

Town of Litchfield, New Hampshire

Capital Improvement Committee

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Meeting Date: 07/20/20

Call to Order: 6:06 pm

Meeting Location: Town Hall

Meeting Called By: Capital Improvement Committee

Type of Meeting: CIPC Meeting

Facilitator: Michael Croteau, Chairman

Note Taker: Matthew Sullivan

In Attendance: Troy Brown, Town Administrator
Cory Izbicki, Business Administrator
Ben Sargent, Chief of Police

Memo: John Brunelle hosted the meeting on Webex

Members in attendance:

1. Michael Croteau, Chairman (Planning Board)
2. Andrew Cutter (Budget Committee)
3. Brian Bourque (School Board)
4. Peter Stone (Citizen)
5. Steven Webber (Selectman)

Two members were absent:

1. Sean Flynn, Vice-Chair (Citizen)
2. Jay Minkarah

Agenda Topic: Call to Order

Presenter: Michael Croteau

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:06 pm, the Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Agenda Topic: Public Input 1 @ 6:08 pm

Presenter: Michael Croteau

1. None

Public Input closed at 6:09 pm.

Agenda Topic: Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

Presenter: Michael Croteau

Discussion: None

Motion: A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes from July 6, 2020. The motion was seconded.

Vote: (4-0-0) The motion carried.

Agenda Topic: New Business

Presenter: Michael Croteau

1. **Discussion:**

Before the meeting, the members were provided with a PowerPoint summary of the departments and committees presentations made to the CIP Committee. Three members of the committee met and put together an overview of all the submissions. The three members brainstormed options for the CIP Committee members. Andrew Cutter informed the committee members that he reached out to T.A. Troy Brown and Selectman Steve Webber, and asked for the three of them to meet, discuss the presentations, and create a summary for voting options. Andrew Cutter mentioned Selectman Steve Webber, and T.A. Troy Brown asked him to contact Executive Director of the NRPC Jay

Minkarah. Andrew Cutter updated Jay Minkarah of the options that were created during the meeting of the three members. Brian Bourque expressed that he was concerned that three members, two of whom are non-voting members, met a week before the CIP committee meeting. Brian Bourque added that the three members did not inform Chairman Michael Croteau that they would meet without him or the other committee members. Brian Bourque mentioned to Andrew Cutter that he believed that all eight committee members should have had the option to be included in the brainstorming process. Andrew Cutter responded to Brian Bourque's concern by saying, "That is why we are meeting tonight." Chairman Michael Croteau mentioned that he thought the three members' work was great, but as the Chairman, he wants the members to be kept in the loop. Selectman Steve Webber clarified that Option One was precisely what the presenters requested. Brian Bourque ultimately agreed but added that the three members then decided what Option Two and Option Three were, without first communicating with the five other committee members.

Planning Session:

Chairman Michael Croteau commented that the Recreation Committee and the Solid Waste Department had not presented the projects to the CIP Committee. T.A. Troy Brown mentioned that the Solid Waste Department might not make a presentation. The department does not have anything that would exceed the \$50,000 threshold. The one piece of equipment, the backhoe, came in under the Highway Department. The Highway Department has already submitted the request for a backhoe. T.A. Troy Brown stated that Selectman Steve Webber sits on the Rec Commission, and he has had conversations with the committee. The two projects for the Rec Commission are field lights at Darrah, and paving the Darrah parking lot.

B.A. Cory Izbicki commented that he had been on Capital Improvement Planning Committees in the past. He was on the Goffstown School District's Capital Improvement Committee. He said that the plan is a road map; the plan is not written in stone. The plan may or may not happen. B.A. Cory Izbicki mentioned that he appreciated the summary; however, there is more to the energy efficiency because of COVID-19. The School District is looking at making ventilation improvements to make sure the students can safely attend school. He added that no matter which option the committee chooses, a new elementary school is needed. Andrew Cutter acknowledged that the elementary school is the priority, and the police were second on his list. Brian Bourque agreed with B.A. Cory Izbicki. He mentioned that the previous Capital Improvement Committee had items, including a new school, on the Master Plan but never happened. B.A. Cory Izbicki pointed out that the Capital Improvement Committee should present all the department and committee requests to the residents. The last thing the committee needs is to have the residents, in a few years, question why a project that was discussed is not on the town's Master Plan. He believes transparency will allow the residents to discuss one or more of the projects later. Andrew Cutter indicated that the town could only keep placing band-aids on town structures and vehicles for so long. At some point, there will be a catastrophic failure in one of the structures or vehicles. He added that this is why the CIP Committee is reviewing projects for \$30,000,000, \$6,000,000, \$4,000,000, and \$1,000,000. The town cannot afford all the projects, and the voters will likely not support all the projects. The CIP Committee agreed that the Griffin Memorial School is the project that has the highest priority.

Chairman Brian Bourque asked the committee if they were now willing to make Griffin Memorial School the priority of the CIP Committee. T.A. Brown questioned the committee if that meant that 2021 was dedicated to \$30,000,000 for a new Griffin Memorial School, or that the school was a priority but for a different year. Selectman Steve Webber responded that the school would be a priority for 2023. The town would need to ask for money in 2022 to have engineers perform studies. Andrew Cutter mentioned that he was not a voting member, but believed that the town needed to invest in energy efficiency.

School Department:

Andrew Cutter reviewed the three different options for the elementary school, middle school, and high school.

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2021: Energy Wide district efficiency. \$1.365MM (LMS)• 2021: Capital Repairs Reserve Fund for \$100,000• 2022: \$125,000 engineering/construction costs• 2022: Energy Wide district efficiency \$1.3MM (CHS)• 2022: CHS Parking Lot - \$86,000• 2022: Renovate LMS Kitchen \$300,000• 2022: Capital Repairs Reserve Fund for \$100,000• 2023: Build new elementary preK-5 school \$30MM• 2023: Capital Repairs Reserve Fund for \$100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Renovate LMS \$1.5MM• Remove Grade 5 portables• Parking Lot at LMS \$232,000• GMS Energy Efficient \$1.3MM• Parking Lot at GMS \$260,000• 2021: Capital Repairs Reserve Fund for \$100,000• 2022: Capital Repairs Reserve Fund for \$100,000• 2023: Capital Repairs Reserve Fund for \$100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to fix problems with buildings as they arise• 2021: Capital Repairs Reserve Fund for \$100,000• 2022: Capital Repairs Reserve Fund for \$100,000• 2023: Capital Repairs Reserve Fund for \$100,000

Discussion: None

Motion: (Brian Bourque / Steve Webber) A motion was made to accept Option One.

Vote: (4-0-0) The motion carried.

Police Department:

Andrew Cutter reviewed the three different options for building a new police station or converting part of Town Hall into additional space for the police station.

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2021: Funds for engineering \$100,000• 2022: Proceed with Phase 2 safety complex buildout \$6MM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2021: Funds for engineering \$200,000. 2022: Conversion of Town Hall into PD and addition for new town hall office space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2021: Build utility type building for evidence storage.

Brian Bourque mentioned that he thought that the police station could be extended into Town Hall. He suggested that the police could convert the Town Hall meeting room into a part of the police station. He then commented that the police could add to their portion of the building. The members of the committee agreed with his suggestion. Chair Michael Croteau asked what the town would do if the Option Two was approved. He also wanted to know how much the conversion would cost, and what the town would do for a Town Hall. Selectman Steve Webber mentioned that the thought was that Option Two would be less expensive than Option One. Andrew Cutter asked the committee members what their intentions were. He wanted to know if the committee was going to back the \$6,000,000 police station project, or address the police station's needs at a savings to the taxpayers. Brian Bourque asked if the town had done any research to see if the police station could fit into the Town Hall building. The committee members agreed that Option Two was the least expensive way to provide additional space for the police station. The members discussed how their approval of one of the options could affect the voters supporting another project. The example provided was the committee supporting both a new school and a new police station. The new school is what the committee agrees is the priority, but the voters may approve the project

that cost \$6,000,000 and vote down the \$30,000,000 project. They decided they needed to present the plans to the residents in a way that one project does not negatively affect another project. The new school would be proposed in 2023, so the committee agreed that the police station would have to wait until 2024.

