

**Groton Capital Planning Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes, October 27, 2020**

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM
2. In attendance for the Committee
 - a. David Manugian
 - b. Don Koski
 - c. Mike O'Rourke
 - d. John Croteau
3. Other attendees
 - a. Mark Haddad, Town Manager
 - b. Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant
 - c. Mike Luth, Chief of Police
 - d. Steele McCurdy, Fire Chief
 - e. Tom Orcutt, Water Superintendent
 - f. Tom Delaney, DPW Director

1. The Agenda was read and Department heads began presentations:

2. Water Superintendent, Tom Orcutt presented the Water and Sewer plan.

Questions were posed on the revenues from the collection of fees by the department. This was explained by Mr. Orcutt who differentiated between the Funding Source as Water Revenue or Sewer revenue as seen in the Funding Source column in the Capital plan.

It was also noted that the \$6M figure in place for the Whitney Well Treatment Project was likely to drop as more details were known.

The Water and Sewer plan was completed at 5:12PM

3. Chief Steele McCurdy presented the Fire Department Plan

It was recommended that the refurbishing of Engine 1 be moved from FY 23 back to FY 22 due to increasing maintenance costs on that unit. Meanwhile, the refurbishing of Engine 5, which had already been moved out from FY 21 to FY 22 was further moved out to FY 23, as that equipment was seen to require less urgent care.

The Chief explained the overall practice of evaluating the maintenance costs versus the replacement value of the equipment in order to help determine whether refurbishing is preferred over purchase of a new vehicle. It was also explained that the department had been working to move to smaller equipment that were multifunctional, were less expensive to purchase and less expensive to maintain. The refurbishing of Engine 1 was the priority item here, followed by the replacement of the command vehicle used by the Chief. The current command vehicle has over 60K miles. That would, however be kept and repurposed for use by the Deputy Chief. This would allow multiple command operations to be undertaken simultaneously. This situation had occurred several times in the last year and the department was hindered by not having the full capabilities available at each location.

The Fire Department plan discussion was completed by 5:27PM

4. Chief Mike Luth presented the Police Department Plan

Chief Luth began with discussion the Communications/Dispatch Center (which is actually shared by the Police, Fire and DPW departments). The current facility is a reinforced structure within the Police headquarters that allows only space for two dispatchers. There is no possibility of restructuring this to accommodate more than two. The current design includes a raised floor allowing cabling to be run to the equipment, but this raised floor means that the center is not ADA (American Disabilities Act) compliant. The room is cramped and inefficiently laid out. A potential plan was presented to remove the raised floor, change the layout to allow the two dispatchers to work side by side rather than facing

each other (and this would allow them to also face the public as they enter the station, and also prevent non-authorized personnel from having viewing access to the dispatcher screens). In addition, consultants have recommended that the current configuration which uses two separate radio systems should be replaced by a single source system. There are funds in the amount of about \$160,000 available from previous activity related to this, and the department has applied for, but not been granted funds to help complete this activity (estimated at approximately \$300K). They will continue to solicit external grants for this, but plan to finalize the estimates and include this in the upcoming budget submission. The chiefs are also intending to bring in a Project Manager with experience in radio systems and dispatch centers to help manage this process.

A priority was placed on new Police Cruisers for the department in order to continue the staggered update practice of the department.

Potential replacement/updates to the current Radio Towers present at the Police headquarters and on Gibbet Hill was also discussed as part of the 5 year plan.

Chief Luth also indicated that he was able to remove several other components of his previously submitted budgets due to other mechanisms that he had put into place.

The Police Department plan discussion was completed by 5:44PM

5. DPW Director Tom Delaney presented the DPW and Town Facilities plan.

A priority was placed on the current payments for the new Dump Truck which had been committed to previously. The current unit that needs to be replaced is a 20-year-old truck. It was discussed that the use of 5 year notes for the purchase of this type of equipment was working and for the next purchase, that mechanism would also be pursued. That would help spread the \$185K cost over multiple years.

A secondary priority was placed on the purchase of an Intermediate size truck. The department is attempting to keep two functioning trucks at all times. The older of the current units would be traded in to help offset the costs.

The priorities for the Library were given as the \$45K parking lot reconstruction. This was delayed from previous years already. Potentially moving this out further and making do with patches in the current asphalt lot were also discussed. There is question on a \$55K “envelope repair” item submitted but we will await further details on that project.

The Transfer Station priority is the Fork Lift/Mini Loader which allows activity during busy times at the location without potential safety issues from using the larger equipment. The current budget item is at \$60K, but that may be possible to reduce.

The Country Club replacement of the pool deck was discussed as well as some roof repairs to the club house. Further detail on these will need to be provided.

The DPW and Town Facilities presentation was completed by 6:02PM

6. Following the presentations by the department heads, Mark Haddad and the committee discussed the priorities overall as being:

- a. Previously committed payments on existing equipment. (DPW)
- b. Engine 2 Refurbishment (GFD)
- c. Two New Police Cruisers (GPD)
- d. New Dump Truck (DPW)
- e. IT Infrastructure needs (~\$40K) (Town)
- f. Library Parking Lot (Library)
- g. Fire Command Vehicle (GFD)
- h. Forklift/Mini Loader (Transfer Station)
- i. Intermediate Truck (DPW)

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 11, 2020 to review the proposed budget from Mr. Haddad (to be provided to the committee ahead of that meeting).

7. Mr. Koski made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Mr. O'Rourke.
8. Meeting was adjourned at 6:45PM (NOTE: I can't read my notes on this line so I guessed at the time here. Can someone check the Zoom recording and see if you have the actual ending time?)