



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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CIP Subcommittee Meeting DRAFT Minutes October 4, 2012

PRESENT:

Tom Cottrill, Planning Board Chair
Jeff Hollinger, Planning Board
Michele Holton, Planning Board
Jim Wheeler, Budget Committee Chair
Doug Homan, Budget Committee

STAFF:

Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer
Lucy St. John, Planning & Zoning Administrator

OTHERS PRESENT:

David Seastrand, Police Chief
Casey Buiso, Tracy Library
Sandra Licks, Library Director
Bob Bowers, Library Trustee
Bruce Parsons, Library Trustee

Chair Cottrill called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Chief Seastrand was there to present his requested CIP. He said the Police Department was up for a new cruiser this budget season. He noted that they have extended the life of their cars recently. They used to purchase a car every year in a three-year car rotation and generally had about 100,000 when they were done with them. He noted that within their fleet they have a SUV (that started in the rotation in 1998) and a mini-van (that started in the rotation in 1999). The SUV is planned to be replaced every six years and the van every 10. They are back to replacing a car almost every year. He has tried to get the numbers for the new car but dealers won't give any real quotes until December. In the interim, he is using last year's numbers and making a best guess. He suggested that they should increase these numbers by a couple thousand dollars. Chief Seastrand said that Ford no longer makes the Crown Victoria. They now make an all-wheel-drive and a smaller SUV. He spoke with the Town of Goshen to find out how much their new cars would be. It would be \$23,500 for the car before the warranty. They liked to stay with the same model of car in the past because they could transfer the equipment (cages) from the old car and put it into the new car. This isn't possible with the new models, so they may have to pay more for these new items. The small SUV starts at \$25,000 before the warranty.

Chief Seastrand said that the State doesn't open up their bidding until January 1. He noted that the Dodge Charger's base price is too high without even adding any options so is not being considered.

The vehicles within the Police Department's fleet are:

Van 2006, 65000 miles – To be replaced July, 2016
SUV 2008, 67,000 miles – To be replaced July, 2015
Cruiser Sedan #2, 2011, 37,864 miles – To be replaced July 2014

Cruiser Sedan #1, 2009, 85,481 miles – To be replaced July 2013

Chief Seastrand indicated that they try to drive their older cars more than the newer cars to keep the milesage low on the later model cruisers.

Chair Cottrill asked that the amounts on the Police Department's CIP be rounded up in their table.

Mr. Wheeler asked if they could see about trading in the old cruisers instead of putting them out to bid, where they generally get about \$2,000 for them. Chief Seastrand said that that he would look into it.

Mr. Wheeler asked Chief Seastrand if the van was working out for them and noted that it was half way through its life span. Chief said Seastrand said that other than some cosmetic and rust problems, it runs well and they really like having it. It holds all of their equipment and is a definite benefit to the department. Chair Cottrill said that in FY 2016 they will have to replace one cruiser and the van. He wondered if they could move the van up two years (so it is 12 years old instead of 10) to a year when they have no other vehicle purchases. Chief Seastrand said that he had thought about this as they are trying to get the most life out of their vehicles. Mr. Homan thought it was a good idea, budget-wise. Chair Cottrill said that they could put in a little less each year as they would be extending the \$30,000 expense out two additional years.

Mr. Homan asked how much the equipment at dispatch was worth. Chief Seastrand estimated that it was worth \$65,000 to \$90,000. When purchased, it was state of the art and very expensive, but over time the cost for electronics has come down.

Tracy Memorial Library – Sandra Licks, Bob Bowers, Casey Buiso, Bruce Parsons

Ms. Licks explained that they had no CIP deposits or expenditures last year, as was agreed after the bond agreement in 2011. Their appropriation request was \$35,000 as it had been in recent years. They have added a new project for FY 2014 which is the repair and rebuilding of 250 linear feet of stone wall around the perimeter of the property, which is in bad shape. If it isn't repaired soon, it will cost even more to repair later on. They were quoted \$20,000 for this work.

Ms. Licks said that other items they have added are:

1. The final phase of the mechanical systems upgrade from the bond. This includes AC and ventilation throughout the entire library. This is estimated at \$75,000. During bond construction they had an evaluation done of the systems so they would have something to work from. In order to prioritize the upgrading of the mechanical systems, they have pushed back bathroom updates and painting.
2. Kitchens and baths. One of their goals is to re-do the bathroom on the ground floor. There is a sewer injector pit involved that gets the sewage to Main Street. They've had issues with it already and they propose redoing the bathroom and configuring it so they won't need a sewer injected pit. Mr. Parsons said that if they reconfigure the layout of the bathroom they can gravity-feed the sewage.
3. Ms. Licks said that they would like to re-do the floor in the bathroom on the main level as it is not ADA compliant. They are also possibly thinking of adding a second bathroom to the main floor. There are no bathrooms that are ADA compliant in the building.

