



**Town of Ayer**

**Capital Planning Committee**

**Meeting Minutes of November 9, 2023**

**Attendance:** Scott Houde (Chair); James Stephen; Barbara Tierney (Finance Manager); Robert Pontbriand (Town Manager); Kurt Fraczkowski (Fin Com); Jim Pinard

**Absent:** Christopher Hillman

**Also in Attendance:** Police Chief Brian Gill; Chuck Shultz, Facilities Director; Sara Withee (Resident)

**Call to Order:**

S. Houde called the meeting of the Capital Planning Committee to order at 5:00pm in the First Floor Meeting Room of the Ayer Town Hall.

**Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes (February 2, 2023):**

The Committee reviewed the DRAFT February 2, 2023 meeting minutes.

**Motion:** A motion was made by J. Pinard and seconded by J. Stephen to approve the February 2, 2023 meeting minutes. **Motion Passed 6-0.**

J. Stephen asked if the ASRSD has taken any action on the elementary school project.

S. Houde stated that when the Select Board last met with them, they were going to file a statement of intent this past Spring. He stated that he will follow up with the ASRSD.

**Initial Review of the FY 2025 Capital Plans as Submitted by Town Departments:**

*(Note: All FY 2025 Capital Plans are posted on the Capital Planning Committee webpage on the Town's website at [www.ayer.ma.us](http://www.ayer.ma.us))*

S. Houde passed out a tracking spreadsheet for the FY 2025 Capital and recommended that the Committee go down the list of requests this evening as part of an initial review and then we can decide who we want to meet with.

The Committee reviewed the list of FY 2025 Capital requests with the following questions or points raised by Committee Members:

R. Pontbriand advised that he meet with the Assessing Administrator and that her request for \$30,240 is for different software than was approved last year in the amount of \$17,000. The company for the \$17,000 approved last year sold shortly after approval and the Assessors have opted not to go with that software solution. They have not spent any of the \$17,000.

R. Pontbriand advised that with respect to the \$65,000 requested for the Park Street Improvement Project, the Town did receive additional grant funding for design and ultimately the Town will be applying for a MassWorks Infrastructure grant for the construction.

J. Pinard stated that the \$45,000 requested for a pickup truck replacement for DPW Wastewater should be more detailed indicating if it includes a plow.

K. Fraczkowski stated that there should be more detail in the description for the Wastewater Pump Upgrades project in the amount of \$500,000.

J. Pinard stated that for the 6-wheel dump truck replacement in the amount of \$95,000 for the Water Division, there should be more detail. Does this include a plow?

R. Pontbriand advised that the Washington Street Water Tank Painting Project is going to need an additional \$100,000 of which the DPW Director and Water and Sewer Superintendent can speak to when they present to the Committee.

S. Houde stated that though not included on the FY 2025 Capital Plan, the Facilities Department recently presented a proposed acoustics/sound improvement project for the Great Hall to the Select Board. It is a large price tag for this project, but it could perhaps be refined and phased in. He has asked Chuck at a future date to present to the Capital Planning Committee.

S. Houde asked Chief Gill to come to the table to discuss the FY 2025 Capital request from the Police Department.

Chief Gill stated that he is requesting \$64,000 to replace and upgrade the administrative wing of the Police Station which consists of the Chief's Office, Deputy Chief's Office, and the Office Manager's Office. The current furniture is approaching the 25-year mark. The Chief stated that his office furniture is fine and could wait. But the Business Manager's Office is a mishmash of hand me down items. He advised that the Capital Committee could reduce the \$64,000 by \$18,000 if his office had to wait. The price includes all the I.T. hookups.

J. Pinard stated that it would probably make best sense in terms of price to do all three offices at \$64,000.

J. Stephen agreed. He stated that you may save \$18,000 this year but you are still going to have to do the Chief's Office and the prices will just go up.

S. Houde asked Chuck Shultz, Facilities Director to come to the table to discuss the FY 2025 Capital requests from the Facilities Department.

C. Shultz stated that he has three projects on the FY 2025 Capital Plan for Facilities as follows: \$40,000 for matching funds for a Green Communities Grant from the state in the amount of \$154,911 for nine proposed energy reduction projects including weatherization at the Town Hall, Police Station, and Wastewater Treatment Plant. Highly efficient heat pumps at the Police Station, Frie Station and Wastewater Treatment Plant. The total cost of all proposed projects is \$338,932 with \$154,911 in proposed grant funding and \$108,271 in utilities incentives with the remaining \$35,750 coming from previously approved Fires Station HVAC repairs.

C. Shultz stated that his second project request is \$45,000 for the Town Hall building envelope repairs and a panic system and the third project request is \$43,000 for parking lot repairs to the First Station and Police Station.

C. Shultz stated that in terms of the Town Hall building envelope project the sun and weather elements are negatively impacting the exterior painting of Town Hall. Additionally, one of the entrance posts at the Columbia Street side entrance is rotting. The project will also include tightening up the brick walkway on the Columbia Street side entrance and the brick pathway into the Memorial Garden.

C. Shultz stated that the panic button component of the project would be an employee security feature for the third floor of Town Hall in the event of an emergency. He stated that he is currently working with the Town's telephone provider to see if there is a better solution to the panic button, otherwise the cost of the panic button technology is approximately \$10,000.

J. Pinard stated that the Town should look to have the parking lots seal coated and painted every 3 to 4 years as opposed to every 8 years.

C. Shultz stated that he agreed. He advised that it costs \$15,000 to sealcoat both the Fire Station and Police Station parking lots. He further stated that in the Fire Station Parking lot, in the front the weight of the trucks over time have created a significant bump that needs to be addressed. Additionally, the rear parking lot of the Fire Station needs to be paved instead of gravel. In terms of the Police Station, the granite curbing in the parking areas needs to be replaced.

#### **Scheduling of Meetings with Town Departments Re: FY 2025 Capital Plans:**

S. Houde stated that since we ended up meeting with the Police Chief and Facilities Director since they happened to be here, it looks like we may need to only meet with Fire and DPW?

The Committee agreed to meet with the Fire Department on Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 5pm to review and discuss the FY 2025 Fire Department requests.

R. Pontbriand did advise that there is another meeting at 6pm in the meeting room on that night and that the Committee would need to finish by 5:45pm.

S. Houde did not foresee that as an issue.

The Committee agreed to meet with the DPW on Thursday, November 30, 2023 at 5pm to review and discuss the FY 2025 DPW requests.

K. Fraczkowski asked if potentially the Fin Com Members could join these Capital meetings.

S. Houde stated that he had no issue as long as the Fin Com posted the meeting if there was going to be a quorum of members and to comply with the Open Meeting Law. Additionally, the meetings are open and public so Fin Com members could also attend individually.

#### **Adjournment:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by J. Stephen and seconded by J. Pinard to adjourn the Capital Planning Committee meeting at 5:58pm. **Motion passed 6-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 5:58pm.

Minutes recorded and submitted by R. Pontbriand, Town Manager.

Minutes reviewed and approved by the Capital Planning Committee on November 16, 2023.

Signed:   
Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager