

Town of Chelmsford  
Capital Planning Committee  
Virtual Regular Meeting  
MINUTES  
December 1, 2022

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

**Others Present:** Darlene Lussier, Town Accountant  
Paul Cohen, Town Manager  
Dr. Jay Lang, School Superintendent  
Joanna Johnson Collins, Director of School Business & Finance  
Brian Curley, School Facilities Director  
Michael Harradon, Director of Library Technology & Facilities  
Lesley Kimball, Library Assistant Director  
Christine Clancy, DPW Director  
Dave Sperry  
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.

**6:01 PM Call to Order**

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

**Reports/ Hearings**

**Public Works**

DPW Director Christine Clancy explained the sidewalk construction work is an annual request of \$350,000.00 which is used to supplement funding received through Chapter 90. A Town-wide sidewalk assessment is being done, and should be completed by February, 2023 to include a 5-year Sidewalk Master Plan.

Mr. Cohen added that he is awaiting word about funding recently passed under Question 1 at the state election. He does not know how much Chelmsford will receive.

The second request is funding for roadway improvements in the amount of \$400,000.00. This is also an annual request. The Town-wide Master Plan for Roads is being implemented. There is \$39 million in

backlog work waiting to be done over the next few years. This year's request will help to improve 6.5 miles in roadwork. These roads have more deterioration and therefore are more costly. Locations of proposed work were listed.

The next request is for a sander truck body and parts for brining application for de-icing. A suitable truck chassis was previously purchased. A new brining system was recently installed by the DPW. This will be a pilot program used this year to try to reduce salt costs. The amount being requested is \$215,000.00, and is considered critical for this winter.

Another request is for a roadside mower attachment, as the existing one is 10 years old. At a minimum, the attachment needs to be replaced, as the request to replace the entire vehicle was denied last year. Two vehicles are equipped to do this work, and sometimes additional vehicles are rented.

The next request is for a Mini Rubber Tire Excavator. This piece would be more versatile for sidewalk work than a backhoe, and would cost about \$200,000.00. The department has rented similar equipment in the past. This equipment can also be used for snow removal in the winter. The backhoe they have is used for tree removal. This purchase would bring more work in-house.

A light duty ¾ ton pickup is next request, as another vehicle in the Highway Department was totaled this year, and insurance didn't cover enough to replace it. The new truck would also be used for winter operations, and may include a plow attachment. Another 2012 light duty with 112,000.00 miles is available, but needs work.

The next project is repair to the Stony Brook Bridge at School St. The masonry needs repointing and maintenance, which is becoming critical as the bridge is settling. Vegetation management is also needed. This request is only for engineering costs of \$150,000.00 -no construction costs are included here.

## **Facilities**

The Facilities Department would like to replace an electrician's van with a new ¾ ton pickup truck that can be used in the winter. The existing van has 80,000 miles on it and needs work. There is no plow included on this one. Replacing the existing van with another van would be about \$50,000.00

Their next request is for additional field improvements to Ayotte Field for \$100,000.00. They have received \$200,000 from the State already. The Town money would cover features at the field. Mr. Cohen felt this request could be withdrawn, because the State has approved funding for this Town project.

Another request is for an elevator replacement at Town Offices. The existing elevator has reached the end its useful life, and is still used often by many people, including many disabled people. The estimated cost is \$480,000.00. There may be cost savings by adding this project to the school elevators that will be discussed later. Mr. Cohen emphasized that if this elevator fails, it will create accessibility issues at Town Offices.

The next project is for the replacement of wooden fencing at Southwell Field. This is a guardrail style fence, and is very deteriorated. About 1100 feet needs to be replaced. There is currently one gate in the

fence; two additional gates would be added in the new fence, which will go around the softball fields. The cost of this work is estimated at \$80,000.00.

Another project was briefly discussed at the prior meeting, and is to move the retaining wall at the Public Library in Chelmsford Center. The Town Engineer looked at this today. Double telephone poles are impeding ADA clearance on the abutting sidewalk. The wall would be moved 12-18" from its current location, at a cost of \$100,000.00. The cost to install granite curbing and a wooden guard rail would be an additional \$10-15,000.00. The actual sidewalk also needs to be replaced with the granite curbing along the sidewalk at \$50,000.00. Work to the wall and the sidewalk can be combined as one project. Mr. Cohen asked whether the wall work could be done aside from the parking lot repaving. Ms. Clancy thought the wall would be done before the parking lot. Parking spaces would not be impacted. The seven to nine inch curb should stop most cars from going over the wall. Ms. Marshall asked why the sidewalk exists, as it goes nowhere and dead-ends, and the sidewalk across the street is more pedestrian friendly. Ms. Clancy believed the sidewalk exists to keep traffic away from the telephone poles. The guardrail would be part of the wall project. The EV station would not be impacted by any of the lot or wall work. Removed granite curbing is in poor condition, and most likely cannot be repurposed. Mike Harradon stated the priority for the guardrail is safety and ADA compliance. Photos will be sent to the Committee after the meeting. National Grid has indicated the double poles will remain for the next few years, as they wait for Verizon to move their wires off the old poles.

