Members Present: First Selectwoman Erika Wiecenski, Chairman Stuart Cobb, Stef Summers, Christina Mailhos, Geoff Prusak, Rick Maloney, and BOF Chairman Michael Makuch

Members Absent: John Patton and Peter Tanaka

Others Present: Donna Latincsics; Business Manager, Maureen Parsell; Director of Parks and Recreation, Troy Sposato; Director of Public Works, Don Berg; Director of the Housing Authority, and Tyler Millix; Assistant Fire Chief.

The meeting of the Capital Improvement Program Committee was called to order at 6:34 p.m. by Chairman Cobb.

1. Present to Speak

No one was present to speak.

2. Approval of Minutes

Selectwoman Wiecenski motioned to approve the minutes from the February 5th meeting. Mike Makuch seconded the motion.

Vote: All yes.

3. Revise Year 1

Chairman Cobb stated we would be working down the list of requests for year 2020-21 and that on the chart columns Z, AA, and AB are the different funding sources available for these projects. Christina Mailhos asked to confirm that $547k was the target for the general fund expense. Donna clarified the number is $554k. Christina Mailhos asked how they come up with that number. Chairman Cobb replied it is a historical number that someone had come up with which they use as the target for capital expenditures and added that it does go up and down some. Christina Mailhos asked if they had a percentage increase each year. Chairman Cobb replied yes, a couple thousand dollars. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated this was the case years ago but there hasn’t been recently. Chairman Cobb stated they bring the expenditures down by pushing project out to upcoming years and once in a while taking them off the list completely. He added that this gives the requester a chance to come back modify their request, give more information, or request it again. Stef Summers stated she believes the problem with keeping the target number the same year to year is that the price of everything goes up. Chairman Cobb stated the number is going up some. Stef Summers stated that if the number increased a little more each year they
could get to a point where repairs wouldn’t have to be put off until a point where things are in very bad shape. Chairman Cobb explained that when the amount goes up higher than the grand list it will drive the tax rate up. Stef Summers asked how this works with the balance they have in the general fund. Chairman Cobb replied that the Board of Finance usually has a goal of what they are trying to keep in reserves and what is being spent. Mike Makuch stated they are currently around 13% and the goal is to stay within 8-12%.

Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that Superintendent Stevens had spoken to her earlier regarding line 46 the school clock and PA system. She stated he originally had this item in year two of his plan but The Board of Education had moved this into year one but he believes this item can wait until year two if needed because their current PA system does still work and isn’t a safety risk.

Chairman Cobb stated the next item after the PA system is Hall School’s exterior trim, doors, and pillars which have some rot at the bottom. He added these items are not going to get any better and they are a vocal point for the building. He stated this is an item that takes precedence over the clock/PA system. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated this project was approved in 17-18 and the Board of Education at that point had something that was more critical which put this project on hold. She stated she believes it is important to fund this project. Stef Summers added that during the presentation they also mentioned that Hall School’s 100 year celebration was coming up and they would want to have something at the school. Chairman Cobb stated they would move the clock/PA system out to year two and keep this in year one for now.

Chairman Cobb stated the next request was to chip seal the lower parking lot at Center School. He asked Troy if he thought $14,000 was an accurate estimate for this project. Troy Sposato replied it is $159 per square yard so he would have to measure it out to say. Christina Mailhos stated this request has been on the list for a few years. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated the quote was based off of the price given for Hall School. Rick Maloney asked if this project could be part of Lotcip. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied she could consider it. Chairman Cobb asked if Lotcip was a competitive grant that you have to apply for. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied yes, you do have to apply and it is competing against other projects. Chairman Cobb stated they would have to assign the project funding other than the grant if they decide to keep it in year one. The committee decided to keep the chip sealing in year one for now. Selectwoman Wiecenski asked Troy if they had used the rejuvenator on this parking lot. Troy Sposato replied no but this is an option to buy them a couple years. Mike Makuch stated if they need to cut a large amount of expenses this may be something they want to look into. Chairman Cobb stated for now they will put the chip sealing under locip funds.

