



RECEIVED  
OCT 29 2021

TOWN OF AYER  
TOWN CLERK

**Town of Ayer**  
**Community Preservation Committee**  
Town Hall \* One Main Street \* Ayer, MA 01432  
Minutes for 7/7/2021

Location: Ayer Town Hall, 1st floor

Members present: Janet Providakes (JP) [Housing Authority]- Chair, Julie Murray (JUM) [Planning Board] – Vice-Chair, Beth Suedmeyer (BAS) [At Large], Barry Schwarzel (BES) [Historical Commission], Colleen Krieser (CK)[At Large], Jess Gugino (JG) [Conservation Commission]- Clerk

Not present: Jason Mayo (JAM) [Parks & Recreation]

APAC taped: NO

**7:05 PM – Open Meeting**

- **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
  - BES moved to accept the minutes for 6/2/2021 as written; CK 2<sup>nd</sup>.
    - Motion approved unanimously 6-0).
- **Correspondence / Bills**
  - **Ayer Community Garden (\$41,000, STM 2019)**
    - The nonprofit Growing Places, of Leominster, has taken over paying vendor invoices for the Community Garden, after which it then seeks reimbursement from the Ayer via the CPC grant.
    - Growing Pains recently submitted a reimbursement statement for \$2695.33, covering multiple invoices received during the period of 10/21/2020 – 4/19/2021.

**CURRENT BUSINESS**

- **Sandy Pond Schoolhouse Phase II Restoration and Preservation Work Grant (FTM 2020, \$187,340)**
  - JP heard from Sandy Pond School Association (SPSA) President Irv Rockwood that two of the individuals at the architecture and preservation firm that has been working on the restoration project – Spencer, Sullivan & Vogt – have now gone separate ways.
    - After checking with Town Manager Robert Pontbriand, Mr. Rockwood said both individuals can continue working on their separate aspects of the project, despite the branching off.
  - In addition, per JP's 6/24/2021 email to CPC members, the SPSA was excited to receive a letter from the Secretary of the Commonwealth, William Francis Galvin, informing them that they have been awarded a \$50,000 matching grant from the MPPF (Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund).
    - The addition of this grant should enable the SPSA to complete all of the Phase II work.



**Town of Ayer**  
**Community Preservation Committee**  
Town Hall \* One Main Street \* Ayer, MA 01432  
Minutes for 7/7/2021

- **CPC Balances**
  - With the new fiscal year having begun 7/1, Town Accountant Lisa Gabree provided JP with preliminary current balances for CPC's category accounts.
    - These figures are preliminary because they do not take into account possible encumbrances from the closing of the previous fiscal year.
      - Open Space \$1,166,142.77
      - Historical: \$74,860.13
      - Community Housing: \$78,988.00
      - Reserve Fund: \$578,925.00
      - Undesignated Fund: \$160,746.13
      - TOTAL: \$2,059,662.03
- **Updating the 5-Year Community Preservation Plan (CPP)**
  - JP received a 6/22 email from Roberta Cameron, who has left her position with the Community Opportunities Group (COG), one of the two bids submitted for the 5-Year plan update.
    - COG has therefore withdrawn its bid as there is no one else on their staff with the expertise to complete this project.
  - This project will therefore be going to the other bid proposal received, submitted by J. M. Goldson for \$20,100.
  - Per Ms. Gabree and as discussed at the 6/2 CPC meeting, this project will have to be approved by a Fall Town Meeting vote on a Warrant Article this October.
    - BAS asked if JP could contact Ms. Goldson about keeping the bid price the same in spite of the delay caused by the need for a Town Meeting vote.
  - In addition, CPC will need to hold a Public Hearing, likely in September, prior to submitting the Warrant Article.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- **Ayer Shirley Regional School District (ASRSD) Fields Project**
  - Dan Gleason, a former member of the School Committee and now a member of an advisory committee, presented an overview of the project in advance of submitting an application for CPC funding.
  - An earlier version of this Fields Project was discussed at CPC's 9/5/2018 meeting.
    - At that time, however, while Ayer residents voted to approve borrowing for the project and authorization of a debt exclusion that would lead to a temporary rise in property taxes, Shirley voters rejected the project.
    - This year, as of 5/4/2021, Shirley voters have now approved debt exclusion to raise property taxes temporarily for a 10 year period.
    - The project is therefore funded and can now go forward.



