

Town of Chelmsford  
Capital Planning Committee  
Virtual Regular Meeting  
MINUTES  
November 30, 2022

**Attending:** John Sousa, Chairman/ Finance Director  
David Goselin, Finance Committee  
Chris Lavallee, Citizen Representative  
Joseph Tierney, Citizen Representative  
Jeff Doherty, School Committee  
Maggie Marshall, Library Trustee

**Not Present:** Darlene Lussier, Town Accountant

**Others Present:** Dave Sperry and Badhri Uppiliappan, Clean Energy & Sustainability Committee  
Paul Cohen, Town Manager  
Debra Siriani, Senior Center Director  
Tricia Dzuris, Town Clerk  
Gary Ryan, Fire Chief  
Mike Donahue, Deputy Fire Chief  
Christine Clancy, DPW Director  
Virginia Crocker Timmins, Select Board Liaison

Please note that all documents referenced in these minutes are on file at the Treasurer's Office, 50 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford, Mass. This meeting was held virtually via Zoom, and televised by Chelmsford Telemedia.

**6:00 PM Call to Order**

Mr. Sousa called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

**6:00 - 6:15 Presentation from Clean Energy & Sustainability Committee Dave Sperry, Badhri Uppiliappan**

Dave Sperry explained the Committee was formed in 2021 to help the Town reduce greenhouse gases emissions to "Net Zero", as required by State mandate, by 2050. The term Net Zero was defined.

A history of Chelmsford's progress since 2009 was provided. Work funded by the Capital Plan included solar panels and arrays and several hybrid vehicles. Facilities efficiencies have been funded, including street lights. Electricity costs have been mitigated greatly because of the solar arrays, even after paying for the equipment. Actual savings have exceeded projected goals to date.

Green communities grants have also helped with Green initiatives done in Town.

Data about greenhouse gas emissions from the private and public sectors (such as cars and oil heat) were shown. The Committee has been focusing on outreach to residents to encourage reducing their carbon footprint. Today, the schools are the biggest users of energy. The Town has done many things to reduce carbon emissions, and their goal is continue this trend. Grants and programs will continue to be used as much as possible. Another goal is to reduce vehicle use where possible. A list of considerations when evaluating sustainability aspects of capital purchases was shown. Challenges are funding, efficiency of equipment, and future cost avoidance (for which there is no data), as new technology is always being developed.

The Committee reviewed the list of Capital Requests to see if there were any opportunities for green initiatives, and did not find many. Mr. Uppiliappan had some data regarding financial offsets for using greener technology. A decision making framework is needed for these kinds of investments. Mr. Sperry noted an opportunity for safe pedestrian access for students at schools. As an example, the request for boiler replacement at the Harrington School considered that natural gas is more cost effective than electricity, so there is no opportunity there at this time. As geo-thermal technology is improved, there may be opportunities in the future. Regarding the vehicle and equipment requests, there are no energy efficient large trucks developed at this time, so there are no alternative options to consider.

The Committee was thanked for their efforts. In the future, they may be more collaboration between the Committee and Town departments.

### **Reports/ Hearings**

Mr. Sousa noted that he received 30 capital improvement requests totaling over \$6.7 million. All of the requests will be reviewed. The Committee's budget is \$4 million, which is commonly funded through municipal bonds. Some departments may have other funding sources that help with funding the overall project. There will be some recaptured funds available this year, which will be used to offset borrowing needs.

### **Municipal Technology**

Ted Lutter explained that his first request is for security camera upgrades at the Police Department building and the Center for the Arts building. Five existing cameras are at their end of life, and additional cameras are needed in more areas of the buildings.

The second request is for the replacement of several security doors at Town offices and the Fire Headquarters building. More buildings are scheduled for upgrades next year. Last year, this request was partially funded.

### **Town Clerk**

Tricia Dzuris had two requests to respond to additional archiving needs for the storage and preservation of permanent Town records. The first request is for the redesign, installation and electrical upgrade work for sprinkler systems in several locations from a water based system to a dry chemical suppression system. The second request is for the digitization of documents. Recently acquired quotes are coming in very

high. She has been focusing on records for the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and Building Department files.

Mr. Cohen requested a breakdown of the digitization project and the fire suppression work. Ms. Dzuris estimated that about \$120,000.00 is needed for digitization, and \$80,000.00 is needed for the fire suppression work.

