

Bolton Capital Planning Committee

Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2016

Bolton Town Office

Members Present: Linda Baker (Planning Commission, by phone), Joss Besse (Chair), Jen Dudley-Gaillard (Select Board), Sharon Murray (Select Board), Pete Siegel

Members Absent: Ray Atwood, Joe Colangelo, John Devine

Also Present: Eric Andrews (Road Foreman), Mike Gervia (Fire Chief); Chris Dubin (CCRPC Transportation Planner)

Meeting materials: Draft meeting minutes (Jan 2016), draft capital program and debt service policy (Mar 2016), draft project worksheet (Mar 2016, v.2), draft equipment replacement schedule (Jan 2016), CIP Working Draft/Spreadsheet (Mar 2016, v.4), e-mail re condition/reconstruction of Stage Road.

1. **Call to Order.** Joss Besse, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:40 pm, and reviewed the meeting agenda as warned. Discussion regarding the status of the Town Garage added as agenda item #4.
2. **Public Comment.** None.
3. **Meeting Minutes.** Pete made the motion "to accept the minutes of the January 14, 2016 meeting as presented." Seconded by Joss. Motion passed 4-0-1, with Jen abstaining. Note: no meeting was held in February.
4. **Town Garage Issues.** Joss reported that he and Eric had met on capital plan details, and the question came up of repairs/renovations to the floor and walls of the town garage. Poor drainage has resulted in puddling on the shop floor; and the stud walls appear to rest directly on the slab with water reaching the sills. There is no frost wall. Eric confirmed that the cement floor was coming apart in chunks, the rebar holding it together had rotted through, and water was also collecting along garage walls. The current situation, resulting from building design, deferred building maintenance, and flooding during Irene, may be contributing to structural deterioration and poor working conditions.

Sharon noted that the current garage, when constructed, was elevated above the previous base flood elevation (BFE), but reportedly did flood some during Irene. In 2010, the government revised the BFE, and the building is now within the floodplain. Sharon noted that if the building requires work anyway, floodproofing may also be warranted – and may be required under the town's NFIP flood regs, depending on the total cost of renovations.

The committee discussed options, including potential use of the garage reserve fund (estimated at \$33,000 in FY16, after scheduled lighting upgrades), to pay for engineering/architectural cost estimates for needed repair work. Sharon offered to look into available FEMA or state grants that could help pay for this work, in advance of the committee's April meeting. Because of the absence of several committee members, Joss noted it would be better (and there is no rush) if we continue the discussion on the next agenda, pending more information and better committee attendance.

5. **Bolton Highway Inventory Work.** Chris Dubin, CCRPC Transportation Planner, met with the committee to go over road inventory work scheduled for Bolton in 2016. This work will include road

surface and condition inventories (using PAVER software), and updates of 2013 culvert and sign inventories as needed, in consultation with Eric. Inventory results will then be used to identify and prioritize needed highway improvements by highway segment, and to develop preliminary cost estimates, for consideration by the town in the highway capital improvement program. The CCRPC also plans to do an erosion/stormwater management inventory for most towns in the county, as required under the state's new town highway permit program (still under development), but depending on available grant funds may not get to that this year. CCRPC staff will check in periodically with the committee on the status of their inventory work.

