



Joint Capital Planning Committee

March 18, 2021 Minutes

Chair Schoen called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Chair Schoen announced that Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, this meeting of the JCPC is being conducted via remote participation.

Chair Schoen confirmed all could be heard and hear.

Members Present: Councilor Cathy Schoen, Chair, Councilor Andrew Steinberg, Councilor Mandi Jo Hanneke, Library Trustee Alex Lefebvre, Library Trustee Tamson Ely, School Committee Member Kerry Spitzer, and School Committee Member Peter Demling

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Town Manager Paul Bockelman, Comptroller Sonia Aldrich, Finance Director Sean Mangano, Facility Manager Jeremiah Laplante.

1. Approve Minutes: None

2. Recommendation Discussion

Chair Schoen kicked off the discussion by laying out the plan for coming to a recommendation. Finance Director Mangano added to that explanation by referencing three parts to the discussion: reviewing outstanding items from prior meetings, hearing any proposed changes to the plan from committee members, and hearing any items that committee members would want included in the recommendation.

The committee began discussing the outstanding items from prior meetings. Below are the items that were discussed:

Dump Trucks – make budgeted amounts consistent across departments and years

North Amherst Intersection – Chair Schoen referenced that the project would be grant funded if it were to happen. Multiple comments from committee members that the project should be pushed off until grant funds are obtained. Finance Director Mangano commented that the project should be removed from the plan and put in the pending project section.

Roads – Committee member Demling discussed reducing the road allocation to fund a higher allocation for sustainability

Police Station Chiller – Facility Manager Laplante shared an update on his further investigation of replacements options. One option was \$900 K and another was \$400 K to \$500 K. The first option is a ductless full VRF system and would have significant impact on operations. The second option was



recommended and was to use an electric heat pump chiller. Both would significantly improve the energy efficiency of the HVAC system. The committee discussed these options.

Munson HVAC – Facility Manager Laplante explained that he needed about \$30 K more to put in the higher end system that would make a significant improvement in energy efficiency. The committee discussed this option.

School Copier – The committee asked Finance Director Mangano to find out how much could be reduced from this project.

School/Town Tech Infrastructure – The committee asked Finance Director Mangano to find out how much could be reduced from these projects.

Jones Library Computers – The committee discussed how the possible building project affects this request. It was discussed that the recommendation should include some guidance to the Town Manager to think about how this request fits in with the project timeline.

Recreation – War Memorial and Mill river play grounds were discussed in regards to their funding source and eligibility for CPA. Town Manager Bockelman commented that the committee may want to include in its recommendation that the Town should seek funding from CPA for eligible projects.

Crocker Farm Feasibility Study – Committee member Demling commented that the School Committee has not discussed this project at all and that it should not be in the Capital Improvement Program until the School Committee has time to discuss and submit a request.

Resident Capital Request – It was discussed and the group agreed that it would recommend increasing the sustainability project budget and include in the recommendation that the sustainability funds be used to pay for the solar study (resident capital request) if grants were not successful.

The committee discussed what changes it would like made to the capital plan. It reached consensus that the sustainability project would be increased and the North Amherst Intersection would be delayed or removed. The amount of the increase to the sustainability project will depend on what information Finance Director Mangano gets from department heads on possible reductions.

The committee asked Chair Schoen to prepare a draft report for the next meeting so they can consider a recommendation vote.

3. Public Comment: None

4. Matters not anticipated 48 hours in advance: None

Chair Schoen adjourned the meeting at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Finance Director Sean Mangano

Documents Presented: Can be found here: [Amherst, MA - Official Website](https://www.amherstma.gov/)