Police Chief Ben Sargent called into the meeting and thanked the committee for respecting the requests of the Department Heads and committees. Chief Ben Sargent agreed with Brian Bourque. He stated that he would never move forward or try to propose a Warrant Article without the support of the CIP Committee, the Board of Selectmen, and the Budget Committee. The Chief supported the CIP Committee’s belief that a new school is the priority.

Chairman Michael Croteau, referring to the PowerPoint presentation, asked the Police Chief if he would be willing to push back his request for the 2022 Phase Two buildout. Police Chief Ben Sargent mentioned that he did not know where the year 2022 for a buildout came. The Chief said that the CIP Committee had identified the school as a priority, and he is willing to work with the CIP Committee. Andrew Cutter mentioned that he had been thinking about the growth projections for the town. He said that the town is already seeing new developments coming on in 2020. He suspected that with the town’s growth, over the next five years, the town will have discussions about increasing the number of police officers and vehicles. He asked Chief Ben Sargent to estimate the safety, space, and storage constraints in 2025. Chief Ben Sargent thanked Andrew Cutter for his question and stated that he would move forward to expand, so that the police can meet their needs from all aspects.

Selectman Steve Webber mentioned that he was concerned that a new school’s bond would put the town in a situation where nothing happens for ten-years. He added that safety, space, and storage are an issue now with the current town population. As the town grows, the needs of the police department will grow. T.A. Troy Brown stated that the CIP Committee could take the best action to fund the Phase Two buildout. The project would then be in the plan, and it would be up to the Board of Selectmen to start working with the police department, the school department, and the engineers. In 2021, the Board of Selectmen would have one year to work with the different departments and be prepared for 2022. T.A. Troy Brown acknowledged that the committee does not have any numbers, and the CIP Committee may not be able to provide an answer.

Chairman Michael Croteau asked the committee what their opinion was on Option One. Selectman Steve Webber liked Option One but admitted that the committee could not do Option One for the police, and Option One for the school, at the same time. T.A. Troy Brown suggested placing the police station in 2026, the last year of the plan. Andrew Cutter believed that the police station should be requested in 2022. Brian Bourque did not agree with 2022. The committee agreed that they would vote for Option One with changes to the option. In 2023, the engineering funds would increase to \$200,000, and in 2024, the Phase Two buildout of the police department. The cost is estimated at \$6,000,000.

Discussion: Andrew Cutter commented that he wanted to ensure that Option Three would be in the plan. The structure was not originally in Chief Ben Sargent’s proposal. The Board of Selectmen and the police department will need to have further discussions.

Motion: (Brian Bourque / Andrew Cutter) A motion was made to accept Option One. The engineering costs would increase to \$200,000 in 2023, and the Phase Two buildout would be in 2024.

Vote: (4-0-0) The motion carried.

Fire Department:

Andrew Cutter reviewed the three different options for the fire department.

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021: Fire Truck \$662,000 • 2022: Fire Truck \$623,600 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021: Multi-purpose truck ~\$750,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Capital Reserve Fund for repairs to existing for X amount of years. Current Capital Reserve Balance is \$50,000

Andrew Cutter commented that Chief Frank Fraitzl had asked for two fire trucks to replace the two older fire trucks. He said that he interpreted the Fire Chief saying that there are multi-purpose fire trucks that can serve the needs that the two fire trucks provided. The multi-purpose fire truck would cost more but would be less than purchasing two fire trucks. T.A. Troy Brown agreed with Andrew Cutter. He mentioned that when Chief Frank Fraitzl made his presentation, he was looking for two fire trucks. During the presentation the Fire Chief said he was still looking into combining the two fire trucks into one multi-purpose fire truck. Andrew Cutter stated that the best option for the taxpayers was Option Two. Andrew Cutter said the best guess for the cost of a multi-purpose fire truck is \$750,000.