6. **Draft Capital Budget (v.4).** Joss presented a detailed overview of the most recent version of the draft capital budget spreadsheet, extending through 2031. The spreadsheet is designed to be interactive, for use by the committee in planning and budgeting. As set up, it links (by formula) scheduled highway and fire equipment purchases to reserve fund and debt service payments and balances—with the intent of minimizing the fluctuation in total capital expenditures budgeted from year to year, and ensuring that that debt service does not exceed the 12% of the operating budget in any given year – a tentative threshold discussed in previous meetings. Initial equipment purchase costs provided by Eric and Mike were adjusted for inflation, estimated trade-in value, and reserve fund down-payments. Facility and highway improvements were not included in this version, but will need to be incorporated at a later date. Initial feedback:
- General concern that we've already maxed out our debt service limit (in relation to operating budget) on equipment replacements, without factoring in needed facility and highway improvements. We may need to reconsider debt levels under proposed budget and debt policies, and will need to access other available sources of funding (e.g., state highway grants, FEMA grants) for needed improvements.
 - Jen suggested setting a ceiling on total annual capital expenditures each year, representing the sum total of all reserve fund contributions and debt service payments (e.g., ~\$160,000 based on the FY16 budget). The amount allocated under each would vary from year to year. Sharon agreed that this would be useful, but at the current level would allow only for equipment replacement, and would need to be adjusted for inflation. Pete agreed that nothing will be getting cheaper.
 - Sharon suggested using fiscal rather than calendar years as column headers.
 - The committee discussed options for spreading out highway truck purchases in the future, to get back on a regular replacement schedule, given that the 2004 International (now in the shop) will need to be replaced in the next year or so, and the 2016 has yet to be placed in service. To be discussed further, in relation to the draft equipment replacement policy/schedule.
 - A new loader would likely be purchased on a 10-year note, rather than a 5-year note as budgeted. Joss will adjust this accordingly.
 - Mike suggested that a new fire truck would be needed in 2017, moving it up in the schedule, noting that Huntington just replaced a truck that had been purchased around the same time. Rather than replacing the existing truck with one the same size, he's instead looking at a mini-pumper, for use on Bolton's steep driveways, and a tanker. Joss asked for revised estimates for these, using project worksheets; and also observed that moving this purchase up to 2017 would

significantly affect highway equipment replacement schedules. Additional information is needed.

- The committee also discussed options for scheduling highway and fire equipment purchases and sharing equipment with adjoining municipalities, e.g., through mutual aid or interlocal agreements. Eric and Mike each provided an overview of how this currently works—through mutual aid agreements and informal requests. Equipment purchases are often discussed, but not specifically coordinated between neighboring highway and fire departments. Sharon suggested approaching CCRPC staff to help initiate some of these discussions between municipalities.
- In response to an e-mail suggesting the need to reconstruct segments of Stage Road (temporarily closed due to mud conditions), the committee discussed with Chris and Eric how to determine when a major road reconstruction project would be more cost effective, in the long-term, than ongoing patching, paving and maintenance. Chris Duban (CCRPC) indicated that their highway inventory work will include sampling by segment to assess road conditions; PAVER software can then be used to help define thresholds for reconstruction v. ongoing maintenance. He also noted that in some cases, though counter-intuitive, it makes sense to allow a road in poor condition to deteriorate further, in anticipation of future reconstruction, rather than continuing to patch and pave. Eric noted that the Notch Road reconstruction project a few years ago was needed because of the increasing amount of truck traffic out of the gravel pit.

7. **Draft Capital Program and Debt Policy.** Tabled due to time, until next meeting.
8. **Draft Project Worksheet.** Tabled due to time, until next meeting.
9. **Draft Equipment Replacement Schedule.** Tabled due to time, until next meeting.
10. **Next Steps.** Items identified for consideration at the next meeting: draft CIP and debt service policy (final); project/equipment work sheet template (final); draft equipment replacement schedule/policy (new), draft CIP spreadsheet (continued). Joss reiterated the need to schedule a meeting with office staff regarding future capital needs. Jen stated that, as the new Select Board Chair, she would have to resign from the committee; but would ask another board member to replace her.
11. **Adjournment.** Jen moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Sharon; motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm. Due to scheduling conflicts, the next meeting of the committee is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, April 21st, 5:30 pm at the Bolton Town Office. Joss will confirm this with absent members, before sending out an agenda. Linda will again be available via Skype, if this can be arranged.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Murray
Committee Clerk

Minutes are in draft form until approved by the committee.
As approved by the committee on **April 21, 2016.**