Chairman Cobb stated the next request was for Hall School’s heating project for $105,000. Mike Makuch stated he believed this was to replace eight classroom heating units and their wasn’t a huge cost savings to do all eight at once rather than splitting it into four in year one and four in year two. The committee decided for now to split the cost $52,500 in year one and $52,500 in year two.

Chairman Cobb stated the next request was for Hall School’s boiler valves and pumps at $8,700. He stated this is a smaller project that can probably stay in year one.

Chairman Cobb stated line 62 is to paint the library which he believes they only wanted to do once the roof is fixed/patched. Mike Makuch stated he believes they roof will be done this summer.
Chairman Cobb stated the next project is the request for a district building committee and necessary consultants for $100,000. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated if and only if the project gets completed these dollars are reimbursable. Rick Maloney asked to confirm that the $100,000 was for professional services. Chairman Cobb replied yes. Chairman Cobb stated one option is to split the cost between year one and two. The committee decided to split the project for now.

Chairman Cobb stated the next project is window re-glazing at the Old Town Hall which also includes the walls and floors. Rick Maloney asked what if we give the Old Town Hall back, who owns it. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied the ecclesiastical society. She added that she doesn’t know if they have the resources to complete this project. Chairman Cobb stated that they have to decide if this is just a cosmetic item at this time. Christina Mailhos stated that the windows would help with the cost of heating. Chairman Cobb pointed out they do keep the heat at a low temperature to begin with so this might not be a large cost savings. Stef Summers asked how long this project has been on the requests. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated it was first submitted in 2016. Christina Mailhos stated it was back in 2010 that consultants came and stated this was one of the things that needed done to maintain the building. Selectwoman Wiecenski and Christina Mailhos agreed the windows were the top priority of this request.

Mike Makuch stated the next line item is the septic for the Old Town Hall and he believes this takes priority due to the potential for health risk. Chairman Cobb stated there has been no known failures to the septic, the sewage isn’t coming to the surface and the toilets aren’t backing up. Selectwoman Wiecenski pointed out they don’t want to wait until a failure happens to fix this. Christina Mailhos stated the current cesspool is probably not an issue day to day but when they have big events this is when it will becomes an issue. Chairman Cobb asked if there is a limited amount of money, would everyone agree they would want the septic done over the cosmetic issues and windows. The committee agreed the septic is the most important request at the Old Town Hall. The septic will stay in year one for now and the re-glazing will move out to year two. Selectwoman Wiecenski asked Christina Mailhos if these items were not eligible for the grant that took care of a lot of restoration in the Old Town Hall. Christina replied that the grant was just for hiring a historical engineer.

Chairman Cobb stated the next item is concrete evaluation of municipal structures for $15,000. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated they had put in $60,000 over four years for this project and they tested the three facilities in this year and are now waiting for the engineers report. Chairman Cobb asked which buildings got done. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied the library, senior center, and pump house. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated she feels comfortable saying they can move this project. She added that our state representative is working on a bill to propose that municipalities can use the testing funds that were made available for residents. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated she has received a preliminary report but they are still waiting on the final report from the samples taken. The committee agreed to not eliminate this request but to push it out for re-inspection etc.

Chairman Cobb stated the boiler for The Town Office Building was the next item. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated this item is just a matter of time as to when the current boiler would fail completely. Geoff Prusak stated this project only makes sense if they also fix the chimney. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that is all part of this project. Troy Sposato stated they will put a cap on the chimney and re-point it.

