

WEYMOUTH PLANNING BOARD
Department of Public Works Building
120 Winter Street
January 23rd, 2007 Meeting

PRESENT: Paul Hurley/Chairman, Walter Flynn /Vice-Chairman, Mary Akoury, Sandra Williams and Frank Hawkins

ALSO PRESENT: Rod Fuqua, Principal Planner/Planning & Community Development
Jim Keefe, Procurement Officer
Police Chief James Thomas, Capt. Fairbairn and Lt. Ken Harrison
Fire Chief Robert Leary

Chairman Hurley called the January 23rd, 2007 meeting of the Planning Board to order

Capital Improvement Plan

In reviewing the Capital Improvement Plan worksheets, Mr. Hawkins asked why the Back River Trail had been highlighted and Mr. Fuqua explained that it was 'still in process'. He went on to note that the Town has a designer on board for this project and is presently preparing the design specifications which are expected to be ready in March, adding that the project status may change in the future.

Meeting with the Police Department

Before addressing the first item on the list under the category of "Requested Vehicles", Police Chief Thomas asked about an item that had been on the list, but was no longer there. He was referring to the driveway in front of the Police Station which would be reconfigured to allow for motor vehicles to enter and exit the front of the station by driving straight through (instead of the present dead-ended road/parking area that terminates by the front door of the station, which requires you to back up and turn around).

Capt. Fairbairn noted that it was on the list as a future proposal.

Mr. Fuqua responded that he was unaware of the reason it was no longer on the list.

REQUESTED VEHICLES

Capt. Fairbairn began his presentation by referring to Page 3 of the handout "Police Cruiser Replacement". He noted they were requesting (7) new vehicles (Ford Crown Victorias) at a cost per vehicle of \$29,014 or \$203,000 total cost. He reported that presently the department has 42 vehicles with (12) having over 100,000 miles and (13) with close to 70,000 miles. He noted that they had received (5) new cars this fall, but they didn't receive any last year, adding this has left them behind in their replacement schedule.

Mr. Flynn pointed out the difference in price re. the Dodge Charger.

Capt. Fairbairn acknowledged this, commenting that they now prefer the larger Ford's because they have found the Chargers too small for transporting prisoners.

Chief Thomas told members that in the past the police officers that live in Weymouth were permitted to take their police vehicles home with them, with the understanding that they are responsible for the maintenance. He said another advantage was it gave the Police a lot more visibility in the community. But since the staff now encompasses over 100, this policy has proved too costly - also taking into consideration that giving this benefit to Weymouth resident officers only can be viewed as discrimination.

Mr. Hawkins commented State Police Officers are permitted to take their vehicles home and this has proved to be cost effective.

Capt. Fairbairn noted that the officers with canines are permitted to take their vehicles home.

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Next, Capt. Fairbairn referred to the request of a "Police Evidence Van", stating that the present van has 157,000 miles. A new van would cost \$19,399. When asked about the age/make of the present van, he responded that it is a 1992 Ford Oconoline.

Next request by Capt. Fairbairn was **(2) Motorcycles**. He informed members that they were able to replace (4) motorcycles through grants and have (8) department owned. The cost for one is \$17,400 - with (2) being 34,800.

Mr. Flynn noted that item was an 'unscheduled' request.

Chairman Hurley asked about the **Police Wagon** and Capt. Fairbairn acknowledged that item was an 'unscheduled' request also, adding that the present van has 43,000 miles and because it is not used on a regular basis it was still useful for a few more years. The estimated cost for a new wagon is \$40,000. He told members that it is used for transporting prisoners.

Mr. Flynn noted they were missing some line items.

The items missing included the new police circular driveway. It was noted that the plans were available, but there is no cost associated with this proposed project at this time. Another item not included on the list was the Harbormaster's dewatering pump, with an estimated cost of \$28,000.

Next, Capt. Fairbairn referred to the Fore River/Wessagusset dredging project with Mr. Fuqua commenting that the dredging for Fore River and Wessagusset were included with the DPW's Proposed Building & Grounds Capital Improvement Projects. The work was being done to improve the beach/recreational use (part of the annual nourishment). This work will also benefit the Harbormaster and the launch ramp at new beach.

It was noted that the dredging is complete on the beach side of breakwater, with the mitigation work being done by Algonquin Gas. Phase II of this project is ready to begin with the application for a dredging permit filed by the Wessagusset Yacht Club. The estimated cost for the total project is about \$440,000, - with Weymouth's portion being \$110,000.

Chief Thomas referred back to the Building & Grounds and the proposed circular driveway in front of the Police Station. He noted that some of the cost could be funded via a Handicapped Accessible Grant.

