

**Kingston, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting of February 8, 2010
MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Selectman Mark Heitz. Also in attendance was Selectman Peter Broderick.

Capital Improvements Plan Discussion - Police Department

Police Chief Donald Briggs was present at the request of the Board, to discuss his Department's input into the Capital Improvements Plan process. Also present were Capital Improvements Committee members Debra Powers, Glenn Coppelman, Ernest Landry and Richard Russman. Chief Briggs noted that the only entry for his Department is for a \$14,000.00 expenditure for replacement of bullet proof vests. The purchase of department cruisers, at the rate of two cruisers in each three-year period, is included in the annual budget. An addition to the Police Station is expected to be completed through donation of materials and volunteer labor. Remaining costs of approximately \$13,000 will be raised through private contributions or fundraising efforts or the addition won't go forward. Debra Powers noted that she actually had thought the addition should be included in the CIP since it's a recognized need regardless of the means of funding. She suggested that if the addition isn't under construction and all funds raised by the next CIP review, it should be included in the updated plan.

Chief Briggs noted that a future CIP update may include an entry for establishment of a 24-hour dispatch center that will be used by Police, Fire, Ambulance and Highway personnel. Although the County now provides dispatch services at no cost, there are problems with transmissions in some areas of town and call volume is increasing steadily. It's hoped that the town will be given a spot on Comcast's transmission tower in the southern end of Town during the next cable contract negotiations, in 2011. It's expected that the various departments will get together and discuss a proposal for the next CIP update.

Capital Improvements Plan Discussion - Library

Library Director Sarah Sycz and Library Trustees Dannielle Genovese, Katie McDonough, Robert Grier, Judith Lukas, Wilhelmina Bradley and Jane Christie were present at the request of the Board, to discuss the Library's input into the Capital Improvements Plan process. Dannielle Genovese explained that the Trustees had voted during 2009 to move in the direction of a new Library facility on the parcel located opposite the Carriage Towne Plaza rather than adding onto the existing building. That decision was based on the fact that major renovations to the present facility would entail making the entire building ADA compliant, adding a sprinkler system, etc., that may not be possible. Additionally, once an addition was completed, there would be no further ability to expand. The planned new structure will be approximately 11,000 square feet and will include a dedicated meeting room for community use and kitchen facilities. The price, based on a conceptual plan developed five or six years ago, is \$3.2 Million, including furnishings and equipment. The Trustees expect to be ready to request funding in 2011 once plans and costs are firmed up. To a question from CIP Committee member Debra Powers concerning the preparation of comprehensive plans, Ms. Genovese noted that there are funds in a non-town account to cover the expense of architectural and building plans for the new building.

Selectman Heitz, noting that there are plans to replace the present Highway Garage and to add an addition to the Fire Station, advised that both of those projects have costs of less than half the price per square foot that the Library is proposing to spend. He expressed the opinion that voters will likely not support a \$3.2 Million project in the present economic climate. Ms. Genovese noted that there will be fundraising efforts and that the final proposal will incorporate a plan to have as much site work as possible done by Town crews. It's hoped that as much as 10% can be shaved off of the original cost estimate through these measures.

Some discussion was held regarding the means by which the funds will be raised. During discussions with the CIP Committee, withdrawal of the full amount from the \$6 Million Landfill Fund was discussed. They also had considered issuance of bonds, the annual payments on which could be withdrawn from the Infrastructure Improvements fund. Selectman Heitz noted that the Infrastructure Improvement fund is based on interest earned on the Landfill Fund. At present, the fund is earning less per year than the bond payments would be and, because earnings fluctuate, the fund might be even less able to cover the payments in other years. He stated that he would not be in favor of trying to fund a fixed payment with a fluctuating revenue stream. Ms. Genovese noted