Chairman Cobb stated the next two items are the public works bucket truck and excavator. He asked Troy if these values are for used or new options. Troy Sposato replied the excavator was for brand new and the...
bucket truck was valued at what they thought they could find used. Stef Summers pointed out these two items feel extravagant given how many other pieces of equipment public works is requesting. She added she doesn’t know how much time they would have to use something like a bucket truck to make it worth the investment. Rick Maloney stated he thought Chairman Cobb had a really good idea about renting the excavator for a month to see what they could get done. He added that then they could come back next year and show us what projects they were able to get done. Selectwoman Wiecenski pointed out that Troy had explained that if they rent the excavator and it rains for a couple weeks then you’re not going to get a project done. Chairman Cobb stated if Troy could give him a budget of what he thought it would take to do the bottom end of Village Hill and he could save them a significant amount of money then he could come in next year and they would be more likely to fund a project like a new excavator. Mike Makuch stated he would also like to know where this equipment would be stored. Christina Mailhos pointed out this project is on the request for the first time this year and she doesn’t feel excited about funding projects that show up for the first time. Chairman Cobb stated they will hold off on the bucket truck for this year and revisit the excavator next year in terms of what they were able to get done with the rental and its associated costs.

Chairman Cobb stated the next project is the basement concrete floor in the Town Office Building. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated this project does need to get done but it could also be push out for something else. She stated the weight in the attic is still a concern and the fact that the attic door cannot properly close. Chairman Cobb stated they would keep this project in year one for now and can come back to it.

The salt shed configuration is the next project. Chairman Cobb stated the $519,000 included the fuel tank. He stated the off budget money came from the $100,000 they approved for the fuel tank plus the STEAP funds and asked why the request didn’t go down by the $100,000. Troy Sposato responded that the building for the salt shed alone cost $200,000 plus you would need to clear the land. Mike Makuch asked how big the current salt shed is. Troy Sposato replied roughly 40x30. Chairman Cobb pointed out that they have only run out of salt once in the past thirty years and that was due to a state wide shortage. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated the current salt shed is going to crumble. Troy Sposato stated they would save money on the salt buying it in larger quantity. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated they are also relocating the building which added a bit to the overall cost. Rick Maloney stated that if they build a building half the size of the building proposed they could potentially stay within the STEAP funds or at least pretty close. Mike Makuch asked if the project only cost $346,000 could it be 100% paid for through the STEAP funds. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied that some of the $346,000 is going to replace the fuel tank. Chairman Cobb asked how much just the fuel tank project cost. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied it was around $211,000. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that the original quote that was submitted for the $100,000 was just a rough estimate put together by Karl and when Troy had the company come in to give a quote, it was much more than they expected. Chairman Cobb stated he believed they agreed they would want to keep a tank that held at least 6000 gallons which is 3-4 weeks running time. He added that downsizing the tank didn’t have much of a cost savings anyways. Mike Makuch stated they would need to know exactly how much of the $346,000 would come out for the fuel tank so they could see their final cost for the salt shed. Troy Sposato stated they do have the amount for the fuel tank which they got down to $178,000. He added that this would increase the cost of the salt shed project by $89,000. Chairman Cobb asked if the STEAP fund expire. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied until they sign the agreement with DOT she isn’t sure what the expiration time is. Christina Mailhos stated she believes they want you to use
it in three years. Chairman Cobb stated he thinks they should go ahead and get the fuel tank done this year and push the salt shed out one year to see what they have left over for funds. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated this may also give them a chance to apply for the next round of STEAP funds if they become available. Chairman Cobb stated they will push the $173,000 out to year two leaving the $346,000 available for the fuel tank and getting started on site work or whatever else they feel is important. Christina Mailhos stated that they should also have an up to date plan for their proposed salt shed that includes a building or moving the old building they would want for storage.