Mr. Fuqua said he would follow up on this possibility with Jody Lehrer in the Planning Dept with regard to the project qualifying for grant consideration under CBBG (Community Development Block Grant) guidelines.

Information Technology/Police Communications

Lt. Ken Harrison came before the Board. He explained to the members that Police technology was obsolete and outdated (last upgrade being in 1993). He said that since 9-11, the lack of communication between the different entities has become quite evident. Since then they have sought upgrades through grants via various Town departments including Police, Fire, DPW, School, Management and the Harbormaster. He explained that the problem became obvious with the fire at the Sacred Heart Church. He said that they found it was important that the Highway System should be able to talk with the Patrol Supervisors and they with other involved entities, especially in an emergency basis such as this - but when researching grants, they found that they are not available based on a 'single' agency concept.

Lt. Harrison went on to say that with the goal obtaining grants, Chief Thomas came up with the idea of including the neighboring towns in their application. He suggested they look at those communities right down the coast; such as, Cohasset, Hingham, Hull, Scituate - and by including these (5) communities under one umbrella a grant application would be more viable (this was in '05). They applied for a grant at that time and kept pursuing it and two weeks ago became aware that some money has become available for consulting services. Those making the decision would evaluate the needs, the infrastructure, equipment and established goals. He just found out the consultant amount being offered for a "Needs Analysis" is \$45,000. At this point he quickly noted that they would also include the Town of Marshfield.

Lt. Harrison further stated that included in the criteria for their 'umbrella project' was that each community must have the ability to communicate on one frequency (all involved Town departments would also be on this frequency). He commented that it would be unusual that their proposal would not be funded.

Next item addressed by Lt. Harrison was "**Upgrade Radio System as Comprehensive Public Safety Community Project**". He said that the Police Dept. is presently using equipment and outdated software installed in 1996. At this time they are seeking money to include an upgrade of the Communications Center, mobile units, police officer portables and chargers.

Mr. Flynn referred to the computer hardware - and asked if what the Fire and Police software they are now using included.

Lt. Harrison explained that it was included but as a separate item (next item on the list), noting that \$750,000 has been allocated for the software. He told members that a good portion of the hardware has been taken care of. Again, he noted that hardware and furniture in Dispatch is a separate item.

Mr. Flynn commented that the cost was unclear, referring to the handout under the "Review & Comments" section. He then asked if the PC had to be compatible with the design the consultant recommends (re. all Town Departments who are involved with Public Safety Communication; i. e., Fire, Police, DPW, Schools and Civil Defense) and he accepts.

Lt. Harrison replied 'yes' and went on to say that each community's needs would be looked at separately, then combined with the others and viewed as a whole and then reviewed once more. He said that he has a meeting with the state in July for the purpose of giving consideration for additional equipment and funding.

Capt. Fairbairn said they are waiting to renovate the Communications Center and are hopeful of funding before July 9th so that the renovation could be completed before the new equipment arrives. (It was noted that the state was paying for this.) He told members that the basic cost for Furniture and Electronics is expected to be around \$200,000. At this point a handout with the appropriate backup was given to the Board members.

Meeting with the Fire Department

REQUESTED VEHICLES

Fire Chief Leary came before the Board. He told members that he was requesting **(1) Suburban Size Vehicle** for the Shift Commander at a cost of \$50,000, with the 2005 being redesignated to the Fire Prevention Officer and his '99 Crown Victoria would be replaced. He said that this would continue toward his goal of having all staff vehicles as SUV's.

The Chief explained that they have specific equipment that's required with the purchase and the installation could be done professionally at the time of purchase. He said that he could do it in tandem with the Randolph Fire Department.

Mr. Flynn suggested a 'slide-in' chassis and Chief Leary replied "that's what it will be".

The next vehicle request was '**Fire Apparatus Replacement**'. Chief Leary informed members that the present vehicle is a 1994 KME Engine Co. #5, describing it as the epitome of the low bid and falling apart. It was noted that the estimated cost was \$480,000. He said they were looking at an additional \$40,000 to cover the cost of meeting emission standards. He explained to the members that if the vehicle is not purchased at this time the cost would only increase by an estimated \$110,000 by 2010, again due to increased emission standards which they would be required to meet.

Chairman Hurley wanted to point out, based on his experience, that just to convert a vehicle today to meet emissions control standards the cost is about \$20,000.