Fire Chief Ryan noted that some records were relocated to a room (LL03) which was not originally slated for records storage. The second location known as SB03 has many different departments' records, including the Tax Assessors' documents.

A fire suppression engineer would review and design the fire suppression project.

### **Council on Aging**

Senior Center Director Deb Siriani described her request to replace the tile flooring for the dining hall and the main hall. The hall flooring is over 30 years old, and has many cracks and chips. Price increases are anticipated to be around 35%, so they removed their requests for replacement curtains, acoustical panels and painting.

Mr. Cohen asked whether it would be possible to do only the problem areas, or did the whole floor need replacing. Ms. Siriani explained that the problem areas were replaced last year, now the older tiles around this area are cracking more. She has tried using area rugs to cover the tiles, but they became more of a tripping hazard. Mr. Lavallee asked if the dining hall renovation for next year would damage a new floor. Ms. Siriani felt the work for acoustic panels and curtains and painting would not impact the flooring at all.

### **Library**

Ms. Marshall requested tabling the discussion, as her associate was not present yet. They have 2 projects to discuss.

### **Fire Department**

Fire Chief Gary Ryan and Deputy Chief Mike Donahue were present for questions.

The first request is for \$68,352.00 to replace a 2009 Ford Crown Victoria with a new pickup truck to be used for fire investigations. A F350 truck which was acquired last year was damaged in an accident, and the insurance proceeds were not enough to replace it.

The second request is for \$111,750.00 to replace a 2012 F350 which is rotted out. The truck does plowing and rescue work. The request includes customized equipment.

Other replacement vehicles were paid through ARPA funds, which caused changes to the vehicle replacement schedule previously submitted. Mr. Cohen noted those differences in the truck schedule previously submitted. He also suggested alternate truck descriptions for the benefit of Town Meeting explanation.

A previously approved plow truck for their mechanic was cancelled. The truck being requested this year is replacing a different truck that is rotting more quickly than expected. It will take 1-2 years to receive this new truck, as that has been the experience with other trucks they have replaced.

**Library:**

Ms. Marshall wished to proceed with the Library requests.

The retaining wall project was previously deferred. In its existing state, the wall is an accident waiting to happen, and the adjacent sidewalk is not ADA compliant because of the location of several telephone poles.

The request is to replace the wall, push it back further, widen the sidewalk, and reconfigure and re-pave the parking lot. In the parking lot, there is curbing breaking down and the pavement is in poor condition. The telephone poles are not going away in the near future.

DPW Director Christine Clancy noted the cost increase for the wall is \$30,000.00 from last year. The sidewalk would be funded through the DPW's sidewalk funds. A cost estimate for the sidewalk will be determined, using either brick or asphalt materials. The original request last year was for \$70,000.00 to repair the wall, which was leaning.

All of the work would be inter-related. The parking lot could be done separately from the wall and sidewalk, however, this would impact the parking spaces, which is a concern as parking is very tight already.

Ms. Clancy believed the wall would only be moved approximately one foot. More information will be needed, as the paperwork reflects the wall would be moved several feet. This will be clarified for tomorrow's meeting

Mr. Cohen added that the costs for a guard rail type barrier is also needed, as cars have gone over the wall. Ms. Clancy advised that a 7-10" berm would be included in the lot, which should stop most cars.

Mr. Lavalley felt that the wall work should be done first, then the parking lot. Ms. Marshall added that the wall is crumbling.

**Discussion/ Questions:**

There was no further discussion or questions at this time.

**Review & Acceptance of Minutes: December 2, 2021 and December 9, 2021**

**Motion:** by Mr. Lavalley to approve the meeting minutes of December 2, 2021, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Tierney. **Motion carries, unanimous, 4-0, with two abstentions.**

**Motion:** by Mr. Lavalley to approve the meeting minutes of December 9, 2021, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Goselin. **Motion carries, unanimous, 4-0, with two abstentions.**

**Public Comments:**

There were no Public Comments received at this time.

**Adjournment:**

**Next Meeting Date: December 1, 2022**

Mr. Tierney commented that he liked the screen sharing option. Mr. Sousa agreed that this can be done again.

**Motion:** by Ms. Marshall to adjourn the meeting at 7:22PM. Seconded by Mr. Tierney. **Motion carries, unanimous, 6-0.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Vivian W. Merrill,  
Recording Secretary

List of Reference Documents:

- Supporting documents for the Capital Improvement Request Budget.
- Project Detail Sheets
- Draft Minutes