Chairman Cobb stated the next project is the first Public Works vehicle, the International 7400 truck for $200,000. Christina Mailhos stated that based on the presentation by Troy they are stating they definitely need the dump truck and also the 450 dump was critical because it doesn’t have a backup. She added they needed either the new F-350 or the new Explorer because if they got the new Explorer Troy’s truck could replace the maroon truck. Troy replied that she is correct. Chairman Cobb asked if Willington Hill’s service truck would work as a vehicle for Troy. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied that if the truck was worth repairing then Willington Hill would continue to use it. Geoff Prusak stated that his concern would be if Troy got a Ford Explorer he wouldn’t be able to fill in when they need someone to plow. Troy Sposato replied that he does not plow now. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that it is a union issue which states plowing is a union job. Chairman Cobb stated they can take out the $50,172 for the new F-350 and instead fund Troy’s explorer and the maroon truck would still get replaced by something quite a bit newer. Donna Latincsics asked if they would lease the new vehicle or buy it out right. Chairman Cobb replied they would see what their balances are at the end and see if they can afford to purchase it out right and save some interest cost. Mike Makuch asked to confirm that the 7400 Dump truck was staying in the plan for year one. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied yes. Mike Makuch asked next about the replacement of the F-450 for $66,299. Chairman Cobb stated this is a very handy truck and is pretty beat up at this point. Mike Makuch pointed out if they are going to have them working on the catch basins and drainage project they will need a lower dump truck like this one. Christina Mailhos asked if the small dump truck they are replacing would become a spare. Troy Sposato replied yes or if the budget allows they could put a flatbed on this truck to use it for projects as the body is pretty well gone. Christina Mailhos stated there seems to be a lot of spare trucks at this point. Chairman Cobb stated they would leave the small dump truck in the plan for now. Rick Maloney asked Troy which truck is least priority. Troy Sposato replied the Explorer but if that was taken out then the maroon truck would really need replaced. Chairman Cobb stated the compromise might be to wait on replacing Lou’s truck for another six months so that they are only taking on one lease payment at a time.

Chairman Cobb stated Liska Road culverts is the next project for $4,800 which he believes is for Karl to do some engineering work on the project. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied yes. Chairman Cobb stated this needs to be done before they get a more accurate estimate on the entire project. Christina Mailhos stated they could perhaps use the STEAP grant for this project as well. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated she would like to see this stay in the plan for year one. Chairman Cobb agreed.

Chairman Cobb stated item 3.2 is the Senior Center handicap bus replacement for $75,000. Christina Mailhos stated they have been asking for a new bus for about ten years and the last one was purchased used. Chairman Cobb stated he believes there may be some other options such as if RTD has another bus they can have or sharing/renting the bus with a neighboring town. Mike Makuch stated upon initial search he does see some very good used options that they can look into. Selectwoman Wiecenski asked what
kinds of prices are listed for the used buses. Mike Makuch replied somewhere around $10,000. Chairman Cobb stated he would like to push this project out a year just so they can explore some other options.

Chairman Cobb stated the Senior Center also requested for painting at the Senior Center for $12,000. Christina Mailhos asked how many years this project has been in. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied it was requested for the first time last year and the painting has not been done since they moved into the building. Chairman Cobb stated the Senior Center does get used quite a bit. Christina Mailhos added that they do take good care of the Senior Center and we wouldn’t want to see them try to take care of these projects themselves. Chairman Cobb stated they would keep the painting in the plan for year one.