It was asked if the work on the stone wall was to make aesthetic upgrades. Mr. Parsons said that it serves as a boundary line and retaining wall and is disintegrating into the abutters' property. The pieces needed to be taken down and built back up, as well as a new concrete cap going on top. He indicated that it is a

mortared stone wall. The mason feels that the base is solid enough that they don't need to take it all down but can just repair portions of it. Chair Cottrill suggested they take the wall down and fill it with rebar and concrete and faced it with cut stone. Mr. Parsons said he really wouldn't like to see that happen. It was noted this method could easily cost more than \$20,000. Mr. Homan said he wanted to look at the wall for himself.

Ms. St. John asked if it was an issue of drainage that was causing the disintegration. Mr. Parsons said that it wasn't; it was a problem with the facing and the mortar breaking down. The wall would be 4.5 feet on the downside and 2.5' steep on the upside. Mr. Homan said he didn't mind making repairs but thought they should last more than 10-years. It was thought that the stone wall was built sometime in the 1920's.

The flooring request for FY 2018 has gone up because they will have to move and store the books to re-do the flooring. Mr. Wheeler noted that last year's bond included money for the flooring but was not used for this purpose. Ms. Licks said that Bruss Construction's labor costs went up and they had to use this money for those increases. They weren't able to put the flooring down in the staff area because of this short-fall of funds following the increase in labor costs.

Mr. Homan asked how the schedule fits their needs. Mr. Parsons said that it fits their needs as long as there are no other surprises. Ms. Holton suggested getting an opinion from more than one mason. Mr. Parsons said that this mason was the only one who offered an estimate after a request for proposals went out. They planned to bid the project out when the time came to do the work.

Mr. Wheeler calculated that if they put in 4' concrete walls in, it would cost only \$10,000. This didn't include removing what is there and facing portions of it.

Mr. Hollinger said that they have always under-appropriated for the library and perhaps with the \$35,000 along with the bond they took out last year, they can better keep up with the maintenance.

Mr. Bowers said when he first started at the library, they and the Budget Committee were just beginning the conversation about the library needing to get their "act together." Once they got the bond, it was like a miracle for them because they could get many things done that needed to be attended to. Now they can look ahead to see what they need to do, and what they need to get in the CIP to meet those objectives. It isn't that they are matching expenditures to what they are bringing in, but they are matching expenditures with what they had planned to ask for in their CIP request. Mr. Hollinger felt the library has come a long way in the last several years with their requests. They seem to have a better handle on what they need.

Mr. Bowers added that it wasn't easy to just re-do a bathroom; they can't make the current bathroom handicapped accessible where it is unless they encroach on other parts of the library to make it larger.

Mr. Parsons said that the estimate for the air system is \$75,152 was a current and hard number. Mr. Wheeler asked if they have had problems with the bathroom not being ADA compliant. Mr. Parsons said that they are required to have a five foot circle to be ADA compliant. They have had people who could make an issue of it if they wanted to but they haven't yet. The bathrooms cannot accommodate a wheel chair. Ms. Licks said that she has heard about people having difficulties and being uncomfortable with using the bathrooms, but there have been no complaints about the bathroom not being ADA compliant. Mr. Bowers said if there were serious complaints, they would be tending to that problem right away. They want to do right by handicapped people and the law, but there haven't been complaints.

Mr. Bowers suggested going along with their proposal for now. If next year they see there is money available, they will change the plan and move the bathroom priority up. If they knew the best way to do it, they may have asked for the money this year. They need to figure out where to put it first.

Water Precinct – Rob Thorpe, Superintendent

Mr. Thorpe said that in 1995, to comply with the State Drinking Water Act, they had to install a gravel system. This was done at Colby-Point to the tune of \$1.5 million dollars. The life expectancy of the wells is 30 years and it took them 10 years to pay off the bill. They also added a grid to Pine Hill Road and had a main replacement on South Pleasant Street. The South Pleasant Street cost half a million dollars. This kept the tax rate at about \$1. They are now at \$1.06. The college has been after them for several years to help with fire flows. They have needed a source up in town between Twin-Lake Villa to the New London town line. If there had been a water break there, the whole town was without water. They installed a booster tank with the college and that helped both the college and the town with their fire flow issues.