The next item being requested was **(2) Forest Trucks** at \$62,000 each or \$124,000. Chief Leary explained to members that the present forest truck is not adequate to carry the weight of the water. He noted that the trucks are not used that often and due to a reduction of wooded areas in the Town the number has been reduced from (4) to

(2). Further he reported that they have been unable to locate parts for the pumps. Trucks #2 and #5 are structurally unsound.

The Chief and the members continued to discuss the needs and uses of these trucks, with the Chief commenting that the trucks he needs for replacement do not have to be brand new.

Mr. Flynn asked if the School Dept. trucks had the capacity to handle the necessary equipment and the Chief said they could maintain their equipment onto the frame of one of their trucks.

Mr. Fuqua asked if a 1-Ton Truck would have the capacity to handle the necessary equipment and Chief Leary responded 'yes, although they do have a problem with maneuverability'.

Mr. Flynn asked about the capacity of the tank and Chief Leary told him it was 250 gallons.

The 4th item addressed by the Chief was for a **Replacement of (1) 1984 E, 110' Aerial Ladder Co #1** priced at \$725,000. He emphasized that this was his #1 Priority. He said he has located one in California and it is the last 2006 available. He commented that the pricing was reasonable because there were no emission controls mandated in 2006. He noted that although the price of the vehicle is \$675,000, an additional \$50,000 is needed to equip the vehicle - bringing the total to \$725,000. The Chief further explained that there are potential problems with the present truck which is 23 years old and proceeded to give the history of the vehicle, which was originally the City of Boston's Ladder #16 for 12 years. He reported that due to the ongoing problems the present truck has been taken out of service. He stated that at this time the 2006 Aerial Ladder is being held for Weymouth in California. He told members that at this point Mayor Madden has all the information and the final decision is in his hands.

When Chief Leary was asked if the Town was presently relying on 'mutual aid' he replied 'yes'.

Next item addressed by the Chief was to **Refurbish the 1994 E-One Sentry Pumping Engine Co. #2**. He noted that had been given the cost of \$175,000 for this vehicle one-year ago, so at this point he wouldn't be surprised if the price had increased to \$200,000. He noted that the present engine is 13 years old and has about 110,000 miles on it. He also informed the members that a complete refurbishment would extend the life of the engine by 10+ years and that after having extended the life by another 10 years, he would then place it in 'reserve' status. He pointed out that the present engine has issues with deterioration due to the affects of salt.

Ms. Akoury asked where he would keep it in reserve and Chief Leary said he would keep this one next door and the second one in North Weymouth, adding that as they increase the number, they would take the existing engine and trade it in.

Next item: **New Pumping Engine for South Weymouth/NAS** - Cost \$480,000. Chief Leary told members that he wasn't sure how the fire protection at the Base was going to be handled as yet. He said he is strongly recommending that arrangements for the Fire and Police be in place before the first shovel goes into the ground.

Mr. Flynn commented that they would need Fire and Police protection pre and post construction. He added that it appeared they were patterning the tax structure after Weymouth's. He asked if Rockland, or any of the surrounding towns could support Fire protection at the Base and Chief Leary replied 'no'.

Mr. Flynn stated that it also appeared to him that other neighboring towns would probably not bid on the work, as it would not be practical or cost effective unless they had a new facility. He said that it appears the public/safety bids would have to include cruisers and apparatus.

Chief Leary told members that he sat in on three (unofficial) meetings and as far as he knows at this point the decision is up in the air.

Next **"Replacement of the Chief's Car"** - Vehicle Upgrade, Sedan to SUV @ \$50,000; Vehicle Replacement - 2000 Crown Victoria. Chief Leary reiterated that he has a goal of replacing all Crown Victorias with 4-wheel Suburban SUV's and this purchase would complete conversion of all staff cars to SUV's. He told members that presently he can't get out of his street (which has a 1% slope) in bad weather with his car.

Next: **Vehicle Replacement - From a 1997 Ford Expedition to a SUV (Cost \$52,000)** - Chief Leary told members this request is for replacement of the Shift Commander's Vehicle which has 40,000 miles, adding that the Traffic Officer has it now.

BUILDING REPAIRS - New Fire Station, South Weymouth

Chief Leary informed members that he met with Howie Leonard about the proposed new Fire Station/Station 2, which he would like to see located at 55 Hollis Street. He explained that it would be viewed as a replacement building/station to be located at a new site and not a renovation. He suggested taking the fire station site and moving it outside of the Naval Air Base to Hollis Street, which he felt would be an ideal site based on access. He told members that there had been a fire at the end of Forest Street and the response time was a full 11 minutes - which he commented was totally unacceptable.

Ms. Williams asked if there was still parking at the Air Station and Chief Leary responded 'yes'.