Peter Stone commented that the tanker is a two-person vehicle with a bigger pump and tank on it. The vehicle is also a dedicated piece of equipment. Peter Stone mentioned that there are portions of Litchfield that are fire hydrant deprived. He said that these areas of Litchfield would need two fire trucks to put out a fire. Peter Stone questioned how the fire department would fight fires if the town purchased a single multi-purpose fire truck. The committee agreed that the town relies on surrounding towns to help put out fires. Currently, about ten percent of the town does not have access to a fire hydrant. The question the committee had was if the ten percent referred to housing or land. Andrew Cutter mentioned that Litchfield has a volunteer fire department. He added that by the time the firemen get to the fire station, put on their gear, get to the fire trucks, and get to the actual scene, the house would not be saved. The town invests \$475,000 a year on fire hydrants.

Peter Stone commented that purchasing two fire trucks in the same year is not likely to occur. The fire trucks need to be purchased at least a year apart. He believes that the town needs to stagger the purchases, so the town does not wind up in the same scenario in the future. He believes the committee needs to research what the size of a multi-purpose fire truck can do, and how much it costs. The committee asked T.A. Troy Brown to reach out to the Fire Chief and ask him these questions. The committee agreed to target the new fire truck in 2021. The reason for 2021 is that it will take a year from the date of purchase to receive the fire truck. Then the firemen need time to learn how to use the fire truck. The CIP Committee agreed to delay their decision until a later date. The committee is going to request more information from Chief Frank Fraitzl.

Highway Department

Andrew Cutter reviewed the three different options for the Highway Department.

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021: 3 Plow Trucks & Backhoe \$500,000 • 2021: Salt Shed \$200,000 • 2021: Parking Lot: \$150,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021: Replace F550 with 350 & Backhoe \$220,000 • Create Equipment Capital Reserve Fund \$50,000 to manage aging fleet and equipment across departments. • Defer Salt Shed and Parking Lot to a later date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Recycle Revolving Fund \$50,000 Balance • Create Equipment Capital Reserve Fund \$50,000 to manage aging fleet and equipment across departments.

Selectman Steve Webber mentioned that he was concerned about the backhoe. If the backhoe fails, then both the Highway Department and the Solid Waste Department will stop running. T.A. Troy Brown said a conservative cost for a backhoe was \$150,000. T.A. Troy Brown said the backhoe is used every day by the Highway and Solid Waste Departments. Selectman Steve Webber believed the town should go through a winter with the new plow truck before purchasing more plow trucks.

Road-Agent Kevin Brown informed T.A. Troy Brown that the current backhoe had gone in for major repair work. He suggested to T.A. Troy Brown that now is the time to trade-in the backhoe, and purchase a new backhoe. The estimated trade-in value of the current backhoe is \$40,000.

Motion 1:

Discussion: None

Motion: (Brian Bourque / Steve Webber) A motion was made: 2021 \$150,000 for a backhoe, and \$70,000 for Ford F-350.

Vote: (4-0-0) The motion carried.

Motion 2:

Discussion: None

Motion: (Brian Bourque /) A motion was made: In 2022, \$70,000 for a Ford F-350, and \$200,000 for a salt shed. In 2023, \$70,000 for a Ford F-350, and \$150,000 for a parking lot.

Vote: (0-0-0) The vote was deferred.

T.A. Troy Brown mentioned that he wants to speak with Road Agent Kevin Brown and go over the figures. If the winter goes well, the Road Agent may be interested in two more F-650's. A question was asked about the Recycle Revolving Fund. Andrew Cutter explained that the fund is made up of the money received from residents who pay to dispose of certain items.

Roads:

Andrew Cutter reviewed the three different options for the roads.