that discussion had been held about possibly combining the Library, Highway and Fire Station projects into a single bond issue of \$5.5 Million. The Municipal Bond Bank had spoken with the CIP Committee and had provided some figures for different scenarios. At interest of 5%, ten year bonds would entail an annual payment of \$550,000.00 plus interest. Over 15 years and at 5.5%, the cost would range from \$422,000 in the first year down to \$232,000 in the final year, and over 20 years at 6%, the cost would range from \$385,000 in the first year down to \$175,000 in the final year. She advised that some taxpayers have voiced the opinion that the \$6 M landfill fund should be the direct source for the necessary funding, particularly since library projects are not acceptable for the grant programs available. Mr. Coppelman of the CIP Committee suggested that Ms. Genovese look into the Health and Education Funding Authority for possible financing assistance. Richard Russman stated that it may be prudent to forego the 2.5% earnings on the landfill fund if the \$6M is used to avoid a 6% or 7% cost to borrow.

Selectman Broderick expressed his wholehearted support for the Library project, once the Highway Garage has been replaced. Selectman Heitz expressed his opinion that the per square foot price needs to come down from the present estimated \$300 per foot to probably half that amount. Debra Powers noted that the Library can't move from the beautiful facility they're now in to "a box". Mr. Heitz agreed, but stated that the facility won't be able to replicate the quality of the present building in any case and that the new facility can be functional and attractive without being overly elaborate.

Capital Improvements Plan Discussion - FOCOS

Ernest Landry of Friends of Kingston Open Space was present at the request of the Board to discuss the organization's input into the Capital Improvements Plan process. Mr. Landry noted that the Master Plan goal of conserving 25% of the total land area of the Town requires the eventual conservation of approximately 1,300 acres in addition to the 1,500 acres estimated to be protected at present and the 500 acres being added with the Tucker and Meadowsend acquisitions by the U. S. Conservation Service. Because estimating when or at what cost property might become available is impossible, FOCOS settled on a means of estimating for the purpose of the Capital Improvements Plan. The group hopes that at least 50% of the amount of land remaining to be conserved will be the subject of easements, at no cost to taxpayers. Of the remaining 650 acres, and assuming a cost of \$5,700 per acre, there is money in the Conservation Capital Reserve to cover approximately 123 acres, leaving 527 acres. Assuming grant funding of approximately 25%, the remaining acreage would have a total estimated cost of \$2.2 Million. Spread over a 20-year span, that comes to an annual cost of \$106,000.00, and that became the amount that FOCOS requested be entered annually into the Capital Improvements Plan.

Selectman Heitz, noting that FOCOS had based its annual requests - including its 2010 request - on actual economic conditions, asked if it is their intent to continue in that manner. He expressed the opinion that the 2010 request for \$28,000.00 is far likelier to be approved by voters than would a request for \$106,000.00. Mr. Landry advised that the voters have been very supportive of the organization's goals and that they seem to understand that open space is the least expensive use of land.

Selectmen thanked those who had attended, noting that the Highway and Fire Departments will be requested to attend their February 22nd meeting to review their input into the Capital Improvements Plan process.

Grant Writing Consultant Considered

Selectmen discussed with Dannielle Genovese a proposal that she serve as a consultant to research and write grant applications on behalf of the Town. It was noted that Ms. Genovese has worked as grant writer for the fire department for some time and has a 75% success rate in grant approval. She advised that she has attended several grant writing seminars and already has contacts and methods set up that should shorten the amount of time necessary to be spent in preparing applications. Selectmen agreed to allow Ms. Genovese to do some initial research and investigation - up to 20 hours - to determine what grant programs may be available. They then will decide whether to authorize her to proceed with the writing of grant applications.

Fire Department Well Report

Road Agent Richard St. Hilaire advised the Board that the ultraviolet light meant to kill bacteria in the fire station well was covered in rust and not operating correctly. It has been fixed and he expects that future water tests will be acceptable.

Mr. St. Hilaire also noted that the sprinkler systems in the Library and Town Hall may need to be temporarily shut down to allow a leak to be located and repaired.

Review of Previous Meetings' Minutes

MOTION: Upon motion of Selectman Broderick and second of Selectman Heitz, it was voted to approve the Minutes of the February 1, 2010 meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:35 pm and the Board retired to address administrative issues.

Respectfully submitted,
Catherine Grant
Administrative Assistant