

Mr. Heffernan thinks the departments will like the new process better as they will not have to rush through everything with the process being more spread out.

Ms. Fay asked if the number is actually more situational or policy driven. Mr. Heffernan explained that the policies include the Capital Policy and the Debt Policy. Mr. Heffernan explained that there are specific state guidelines that need to be followed with regards to debt.

Mr. Heffernan commented that he really likes that idea of capital requests being due in October.

Ms. Paxson asked if it is a bit redundant to have each department present to the Town Manager and the CEC, and why not one presentation to everyone. Mr. Howell responded that he thinks it is best that the initial requests be vetted out before coming in front of the Committee.

Ms. Paxson suggested that within the calendar a block be added between preliminary and secondary department discussions for a CEC visit to departments.

Ms. Paxson asked the Committee to consider what could happen differently to alert people of the hearings to avoid those who wish to advocate for a project know when it is being discussed.

Mr. Podolski explained the legal difference between a hearing and a meeting as it related to requirements for notice and advertisement.

Mr. Howell informed the Committee that they could choose to do a preliminary vote. Mr. Heffernan agreed the Dedham CEC could also do a preliminary deliberation/vote and then let those know that a particular project is questionable and at risk of not being recommended for approval.

Ms. Fay asked Mr. Heffernan if it would be helpful to the Finance Committee for the CEC to give a presentation. Mr. Heffernan recommended sticking with a high level overview and then going deeper into what is needed. Ms. Paxson agreed.

Mr. Podolski asked who would be creating the high level summary. Mr. Heffernan responded the Committee would do this. Mr. Podolski explained that he was concerned about giving Mr. Howell additional work. Mr. Howell commented that while he wouldn’t mind helping, he did not think it would be appropriate to create that summary; it should come from the Committee.

Ms. Paxson commented that safety should be added to the list for the priority rating system.

Ms. Fay asked Mr. Howell if he could send the presentation that he gave last year to the Committee on the rating system. Ms. Paxson agreed that she would like to see that again before finalizing this document.

Ms. Fay suggested adding impact to the priority ranking.

The Committee decided it would meet again on June 16, 2014 to discuss the new schedule, rating sheet, and to vote on the Chair of the Committee.

Ms. Paxson made a motion to adjourn at 7:48 PM, seconded by Mr. Podolski. It was voted 5-0.