Mr. Thorpe said that they weren't planning on doing any water main improvements in the near future. The booster station was \$1.7 million dollars and they didn't want to impose any more increase on the tax payers. He explained that when Little Sunapee Road was updated with the round-about design, they upgraded the water main system, which cost \$2 million. They are down to owing \$900,000, which will be paid off in 2020. They have no planned projects but if something comes up in town they will act if need be. Mr. Thorpe said they are not inclined to grow the precinct or add services because that would be detrimental to the life expectancy of their water source. They have done a very good job maintaining it so they will keep usage down and get a longer life expectancy out of it. In 2020 when the notes are paid off they will be approaching the 30-year mark. They may be looking at Keysar Lake, working on the wells at Colby-Point, or possibly at another source. They have been looking forward to the 2025 end date and at every meeting they talk about Colby-Point. They put a lot of money into that system to keep it going. They may have bought a few years with the college putting in low flow fixtures, which cut their usage in half. Also, the middle school moved, so usage went down. Their leaving has bought them some additional time with the current wells, or could be considered as being better able to accommodate additional development in town.

Chair Cottrill asked Mr. Thorpe to indicate his top three concerns within the water precinct. He wondered if ongoing construction/expansion at Colby-Sawyer College was a problem. Mr. Thorpe said that the Water Precinct has recently had to put their foot down. If the college wants to add any additional beds (dormitory capacity), they would need to connect to the Seamans Road main to create continuity and help with water flows. He said this was a college concern and they need to do this for their own protection.

Mr. Hollinger asked if the college was upgrading some of their lines. Mr. Thorpe said they replaced some fire lines, which were originally from the 1940's. The precinct understands that plans change and they have been patient with the college thus far.

Mr. Thorpe's main concerns were:

1. Pine Hill Road – The pipe used is (spun-cast, not of good quality and the construction was through a swamp and on top of rocks. They have experienced a lot of breaks. The road is not paved so it hasn't impacted the town much but is a problem nonetheless.
2. Knight's Hill Road – The pipe used there is poor quality (transite). They had a very bad water main break there recently.
3. Water Treatment Issues – They never used to chlorinate full-time but they are having to now. The water is sitting in the boosters, generating heat from the ground, and breeds bacteria. A study was completed to help determine why the increase in bacteria. They found that now that they have a

back and forth actions of water flow on Main Street that they never had before. This is causing a sloughing off of the pipe. It is not E-Coli. The presence of bacteria, not E-Coli is the reason more sampling and testing has to be done. It is easier to go to a chlorination system. Also, they have tested the water for alkalinity and it is coming in low, which creates pH problems. They put Phosphate and Sodium Hydroxide in the water to help adjust the pH and coat the pipes. They've had some water complaints from the Flying Goose Pub and from other people who complain about dirty water in town. This is caused by more sloughing off of the inside of the pipes causing a brown stain on fixtures. They may be looking at an additional chemical to promote alkalinity. The inside of the pipes will be eaten away if they don't do anything. An engineering firm may come in to study the raw water coming out of Colby Point to see if any information about the source could help them solve these problems.

Chair Cottrill asked if the water precinct would start a conversation with the town when they got closer to the end date for the wells. Mr. Thorpe said that they would and that they are forward thinking people.

Mr. Homan asked what yield was of the wells. Mr. Thorpe said that the largest well yields 100 gallons/minute as it is set right now. They have the capacity of 750 gallons/day at Colby Point but will generally do 500 – 550 gallons/day.

School District – Email from Jerry Frew, Superintendent

Mr. Frew responded to Ms. St. John's email invitation to attend the meeting by noting that the School Board had a scheduling conflict and couldn't participate in the CIP meetings. He noted that the Board will not discuss the revised long term CIP plan until a later date in October. The Board has yet to decide the plan for the renovations to the High School Auditorium, and the biggest cost drivers for Capital Improvements next year will be windows in New London and Bradford, lavatories at Simonds School, and some Fire Control Panels at Sutton Central and the High School, in addition to athletic field upgrades at the High School. Once the Board has endorsed the long term plan, they expect to share it with all of the towns.

It was noted by Ms. St. John that they are required to have a representative from the school provide a report, by statute, as their plans affect the town's tax rate.

Administration – Kim Hallquist

Ms. Hallquist said that the only change she would suggest in the current chart would be to switch Whipple Hall being sprinkled before the Town Office building is. She noted that Whipple Hall is now being used by Mr. Denning (Recreation Director) for recreational purposes and it is a change of use. By fire code it should be sprinkled. Chief Lyon had said that if they have a plan to sprinkle, he would work with them on the timing. It has always been on the list to sprinkle Whipple, but she is suggesting waiting on the Town Office building and tending to Whipple first.

Ms. Hallquist said if they are going to have kids in Whipple Hall a lot, so they should get it sprinkled. Chair Cottrill felt that Whipple Hall and its conference rooms would be a good place for file storage instead of having to build a new garage to house them in. Many at the meeting were not impressed at the thought of Recreation using the space. Ms. Holton asked why Mr. Denning was doing this. Ms. Hallquist said that he brought it to the board as a need. He will be bringing in a plan to the Board of Selectmen with additional details. She noted that Janet Kidder saw Mr. Denning's move to Whipple Hall as a gauge on how popular these kinds of programs were and if they should try and use the 1941 building as a community center.

With regards to the cupola on the town office building, they had voted on fixing it two years ago. The work would be put out to bid and it was possible that it could come out to less than what they were anticipating.

Ms. Hallquist said that they had wanted to put GIS mapping on the CIP. Last year Peter Stanley put \$10,000 into it and since it seemed an important project, she pumped it up to \$45,000 for this year to reach the goal of \$75,000 by 2014. Mr. Wheeler said that this was Peter Stanley's pet project. He had an issue with the fact that that aerial photos did not line up perfectly with the lot lines and he wanted them to be perfect. Mr. Stanley wanted to spend \$75,000 on the software upgrade and having the maps sent out to be fixed. He was very adamant about getting this done.

Ms. St. John was asked her opinion on the GIS system. She conveyed she doesn't have the level of expertise that Mr. Stanley had and that the current mapping resources in town available on the Town's website were adequate for general planning needs. She conveyed that survey plans could be referenced to determine lot lines. The accuracy of these complex system costs a lot of money and it is important, but they shouldn't use local assessing and GIS maps for things that are for site plans and subdivisions. She noted that even larger cities that use GIS system typically have a disclaimer at the bottom of the page saying it is not meant for site specific mapping. Ms. Hallquist said she didn't think there were many towns that used or have this level of mapping detail. It is certainly more accurate but do they need it? Ms. St. John said that the maps will always be a little off; even two different surveyors will survey a property differently. She didn't feel that this level of mapping was necessary. She noted that she didn't have the opportunity to review this in any detail prior to this meeting.

Ms. Hallquist said they could either change the purpose of the fund or put it back into the general fund by a warrant article. It was decided to take it out of the CIP and get rid of it. It will require a 2/3 vote to change the purpose of the fund. Getting rid of it will require a majority vote. The Board of Selectmen will have to recommend this in their budget.

Wrap-up

Library: They would leave the CIP as presented.

Police Department: They would round the numbers up in the tables and fix the clarification of the cruisers and the year they were put in service.

Water Precinct: Nothing to change

Town Administration: They would change the sprinkling of Whipple Hall, and add the furnace replacement date. Building maintenance would be kept the same. GIS mapping would be eliminated and not funded. They would need to create a warrant.

Fire Department: Mr. Homan didn't feel that maintenance items should be in CIPs. Ms. St. John agreed. She said that maintenance should be in the operating budget. She said that next year they can approach some of these things differently. Mr. Wheeler said that the maintenance table was created two years ago by Chief Lyon because he wasn't getting the maintenance funds he wanted and he wanted to build up a fund. Mr. Homan said if they needed a \$26,000 repair on an apparatus, they could come to the town and have it taken out of the general fund. Ms. Hallquist said there is some good software available that helps people put CIPs together. It was decided to keep the CIP as-is this year but next year they will change everything.

Conservation Commission: They would put \$12,500 into the Land Acquisition Fund to hopefully keep them from coming forth with a warrant article for \$25,000. Mr. Homan said this could have a bearing on next year or the year after. They could keep asking for more year after year. Until they get 500-600 people to come to Town Meeting, they will lose these battles. Mr. Wheeler said there are a great many people in the town who support the Conservation Commission and if they ask for money they will vote it in.

