**Town of Leicester Capital Improvement Planning Committee**

**Meeting Minutes**

**September 27, 2022**

**(*Note: This meeting was held as an in person only meeting)***

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Lucky Margadonna, Sharon Nist, Kurt Parliment, Herbie Duggan Jr., Dorothy Dudley, Beth Auger

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** at large member vacancy

**IN ATTENDANCE:** David Genereux, Town Administrator; Michael Dupuis, Fire Chief

Chairman Margadonna called the meeting to order at 6:57 pm. Chair Margadonna informed the Committee that the purpose of this meeting was a special meeting to discuss/vote on the recommendations for four capital items for the special fall Town meeting on October 18, 2022.

Before starting the discussion, Chair Margadonna introduced the two new members: Dorothy Dudley, Finance/Advisory Board representative (replacing Ms. Keefe-Layden who has moved out of town) and Beth Auger, School Department representative – Director of Financial Compliance and Operations (replacing Mr. Ayala – facilities manager. This position is now under the auspices of the Town instead of the School Department). Chair Margadonna also stated that the Committee is now in need of another at large member to replace Ms. Coyle, who has been appointed to the Finance/Advisory Committee.

Chair Margadonna informed the members the items being discussed are as follows: security cameras, Cherry Valley Fire Station boiler replacement, safety vests and helmets for EMS staff, and hydrants. Chair Margardonna also explained that the Committee will not be going through the usual set protocols for ranking the items before the voting process. They will be voted upon outright.

**DISCUSSION OF SECURITY CAMERAS**

At this time, Chair Margadonna asked Mr. Genereux to update the status of the purchase of security cameras. Mr. Genereux explained that the security cameras are for Towtaid Park, the Bark Park, Burncoat Park, Rochdale Park, and Tarantino Park (formally Community Field). When presented previously, the Highway barn and Memorial School were also included in the purchase. Instead, Mr. Genereux stated that the Town is trying to figure out how the Recycling Center can be included. The problem with the Recycling Center is that is has no internet access. The purpose of these cameras is to hopefully cut down on the amount of vandalism that is taking place at these sites. Refer to October 20, 2021 Capital minutes for details from first purchase presentation of the security cameras.

The cameras are designed to catch perpetrators and hopefully apprehend them. The Police Department can add these cameras to their main system.

This request is for the purchase and installation of the cameras and obtaining the required internet connection. Note: the original article was disapproved at 2021 Fall Town meeting.

**DISCUSSION OF CHERRY VALLEY FIRE STATION (STATION TWO) OIL TO GAS CONVERSION**

Chair Margadonna asked Chief Dupuis to present. The Cherry Valley Fire Station had an oil tank leak that had to be taken care of immediately. The tank was pumped out and the oil moved to another Fire Station. This procedure cost the Fire Department $879.38.

Chief Dupuis stated that Station Two is now in need of some sort of a heating system. Prior to the leak, the Fire Department was heating a building that no one occupies, thus the conversion to propane heating. Older oil furnaces/boilers operate at an efficiency rating of 60% whereas propane furnaces operate at an efficiency rating of 90% or better. Propane was chosen since the natural gas line ends at McCarthy Ave/Gerard Court. Right now, Station Two does not have a back-up generator. The propane system will allow for future generator back-up power. Also, there will be no more oil leaks to contend with.

Mr. Genereux stated that the bid for quotes will go out at midnight, September 28, 2022, to the COMBUYS site; to Central Register on October 5, 2022; and is already posted on the Town website. Bidders on quotes must come to look at the site before submitting a quote. Deadline for quote submissions is October 17, 2022. There is a timeline of sixty (60) days of completion past the quote award date.

Mr. Parliment asked if there was a back-up system in place in the event the project is not completed by the sixty (60) day deadline. Chief Dupuis stated that the department will work on something such as a torpedo heater.

Ms. Dudley asked how will the water be heated? Chief Dupuis explained that it is a forced hot water system.

Chief Dupuis stated that the goal of the heating is to keep the building at a temperature to keep the pipes from freezing during the winter months.

Mr. Duggan asked how Station Three’s (Rochdale) heating system is holding up. Chief Dupuis stated that the boiler was replaced about four (4) years ago and is still working okay. He stated that it should last approximately another ten (10) years.

Chair Marganonna asked if the department has gone through Mass Energy to take advantage of any rebates. Chief Dupuis stated that there is an approximate rebate from the McDonald Heating estimate of $2400.

There was a question about the previously approved capital items. Mr. Genereux stated that projects are behind due to COVID and the supply chain problems. Things are now starting to open up. The gas replacement tanks at the Highway Department are presently under construction. The Highway Department has done some cosmetic work on the Police firing range.

**DISCUSSION OF BULLET PROOF VESTS AND HELMETS FOR EMS STAFF**

Chief Dupuis stated that the Ambulance is not self sufficient yet, but is working towards becoming so. Its working budget right now is approximately $76,000.

The Fire Department’s union contract states that “the Town shall supply a minimum of two (2) - vests and helmets for each of the three frontline engines by July 2021.” Chief Dupuis stated that because of EMS staff being called to respond to a variety of calls, he wants to look out for his EMS staff and make sure they are also protected even though they are not currently included in the union contract. He stated that mental health calls are on the rise. EMS staff is called to Worcester on a daily basis. All WEMS wear protective vests and helmets. The vests are protection against not only shootings, but also for protection from knife threats, sharp objects etc.

Many times, EMS staff have been assaulted in the back of the Town ambulances.

The new school superintendent stated that the school department is looking for more protection due to the new open campus.

Mr. Duggan asked if there was an expiration date on the vests. Chief Dupuis replied that they have an average life span of about ten (10) years.