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">\$200,000 warrant article	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Raise \$100,000 via warrant; \$100,000 from unassigned fund balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Offset full with \$200,000 unassigned fund balance

Andrew Cutter mentioned that the Operating Budget has \$200,000, and has been in the budget for several years. A Block Grant offsets the \$200,000 in the Operating Budget for the same amount. Up until this past year, the town has approved a Warrant Article for \$200,000. The \$200,000 from the Operating Budget and the additional \$200,000 from a Warrant Article provided the town with \$400,000 to upkeep the roads. This year, the town is not funding the road upkeep at \$400,000. The Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator, and the Road Agent wish to get back to the \$400,000 in funding.

The Assumption is that the town will receive a \$200,000 Road Block Grant in 2021. The additional funding will need to come from either Option One, Two, or Three. Selectman Steve Webber commented that COVID-19 has affected how much the Block Grant will be. The gas tax calculates how much the grant is. Andrew Cutter said he would like to see some of the Unassigned Fund Balance be used here.

Discussion: None

Motion: (Brian Bourque / Steve Webber) A motion was made to accept Option One.

Vote: (4-0-0) The motion carried.

Conservation Commission:

Andrew Cutter reviewed the three different options for the Conservation Commission.

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">2021: Fund \$2MM for heritage preservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Recommend to utilize conservation trust fund and grants for land acquisition. Trust fund balance is ~\$700,000.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Not supported

The CIP Committee requested additional information from the Conservation Commission. The committee has not provided additional information. Brian Bourque commented that he would like to know how much land the Conservation Commission owns. He would also like to know what property the Conservation Commission is looking to purchase.

T.A. Troy Brown said that the Conservation Commission is working on a map right now. He said that she is trying to separate the properties from recreation properties. The CIP Committee agreed to defer their decision until a later date. The committee is waiting to receive more information from the Conservation Commission.

Library:

Andrew Cutter reviewed the three different options for the Conservation Commission.

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2021: Engineering costs TBD 2022: New Library - \$2-\$3MM based upon other Library cost estimates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore neighboring town options (Hudson/Londonderry) to utilize their Library services. Potentially Re-purpose Aaron Cutler for Town historical documents currently in storage at Historical Building/ Historical Society. Validate with Library Trustee's the will Aaron Cutler. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not supported

Andrew Cutter mentioned that he believes that the committee needs to determine if the town has any contractual agreement with the family that donated the property. He wants to know if the building needs to remain a library. The CIP Committee agreed to defer their decision until a later date. The committee is looking to receive more information from the Library Trustees.

Agenda Topic: Public Input 2 @ 8:43 pm

Presenter: Michael Croteau

- None

Public Input closed at 8:44 pm.

Agenda topic: Old Business

Presenter: Michael Croteau

- None

Agenda topic: Other Business

Presenter: Michael Croteau

Selectman Steve Webber mentioned that he would like to see a public meeting before the plan goes to the Board of Selectmen. T.A. Troy Brown said that the CIP Committee would put together their final draft and solicit public input. After the public input, the CIP Committee would make any necessary changes to the final draft. The committee would then send the plan to the Board of Selectmen.

Chairman Michael Croteau suggested that the CIP Committee present the plan to the Planning Board. In 2016, a Warrant Article delegated the authority of capital improvements to the Board of Selectmen. The same Warrant Article removed the authority from the Planning Board. The committee did agree to present the plan to the Planning Board.

Agenda topic: Next Meeting Date & Time

Presenter: Michael Croteau

1. **Next Meeting:**

- a. Monday, August 3, 2020 @ 6:00 pm.

Agenda Topic: Adjourn the Meeting

Presenter: Michael Croteau

Discussion: None

Motion: (Andrew Cutter / Steve Webber) motion to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: (4-0-0) The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:49 pm.

Approved by the Capital Improvement Committee:

Michael Croteau, Chairman

Sean Flynn, Vice Chairman

Brian Bourque

Peter Stone

Steven Webber