Ms. St. John was asked to comment on the amount in the Conservation Fund. Ms. St. John said she didn't think there was enough money in the Land Acquisition Fund. She noted that the acquisition of conservation easements and or the purchase of land for conservation purposes are generally a multi-year process. In Nashua she will directly involved in this process. When talking with prospective property owners, it is important to have "cash reserves", a fund they know they don't have to wait for if they decide to sell. Partnership opportunities with other conservation agencies are one approach, as well as bonding. She noted that the Master Plan identifies a list of desired parcels. She didn't think it was enough money if they look at the goals and recommendations in the Master Plan. Mr. Homan said the problem with future funding an account is that it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Mr. Hollinger said that when they increased the contribution to \$150,000 it was because they did not have enough money. There were parcels of interest at that time but didn't have enough money to do anything with them. For two years in a row they appropriated \$150,000 to the fund. If they actually started spending money he would argue that they need to put more money in the account. They have to look at what is going on and he opined that they hadn't really done anything.. The Conservation Commission has other groups they can work with. A concern was expressed about the perception if they don't appropriate anything. The Town has been very generous in the past and if there is a need the Town finds ways to come up with the money.

Ms. St. John reminded them that the CIP is not a funding source, but rather a plan. Mr. Homan said they had a building spree in New London because they were supposed to grow 3-5% but in actuality, they are a shrinking population. He didn't feel it was necessary to add anything to this fund. Mr. Wheeler said this was earnest, good intention money. He said they would agree to give the \$12,500. He felt bonding was a legitimate planning tool and would enable the future generations to share in the preservation of land. Ms. Holton agreed with the appropriation of \$12,500.

It was determined to put \$12,500 in the table until they get to the half-million dollar balance and then fund it as zero from then on out. If they purchase land between now and then, those numbers will change. Recreation: Mr. Wheeler wanted to fund this as zero. If they look at the minimum balance, it is \$44,000 which he thought was \$34,000 too high. They don't have anything to spend it on.

Mr. Hollinger said that they could move the Elkins beach upgrade up. The beaches are what the town is known for. He felt both of the facilities at the beaches were an embarrassment. He thought they should tend to Bucklin first and then Elkins. It was noted that they should take the high ropes course out.

Mr. Hollinger said that if he was running the Recreation Department he would ask for more money and put something nice in at both beaches. He felt the bathrooms and the building at Bucklin were too small. He cited that this was the lakes region and people come to the area to use the lakes. Other towns have much nicer facilities. It was noted that Mr. Denning had tried to do this previously but was limited to what could be done; the footprint could not be expanded.

Mr. Wheeler said that this was a very controversial issue. Mr. Homan said they want it to look clean, neat and nice without getting carried away. He agreed that the beaches were critically important. Having kid's

activities is great, but in a list of priorities it starts with beaches. Ms. Holton opined that bath houses don't have to be glamorous.

Mr. Hollinger asked how much the Recreation Department had in the maintenance fund for the beaches. Ms. Hallquist said it was \$3,000. Mr. Hollinger said that this was clearly not enough especially if they have to pump the septic at Bucklin each week in the summer. He thought the facilities looked dump. It was noted that the Elkins maintenance fund was just \$500. Mr. Hollinger said that if they are taking maintenance out of Recreation's budget, they need to put it back into his maintenance fund. He said he would do exactly the same thing if he were Mr. Denning. Mr. Wheeler said that if Mr. Denning needed \$2,000 for Elkin's beach he could come and ask the Board of Selectmen for it and he would get it. Ms. Hallquist said that there is a Building Maintenance Fund that Mr. Denning could use and it is available to all the department heads. The issue of maintenance has been on her radar. Mr. Wheeler agreed that the buildings should look good.

Mr. Homan expressed that if input is needed in developing a department maintenance budget help is available.

Mr. Homan said he is supportive of having a town building manager but he didn't know where the money to pay this person would come from. Mr. Hollinger said they could take a little bit out of everyone's CIP. It is considered preventative maintenance. Chair Cottrill said maybe it would come from the Public Works Department and if the individual has nothing to do with the buildings, they could do work with the rest of Mr. Lee's staff.

Mr. Wheeler said that the Highway Department and the Fire Department have treated the town well with handling building maintenance themselves.

It was decided to not fund Recreation for the next four years, and then add \$5,000 per year after that.

Public Works Department: Mr. Homan said that Mr. Lee is doing a great job at helping cut costs by trying to extend the vehicle life and cutting down on employees.

There was some talk about the Elkins sidewalk project. Ms. Hallquist said that if the project ends up costing more than they have to spend, they could pull the plug. They are working with the State on this who may work with them on getting additional funding if that is what it comes down to. There would have to be extraordinary circumstances for the project not to happen. The worst case scenario is that it would just take a lot longer to complete.

The consensus of the subcommittee was that they had concluded their work and would pass it on to the Planning Board to review.

No further meetings would be required. The Planning Board will review the information at their next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10pm

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London