Ms. Dudley suggested that the vests/helmets should be worked into the department’s budget so they can be replaced on a rotating basis. Chief Dupuis agreed.

Chief Dupuis gave examples of various towns and the amount of ballistic protection they have on their ambulances.

The request is for two (2) sets of ballistic protection (vest and helmet) for each of the four (4) ambulances and two (2) sets of ballistic protection for each of the four (4) fire engines, for a total of sixteen (16) sets totaling $14,989.64.

**DISCUSSION OF HYDRANT REPAIR/REPLACEMENT/MAINTENANCE**

Chair Margadonna brought the Committee up to date with the most current maintenance policy:

“On March 2, 1971, at Town Meeting, Article 21, the town voted to assume the expense of repair of fire hydrants. The Town appointed two “hydrant inspectors” who were responsible for hydrant repair. Both persons appointed were the Superintendents of their respective water districts. Later a third person was appointed, perhaps a representative of the fire department.

“The inspectors reported annually in the Town Report on hydrant maintenance and repair; the reports indicate that the town kept hydrants in stock and had a replacement plan.

“Hydrant inspectors served the town until 1999, with none having been re-appointed as hydrant maintenance and repair was taken over by the fire department in 1997. Also, in 1997, the hydrant maintenance report was incorporated into the fire department report.

“After 1997, there are no records for any maintenance or repairs”

Chief Dupuis stated that the Fire Department has $6000 a year allocated for hydrants. The Fire Chief currently inspects the hydrants. There are three hundred (300) hydrants in Town. Of these, eighteen (18) need repairs at approximately $3,750 each, five (5) need to be replaced at approximately $7500 each, five (5) will try to be repaired by working with the water departments, and the status of four (4) is unknown. The hydrants need maintenance/inspections because of many more unknowns due to lack of yearly maintenance. The cost estimates were provided by Hydra-Tech which has previously been used by the Fire Department.

Currently, water has to brought in by the tanker to fires where hydrants are out of service.

Chief Dupuis also stated that Mass Highway uses liquid magnesium chloride to prevent snow and ice from sticking to the roads. All chlorides cause corrosion. Both calcium chloride and magnesium chloride are particularly corrosive because of their ability to retain moisture. This is making the cast iron hydrants and hardware susceptible to rusting and rotting extremely fast. During the winter, unlike a car, magnesium chloride cannot be washed off the hydrants.

Some sort of an agreement needs to be worked out with the water districts with the maintenance.

Chief Dupuis would like to establish a rotating maintenance plan with the hydrants. He proposed the following schedule:

FY23 – Hydra-Tech to repair approximately eighteen (18) hydrants at $64,000 total.

FY24 – Hydra-Tech for maintenance/inspection of one hundred fifty (150) hydrants for $28,125 ($187.70 per hydrant). This is half of the hydrant inventory.

FY25 – Hydra-Tech to replace five (5) current out of service hydrants for $37,000 ($7500 each)

FY26 – Hydra-Tech for maintenance/inspection of remaining one hundred fifty hydrants for $28,125 ($187.50 per hydrant). This is the second half of the hydrant inventory.

FY27 – Hydra-Tech to replace the new out of service hydrants at $7500 each OR Hydra-Tech to repair the new out of service hydrants at $3750 each.

FY28 – Hydra-Tech to begin the rotating maintenance/inspection of the one hundred fifty hydrants from FY24 for $28,125 ($187.70 per hydrant). This is the first half of the hydrant inventory.

This rotation maintenance/inspection schedule would then continue on a yearly basis.

Mr. Parliment asked if any of the hydrants are leaking water at this time. Chief Dupuis stated that as of now, no. There is a pipe that goes six feet down, and when the hydrant is opened, a lever opens a valve allowing the water to rise into the hydrant.

Ms. Nist asked if there was any grant money available. Chief Dupuis stated that there is not a whole lot of money out there, but he would look into it.

**VOTING**

At this time Chair Margadonna stated that voting on the presented items will take place.

Mr. Duggan made a motion to approve spending up to $100,000 for camera systems for town-wide protection, seconded by Mr. Parliment. Under discussion: Mr. Duggan asked that the recycling center also be included and Memorial School and the Highway barn be excluded. Vote: five (5) in favor, one (1) opposed. Motion carried.

Mr. Duggan made a motion to approve spending up to $15,000 for the heating system replacement at the Cherry Valley Fire Station, seconded by Ms. Nist. No further discussion. Vote: five (5) in favor, zero (0) opposed, one (1) abstention. Motion carried.

Mr. Duggan made a motion to approve spending up to $15,000 for bullet proof vests and helmets for the Fire Department and EMS staff, seconded by Ms. Dudley. No further discussion. Vote: six (6) in favor, zero (0) opposed. Motion carried.

Mr. Duggan made a motion to approve spending up to $65,000 for the repair/maintenance of the Town’s three hundred (300) fire hydrants, seconded by Mr. Parliment. No further discussion. Vote: six (6) in favor, zero (0) opposed.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Margadonna entertained a motion to table approval of the minutes from the previous two (2) Capital meetings.

Mr. Parliment made a motion to table the approval of the minutes from the March 14, 2022 and April 7, 2022 meetings to the next Capital meeting, seconded by Ms. Dudley. No further discussion. Vote: six (6) in favor, zero (0) opposed. Motion carried.

 **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Margadonna thanked all those who attended the meeting and again welcomed the two (2) new members.

Chair Margadonna entertained a motion to adjourn. Ms. Nist made a motion to adjourn at 8:00pm. Seconded by Ms. Dudley. No further discussion. Vote: six (6) in favor, zero (0) opposed. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon J. Nist

Clerk

Capital Improvement Committee