The High School needs four new boilers, at a cost of \$325,000.00. An increase in costs makes the original funding request insufficient. The boilers have been purchased. Engineers are designing how they will be installed. The revised amount is \$207,000.00 and work would be done in Summer 2023. Details of the work can be provided upon request. Mr. Goselin asked if the recaptured funds could be used for this project. Mr. Sousa explained this would need Town Meeting approval. Recaptured funds are usually used to defray the amount of total borrowing.

The Harrington School needs to replace three boilers with two new boilers. Work would also be done in the summer of 2023.

### **School Facilities**

Dr. Jay Lang spoke on behalf of the School Department.

The School Department has 5 and 10 year capital plans they work from. The original requested projects were \$2.981 million. The department has agreed that two projects will be deferred. These projects were to replace elevators the Parker and McCarthy Middle Schools.

Their requests are now eight projects for a total of \$2.3 million.

The first request is to replace the air handling units for kitchen and gym area and two bathrooms at the Westlands School.

Another project at the Westlands School is to replace the elevator that is used often by special education/disabled students. It is 33 years old; it is hard to find parts, and is now a priority item. Dr. Lang

felt that Community Education funds should not be used toward this project, as that department does not use the elevator. The Special Education Department does not have available funds.

There are two requests for tile replacement for flooring at Parker and McCarthy Schools. Dr. Lang noted that in the future, one school will do grades 5 & 6, the other school will do grades 7 & 8. Many tiles are now broken and causing tripping hazards. The goal is to shore up the flooring in the modular classrooms and replace the floors. The cost of \$90,000.00 is just for Parker Middle School. More requests will come in the future for other parts of these buildings. The flooring at McCarthy Middle School is for less square footage, but is also \$90,000.00.

Two concrete stairwells at the McCarthy School need to be upgraded with proper rubber coatings. They are a slipping hazard when they get wet. Similar work at Harrington, Byam and Parker Schools has already been done, and the coating makes a huge difference.

The High School elevator was deferred last year, and is now a priority. This one is used the most, and is about 48 years old. It is hard to get parts as the servicing company is out of business. Staff and students with disabilities use this three story elevator.

The existing kitchen at the High School is original to the building. This kitchen needs complete remodel and retrofitting, to include flooring and equipment. This kitchen prepares all the food for breakfast and lunch at the elementary schools. Similar work at the Parker and McCarthy kitchens came out great. The High School kitchen prepares about 2000 meals a day, and it's three times the size of the other kitchens. The Food Service Department is contributing to the costs from their Revolving Funds.

The Art wing at the High School needs renovation, and consists of four rooms. Lighting and HVAC has been addressed already. This is mostly a technology upgrade to computers and software, and ceramics and pottery equipment.

Ms. Marshall stated that she appreciates the prioritization information provided. All of the school buildings are old, and need maintenance. Technology needs are increasing, especially electrical and infrastructure upgrades. These buildings are consistently maintained.

**Town Accountant Darlene Lussier; Recaptured Funds**

Ms. Lussier provided the Committee with a list of remaining balances from prior years' projects which should be ready to be closed out. The largest item was a MSBA reimbursement of \$218,000.00 for the South Row roof which was received, and already approved by Town Meeting. The rest of the projects bring the total of recaptured funds to \$224,848.00. Recaptured funds will be used to offset needed borrowing.

**Discussion/ Questions:**

There were no questions raised at this time.

**Public Comments:**

There was no one from the Public present to make any comments.

## **Review & Acceptance of Minutes: November 30, 2022**

The Minutes were not available yet.

### **Next meeting:**

Mr. Sousa will email a worksheet where members can prioritize the projects and provide their recommendations for funding to be discussed at the next meeting. Responses can be sent back to Mr. Sousa by Tuesday, December 6, 2022 for compilation. Members had questions about how to prioritize and rank the projects. Some negotiations can be discussed to meet the budget. Inflation and supply chain issues have created a lot of cost increases. ARPA funding helped with a lot of HVAC projects.

Ms. Marshall thanked Ms. Clancy for her help with the library projects.

### **Adjournment:**

**Next Meeting Date: December 8, 2022**

**Motion:** by Ms. Marshall to adjourn the meeting at 7:27PM. 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