**Capital Expenditures Committee**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, February 17, 2015, 6:15 PM**

**Lower Conference Room, Dedham Town Hall**

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

Mr. Springer called the meeting to order at 6:20 PM

**Public Comment Period**: No comments.

**Additional FY16 Requests from DPW**

Joseph Flanagan, Public Works Director, was present.

The first request was for a new front end loader. Mr. Flanagan then explained his request for a loader mounted snowblower. They plan to load a dump truck beside it. Mr. Flanagan explained that the main objective would be the front end loader. The snowblower attachment will increase efficiency of sidewalk snow removal by taking the place of 4-5 front end loaders and will cut the time in half.

Mr. Springer asked what it would be able to attach to on their existing fleet. Mr. Flanagan responded that it could attach to the two front end loaders.

Mr. Flanagan explained that his 1st priority is the backhoe for the cemetery. They can replace the 3rd request for a sidewalk bombardier with the $175,000 machine.

6:30 PM- Susan Fay arrived to the meeting.

Ms. Paxson commented to Mr. Flanagan that the DPW is doing a fantastic job keeping the streets clean.

**Discussion of Capital request priority ranking system**

Town Manager Jim Kern was present to discuss the priority ranking system and capital process.

Mr. Kern explained that he will be presenting to the Board of Selectmen on January 26th, so the budget needs to be done by the end of this week. Mr. Kern expect there to be a number for both non-bonded and bonded capital by the middle of next week.

Mr. Kern will work with the CEC to identify a list. He considers the CEC's involvment in the process particularly important this year.

Items that he will not be moving forward with this year:

* Violet Avenue drainage.
* Dedham Greenway (He is supportive but thinks it needs more time).
* East Dedham Fire Steel Building (Need more time to find a location and put together a more comprehensive plan).
* Ladder Truck- (Spoke with the Fire Chief and has to have a place to put the trucks).

Mr. Kern explained that the IT study is only due at the end of this month, and they will need time to comprehend the report before making requests.

Mr. Heffernan commented that they are further ahead in the process this year than in previous years. The CEC did not intend to take a vote until after they had a number.

Ms. Paxson commented that as they are refining the process it may be useful for the Town Manager to deliberate with the CEC. They need to define what the purpose of the rankings is; the number ranking is not part of the overall decision.

Mr. Podolski commented to Mr. Kern that it would be refreshing to see what he says is going to happen actually happen. That is not what happened in the past. Mr. Podolski felt like in other years the priorities of the Committee were ignored.

Mr. Heffernan commented that it is important to have certain people in the room for deliberations, including the Town Manager and the Assistant Town Manager.

Mr. Rippin asked if there would be a School ranking and a Town ranking, or if they would be melded together. Mr. Heffernan responded that they never had two numbers to look at; they look at capital overall. They understand in some cases it is ranking apples and oranges.

Mr. Podolski commented that when they created the Facilities Department there was not supposed be a divide between Schools and the Town. It is the Facilities Department now, not the School versus the Town. Mr. Podolski is also thinking that as a result of the IT study technology will be merged into one system instead of two separate; School versus Town. He wondered why technology requests cannot be addressed Town wide, or if the Schools should get priority. Mr. Podolski explained that changes from the technology study should be phased in. Mr. Podolski commented that he never heard what happened to the savings from the energy plan as they never reported back to the CEC; he wondered if they saved any money.

Ms. Fay asked if they generally see that the percentages of where your operational budget is falling are similar to the CEC. Mr. Kern responded that a Capital discussion shouldn’t be based on equity; it should be based on need. Mr. Kern confirmed with Mr. Heffernan that they have not kept a percentage allocated to the Schools in mind in the past.

Mr. Heffernan commented that he found that the Dedham Greenway is an example of something that did not fit in the ranking system. Ms. Paxson commented that they may need to revisit the numbering.

Ms. Fay commented that it seems you are punished if you are a new service with the current rating system. She also asked if there are alternatives that the Town is looking at for Violet Avenue. Mr. Kern responded that there has already been some civil engineering. Mr. Kern responded that the other alternatives that represent a similar approach were more expensive. Ms. Fay asked if neighbors are comfortable with the way that things are progressing for them. Mr. Kern responded that he is not sure. Ms. Fay responded that they all had arrived at a CEC meeting that was canceled.

Mr. Heffernan asked Mr. Rippin what level of experience they have had with Chromebooks. Mr. Rippin responded that they have 60 that they are currently using for professional development. Staff will keep them over the summer to get to know them better. Mr. Rippin explained that the Chromebooks are at a better price point than the iPads, and are more flexible in utilizing the cloud. Mr. Heffernan commented that he would be a little hesitant launching in to purchase that many of something they are not sure of yet.

Rachel McGregor commented that Don Langenhorst would be the best person to have this conversation with. Mr. Heffernan responded that he thinks the program should move forward just unsure of how fast.

The Committee plans to invite Don Langenhorst to the meeting on January 25th.

Mr. Kern commented that going forward they may need to start process earlier. Mr. Heffernan explained that he agrees in getting educated on the department needs earlier on, even without having the numbers.

Ms. Fay confirmed with Mr. Kern that they plan to prioritize the Ladder truck next year. Mr. Heffernan commented that would be a big number they will want to plan on for next year. They many want to consider if that means they will reconsider items that were on the list that were discussed for FY16 that would not have been voted otherwise.

Mr. Podolski asked why they don’t take it easy this year with the spending, why max out the credit card.

Ms. Fay asked how storage issues with the new fire truck are just coming up now. Mr. Kern responded that until recently, they were not able to find a fire truck that would fit in the existing fire station. Ms. Fay explained that she is concerned about why they need to wait for a new truck.

Mr. Paxson commented that if she had known that the fire truck was not going to go through she may have asked more questions about FY17 items.

Ms. Fay asked if they should invite people back in to provide more input.

Ms. Baker explained that it is only a courtesy obligation to notify people who have shown interest. All meetings are public meetings.

Ms. Paxson asked if they should invite in people from any other projects that they have not heard including the Greenway, Violet Ave, and Manor Fields.

Ms. Baker commented that these are sensitive projects because they affect particular neighborhoods. The Greenway seems to have more opposition than support, and will need more vetting.

Mr. Heffernan informed the Committee that the Finance Committee would be having budget hearings on Saturday March 7th, and hearings on the warrant the week after.

Ms. Paxson made a motion to adjourn at 7:59 PM, seconded by Mr. Heffernan, UA.