**Town of Ayer**  
**Community Preservation Committee**

Town Hall \* One Main Street \* Ayer, MA 01432

Minutes for 7/7/2021

- Total cost of the field project is estimated to be \$5,274,648.
  - The project has been scaled back from the 2018 version that had a price tag of roughly \$7.1 million.
    - Ayer's allocated share of the 2021 version of project expenses will amount to 56% of the total (\$2,953,803).
    - Shirley's allocated share will amount to 44% (\$2,320,845).
  - A grant from Ayer CPC for this project would only reduce the taxpayer property tax burden for Ayer voters and not affect Shirley's allocated expenses.
- Mr. Gleason provided an overview of the new project.
  - Since 2018, the School Committee had approved \$50,000 for work in the lower field (paved path, leveling the field, hydroseeding), so that field upgrade is no longer part of the 2021 project scope.
  - A private donation of \$500,000 will help fund a building that will include restrooms, a concession stand, storage, and ticket booths, so that has been removed from this project.
  - The revised 2021 project includes:
    - Minimal work on the softball field is planned;
    - Work to improve the baseball field is planned, including:
      - use of excess fill from Norton Field to fill in the hill and push the outfield further out;
      - redoing sod to provide a consistent surface across different sports uses.
    - The bulk of the project will focus on Norton Field improvements that will include:
      - completely redoing the track area, including 8 straight lanes for sprints and 6 lanes going all around;
      - track fencing;
      - raised, centered bleachers, with 8-10 rows instead of 4, steps, and a ramp for accessibility;
      - widening the field to allow also for soccer use;
      - jumping pits at the top of the field, not on the sidelines;
      - synthetic turf;
      - new sports LED lighting and electrical improvements to infrastructure;
      - installation of a French drain around the perimeter of the field for drainage.



**Town of Ayer**  
**Community Preservation Committee**

Town Hall \* One Main Street \* Ayer, MA 01432

Minutes for 7/7/2021

- BAS asked that the project consider the use of 'dark sky compliant' LED lighting that won't negatively affect wildlife, etc., and Mr. Gleason said he would look into this.
  - As for timeline, Mr. Gleason said the goal would be to put the project out to bid in November or December and have construction start the following summer, to be largely completed – at least for Norton Field – by August 2022.
  - CPC needs to consider the amount of the funding request it would support, as well as what aspects of the project CPC funds could legitimately be used for.
    - (i.e. CPA funds cannot be used for artificial turf, but could be used for site landscape improvements or dark sky compliant lighting or the track upgrade or some of the other items in the improvement plan.)
  - Per CK's request for clarification, if Ayer CPC funds were approved for, say, the line item for landscape improvements, these funds would only be used for up to 56% of that line item, the rest being allocated to Shirley.
  - On further discussion, CPC members felt that a CPA grant application for \$100,000 would be appropriate at this time.
    - Additional CPC funds could be sought at Spring Town Meeting 2022 as well if necessary.
  - To be ready for Fall Town Meeting at the end of October, CPC will need an application from ASRSD in August, with an aim for CPC holding a subsequent Public Hearing in September.
- **Committee Updates**
    - Conservation Commission (JG)
      - ConCom is working on a draft fertilizer use bylaw to submit to Town Meeting.
    - Planning Board (JUM)
      - The Planning Board has completed the permitting process for the 'Panther Place' subdivision off Washington Street, and at its second July meeting will open the Public Hearing for a definitive subdivision plan for 'Stratton Hill,' off of Wright Road.
    - Historical Commission (BES)
      - The Commission is issuing next week its RFQ (Request for Quotes) for prospective consultants to work on its Historic Resources Inventory project.
      - BES asked if grant money could also be used to reach out to homeowners whose houses potentially qualify for listing on the National Register.
        - JP will check to see how the initial Warrant Article was written (\$20,000, Spring Town Meeting 2020).



**Town of Ayer**  
**Community Preservation Committee**

Town Hall \* One Main Street \* Ayer, MA 01432

Minutes for 7/7/2021

- BAS suggested a public outreach component be written into the consultant's contract for scope of work, adding the RFQ should perhaps be modified to indicate this might be part of such a scope.
- Housing Authority (JP)
  - Nothing to report.
- Affordable Housing Committee (CK)
  - CK, who is now a member of the newly appointed Board of Trustees, said they recently held a joint meeting with the Affordable Housing Committee, and that there was a lot of information to be learned in that meeting, as well as future joint meetings.
  - JP noted that a proposed 'friendly' Chapter 40B subdivision project on Fitchburg Road is now before the State.
    - As soon as it comes from the State to the Town, the time clock starts for the comprehensive permitting process that will be led through the Zoning Board of Appeals.
- Parks & Recreation (JAM)
  - No report.
- Nashua River Wild & Scenic Stewardship Council, Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee (BAS)
  - No report.
- **8:35 PM – Adjourn Meeting**
  - CPC's Next Meeting: August 4, 2021, 7 p.m.
    - BAS suggested, and others concurred, that if ASRSD does not have its application ready by August 4, perhaps CPC could take a month off.
  - CK moved to adjourn; JUM 2<sup>nd</sup>.
    - Motion approved unanimously.

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Jessica G. Gugino, Clerk

Date / Signature Indicating Approval:

9/8/2021 