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TOWN OF CHELMSFORD PATRICIA E. DZURIS TOWN CLERK

Town of Chelmsford
Community Preservation Committee
50 Billerica Rd. Chelmsford, Ma 01824

Meeting MINUTES
February 21, 2018
Approved April 18, 2018

Meeting Location: Town Offices, 50 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford, Ma Room 204

Committee Members Present: Linda Prescott-Chairman, Ed Roux, Connie Donahue, Evan Belansky, Gary Persichetti, Laura Merrill

Committee Members not Present: Judith Carven, April Mendez, Sandra Martinez

Others Present:

* Documents referenced in these minutes are available at the Community Development Office, 50 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford Town Offices. This meeting was hand recorded by the Recording Secretary.

Meeting was called to order at 6:35PM by Chairman Prescott.

Public comment

No one came forward at this time.

Finance Review

The most recent reports were provided to the Committee by the Town Accountant.

Mrs. Prescott will contact the Town Manager about adding a warrant article to the Spring Town Meeting Warrant to replenish the Recreation Capital Improvement Account.

At this time, there are enough available funds to take care of expenses through June 30, 2018.

Request for Minutes Approval

August 22, 2017

Motion: by Mr. Persichetti to approve the minutes of August 22, 2017 as presented. Seconded by Mr. Roux. Mrs. Merrill and Mrs. Donahue abstained, all others in favor. **Motion carries.**

November 15, 2017

Motion: by Mr. Persichetti to approve the minutes of November 15, 2017 as presented. Seconded by Mr. Roux. Mrs. Prescott abstained, all others in favor. **Motion carries.**

Bailey Berglund, Eagle Scout Final Presentation

Mr. Berglund explained that his project was to build a 10' x 16' gambrel storage shed at the Chelmsford Dog Park. Work was started on August 20, 2017 and finished on September 17, 2017. The shed will be used for equipment storage for park maintenance and events. Photos were shown, and changes in paint and the addition of a ramp increased the final cost. Total cost for the project was \$3510.75. Mr. Belansky advised that this payment of \$1,750.00 has been processed, and the original receipt is on file.

Nick Parlee, Request for Byam Playground

The Committee agreed to take this item out of order.

Rachel Zyminsky is a Byam parent and helps the school's PTO. Nick Parlee was also present.

The project was developed as the current playground equipment is reaching the end of its useful life. The goal is to replace the entire playground, including resurfacing the ground and adding ADA compliant equipment. Currently, there are two levels of ground with one play structure on each level, and a paved area. It is the oldest school playground, and DPW has been sharing the costs of repair. Replacement parts are becoming hard to find. The goal is to replace both structures with two new structures that will accommodate up to 60 students at one time.

A budget breakdown was included in the application. Equipment will cost \$86,000.00; DPW will supply and install benches at a cost of \$31,000.00. Concrete will be supplied as an in-kind donation. The PTO will supply the mulch for a total project cost of \$152,000.00. Any savings will be returned to the CPC. The metal from the old structures will be recycled for a return fee.

The PTO is contributing \$42,000.00, and they are requesting \$75,000.00 from CPC. They anticipate more donations and additional fundraising will be done.

Mr. Persichetti added that the existing swings are not code compliant, and will also be replaced. Mr. Parlee advised there will be additional area prepared for future playground expansion. The end result will be similar to what was done at Harrington and South Row Schools. Mr. Parlee hopes to do this work this coming summer.

Mr. Persichetti advised that playgrounds at the middle schools will need more improvements, Varney Park will need improvements in 3-5 years, and then Center School will be ready for similar improvements. The former Westlands School has had some renovations done which allowed for some retrofitting which saved on costs.

Mrs. Prescott advised the Committee that CPA on a state level is implementing funding changes due to more cities and towns joining the fund, so there will be less coming to all the towns. More applicants will be asked to match funds.

This request will be heard at Spring Town Meeting.

Motion: by Mr. Persichetti to recommend approval of \$75,000.00 for the Byam School Playground replacement project. Mr. Parlee will manage receipts. Seconded by Mr. Roux.

Motion carries, unanimous.

Payment Approvals

An invoice for \$4,350.00 was received for annual dues to the CPA Coalition. Mrs. Prescott explained why belonging to the coalition is important, and that this bill is usually paid out of the Administrative Account.