Chairman Cobb stated the first Housing Authority request is call for aid at $33,550. He stated that currently the alarms don’t go anywhere and they aren’t even in a central hallway they are just outside. Selectwoman Wiecenski asked if there are ever grants available for these projects. Don Berg replied he hasn’t heard of any and believes they have asked the social services person who directed them to CIP. Chairman Cobb stated this would break ground on the town financing projects for the senior housing. He added that the other side of the argument would be if the housing authority was responsible for taking care of these things possibly through raising rent etc. Don Berg stated they do have some money in reserves but the bank wouldn’t let them touch it until they built up their funds. He stated they are putting $1,000 per month into the fund to build it up. Don added that they did have a rent increase last year but they are limited by HUD maximums as far as how much they can increase their rent. Chairman Cobb asked Mike Makuch if this is a building code issue. Mike replied that he didn’t look too far into this but believes the code would come into play during installation but has very little requirement after and he believes it meets the bare minimum. Don Berg stated they can upgrade their exterior alarms over the doors to ring louder within their budget. Selectwoman Wiecenski asked what funds were used to build the facility. Don Berg replied the town contributed land and a tax break but the DOH and federal home loan contributed the funds to build the complex. Selectwoman Wiecenski pointed out that this is not technically a town owned facility. Chairman Cobb stated they want to be careful because if they approve a project like this will the housing authority come back to them when something like a furnace needs replaced and expect them to cover it. Chairman Cobb asked if the corporation owns the building indefinitely. Don Berg replied he believes so but is not positive. Selectwoman Wiecenski asked if Don knew what their budget is per year from the town. Don Berg replied he believes it is $3,000-$4,000 per year which covers officers insurance and their secretary. Chairman Cobb proposed leaving the call for aid in year one for now and moving the request for the generator out into year two. Chairman Cobb asked Don if the $33,550 was an all or nothing quote. Don Berg replied that $26,000 was for the wireless system and another $7,000 was for the FOBs. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated if they did fund the project they would be responsible for the cost of permits which she saw as part of the cost. Chairman Cobb stated that improving the alarm light and sound would be a step in the right direction and then they could revisit the wireless system. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated they need to look into the contract they originally had with Button Hill to see if they are at all responsible for upgrades and repairs to this building.

Chairman Cobb stated the next project is for Willington Fire Department #1’s bunker gear for $19,000. He added that this is to meet the new NFPA standards which are being enforced by the fire school. Rick Maloney stated he thinks this should be in their budget. Chairman Cobb said this is an argument that goes back and forth. He added that this request would cover five sets of gear and they have two sets in their budget for this year and two sets in next year’s budget which will get them close to where they need to be.
Selectwoman Wiecenski stated because of safety she believes this should remain in year one. The committee agreed.

Mike Makuch stated that he believes item 5.5 the CPR device for Willington 1 should be moved into year one. Chairman Cobb stated they had put it in year two because it is a new request this year but it is a game changer for saving lives and ensuring the quality of CPR as well as allowing them to focus on other things during the emergency call. Mike Makuch stated he believes $16,000 is a small dollar amount for something that is going to save lives. The committee agreed to move the CPR device into year one for now. Chairman Cobb stated this item could possibly be funded through fund 17.

Chairman Cobb stated the next project is the replacement of the oil tank at station 13. He stated the Fire Marshall had suggested replacement. The $106,000 was for another underground tank with double walls and a monitoring system. He added the above ground tank is $6,000 cheaper and the third option would be changing over to propane. Chairman Cobb stated they need to decide to pull out the old tank or roll the dice. Mike Makuch stated an advantage to an above ground is that they wouldn’t need to pull up the tank again in twenty years. Christina Mailhos asked Donna if this would be funded through locip. Donna replied yes that would be her recommendation.

Chairman Cobb stated item 5.8 is for the replacement of Willington Hill Fire Department’s 1st response vehicle for $70,000. He stated they were given a quote for a 2020 Ford Expedition but there was a little disagreement on whether they could get a better price with a state bid or without. Tyler Millix stated the price for Tahoe would be $33,800 and the Yukon is $37,800. Christina Mailhos asked what would happen to the old truck. Mike Makuch stated they were told it would be traded in but the town does own it so they could decide. Chairman Cobb stated he doesn’t believe they have put a lot of money into the current vehicle. Rick Maloney suggested we bundle this item and put it in with the leases for the other vehicles to see where they are with payments and defer it to the next meeting to make a decision.

Chairman Cobb stated the last request in year one was from Parks and Recreation for pickleball courts at $39,346. Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that this item does give something back to the people and gives them something to enjoy. The committee agreed to keep pickleball on the plan for year one. Christina Mailhos asked if they would be using funds from the general fund. Selectwoman Wiecenski replied yes.

Stef Summer moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:51PM. Geoff Prusak seconded the motion.

Respectfully Submitted:
Catharine Holcroft
Recording Secretary