Mrs. Prescott is trying to schedule a meeting with the Committee and Stuart Saginor to explain recent changes in protocols because the program has grown considerably. This meeting may need to be held on a different night, or during the day. The Committee will be advised of the meeting date, time and place.

Motion: by Mr. Persichetti to authorize payment of the Annual CPA Coalition Dues in the amount of \$4,350.00 to be paid from the Administrative Account. Seconded by Mr. Roux.

Motion carries, unanimous.

Procedures and Policy Updates

Mrs. Prescott described the application process changes she would like to see. A proposed deadline for submissions would be the close of business of the Wednesday one week before the next Committee meeting.

Deadline dates for large projects should be established. Applications are preferred to be received six months before Town Meeting. Partnering will be needed for most projects due to decreased funding coming to the CPA account. The Committee should avoid having all available funds being bonded out completely, in light of actions on Beacon Hill trying to stop the program or otherwise raid it.

All projects over \$20,000.00 should meet the 6-month deadline.

The Committee wants to make sure there are funds available for small projects, too.

Mr. Belansky warned against making the process too complicated, as timing is difficult for some projects, and not all applicants will be able to provide matching funding, especially Town-owned amenities like the Varney Playground, which has no formal group to represent them. For example, The Board of Selectmen is in charge of Varney Playground, and could not fundraise for a playground. Not every property has a friends group to support it, and one size doesn't fit all. Mr. Belansky described issues raised because of

how a CPA funding request for the Roberts Field Playground was handled. Mrs. Prescott objected that when Roberts Field was presented, no grants were pursued. The Board of Selectmen could apply for grants. Mr. Persichetti agreed that 50% matches are not always possible, but some effort should be made as he received feedback about Roberts Field not being required to have matching funds of any sort. Mr. Belansky advised that the Committee has always made a practice of hearing the application before them, and funding has been awarded on a first-come, first served basis. The Committee has never had to be political, and policies need to be flexible. Mr. Roux cited concerns about large land purchases which may not be able to comply with a six-month requirement as sellers may not want or be able to wait that long. Similar scheduling concerns may exist for large renovation projects as well.

Mr. Belansky suggested getting more input from the CPA Coalition, the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee before any decisions are made regarding policy changes. The Committee also needs to be aware of what the expectations are of the CPC by Town residents. Mrs. Prescott noted that the Committee has the ability to decline an application, but it has never had to be done.

Mr. Persichetti supported having a policy as long as everyone knows about it. Mrs. Merrill felt some groups need to be told how to set up a non-profit organization in order to fund raise, which was an issue concerning the Roberts Field project. Mr. Roux described problems he faced when managing a coat drive he ran for Hurricane Katrina victims, and he was advised not to collect money because of IRS and state regulations. The Committee agreed the Roberts Field application was acted on in accordance with Board of Selectmen recommendations, and the results may have been different if the DPW had been more involved.

The Committee considered the differences between a town project versus a public project, in terms of a school project versus a neighborhood project. Mr. Belansky warned that too many policies will politicize the process, and CPC should not manage any project. Mrs. Prescott reiterated the need for all applicants needing to provide some matching funds because of state funding challenges which are political.

The Committee discussed potential questions to ask Mr. Saginor regarding reserve amounts, waiting periods, matching funds, and when and how to make exceptions. Cambridge CPC's model was suggested as a review point.

Mrs. Prescott wished to ensure the Committee can pay bonds due until 2030. She noted the accounting process is very confusing, and she is working with the Town Accountant to determine what funds can be used this year.

Decisions will be tabled until after the meeting with Mr. Saginor and other input is obtained. The Committee did agree on the one-week prior deadline for applications.

Other business

A Public Hearing will not be held this year as all Town Meeting Warrant Articles are routine housekeeping items.

Motion: by Mr. Roux to recommend approval of Article 20, Byam School Playground. Seconded by Mr. Persichetti. **Motion carries, unanimous.**

Article 21 was already approved at a previous meeting.

Adjourn

Motion: by Mr. Roux to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 8:05PM. Seconded by Mrs. Mendez.
Motion carries, unanimous.

Next Meeting: March 21, 2018

Respectfully Submitted,

Vivian W. Merrill Recording Secretary

Supporting documents:

- Minutes
- Application for Byam School Playground
- Financial Reports