Ms. Akoury asked when the conversations at the Base officials would start and Chief Leary replied that he couldn't answer that.

Mr. Flynn stated that questions were raised in the past and there was some discussion, but it was never 'formally' discussed.

Chief Leary explained that presently if there is an alarm at the Base, the trucks/firefighters need to stop at the White Street entrance and turn on the water, which he commented was totally impractical.

Mr. Flynn said he believed Lenar has the responsibility to build a government building - a public safety building that would house Police and Fire.

Ms. Akoury stated, from a Planning Board perspective, these requests are being made - but asked how can we responsibly look at this without the necessary information.....concluding she commented that Lenar is ultimately responsible.

Ms. Williams commented that she felt they would like Weymouth to build everything.

Chief Leary interjected that now they have the town of Avon in Weymouth without protection.

Next item: **Asphalt Ramp and Parking Areas in front of Station 2** - The Chief described the current situation as falling apart. He said he would like to redesign it by removing/relocating the utility pole and constructing an open ramp. He told members that the visibility there was very poor. Additionally he would like to relocate the parking spaces, with spaces on the right for visitors and on the left for the firefighters.

Next item: **Concrete Floor & Drains in Apparatus Bay/Station 2** - The Chief explained that this item was separate from the Renovation of Station 2. He described the present concrete floor as decayed, not level and unsafe with water collecting there. Additionally the drainage doesn't meet EPA standards. He said that he would like to have a radiant floor heating system, which would end up being more economical. When asked if it would be done in May '07, he responded 'not necessarily'.

Request: **Central Air-Conditioning for Station 2** - Chief Leary informed members that this was an 'unscheduled' request. And that he had spoken with Howie Leonard about it, adding this might be incorporated with the other work for Station 2.

At this point Chief Leary informed members that they received a \$50,000 switch system a few months ago, with the justification being the Sacred Heart Church fire. Plans are to incorporate this system with the radios that tie into the computers (4 UHF and 4 VHF). Now they have the ability to tie into other communities including Braintree, Hull, Hingham. He went on to say that the Police and Fire picked up some of the costs for the radios. At this point they would like Civil Defense to contribute also. The Chief continued to explain the setup and use stating that also included would be the Police, Fire, Schools and Harbormaster - everybody. He said that where it is located depends

on the size of the vehicle, hopefully it will prove to be a big help. He continued to explain that Weymouth is part of Metro Free, which includes 35 communities. He noted that they just secured 35 frequencies on the UHF Band. The 35 will be divided up into districts; i. e., North, South and West. So, at this point, Weymouth needs to complete the change to the UHF system. Additionally, it would allow them to tie into computer software. He noted that the Weymouth Fire Dept. is presently VHF and the Police are UHF. He expected the Fire Dept. would become UHF by March, stressing they need to change over to UHF to utilize the service. Lastly, the change will need to be signed off by the FCC in Washington, D C.

Further, Chief Leary explained that plans call for the Town's fire alarm system to be retiring in September, but he added this will not be done until they are completely off line. It was noted that 300 wire miles need to come down.

Mr. Flynn asked if Weymouth was too small to utilize 'command vehicles' and Chief Leary responded 'not at all'.

Lt. Harrison interjected that the consultant may recommend funding which could be used for that purpose.

Mr. Flynn commented that he hoped this question is raised.

Chief Leary cited an example where a command vehicle would be useful such as a hazardous spill. He told members that funding has been coming from the Feds since 9-11, adding that the State Police received a lot of it.

Chairman Hurley said they are now talking about 'pandemics'.

Mr. Flynn felt that South Shore Hospital should also be included. He wanted to take a moment to thank the staff present for being the prime drivers in pursuing grants.

Chief Leary said in the last four years they have received about \$1,000,000.

Mr. Keefe, Procurement Officer asked about the disposition of the film trailer.

Chief Leary responded that they recently received a grant in the amount of \$43,000 from FEMA/US Fire Administration for a Fire Safety Trailer. He said he was hoping to make fire safety education a priority for all - young, old, group homes, etc. He felt they were a great teaching tool, adding that public education is one of his fortes. He felt it would be one of the best things for the Fire Dept. and the Town of Weymouth.

Chief Leary further described the trailer, which he said shows a house with a kitchen, living room and bedroom, noting that it gave the ability to simulate smoke, noise, dark and light. He then informed members that plans are to open the bids on February 8th with a 6-month delivery time. He noted that they have a truck to pull it, which was recently restored by MCI Norfolk. He said they would like to use the grant resources in as many different ways as they can. He wanted to thank Jim Clarke for his assistance in this area.

Next Chief Leary said he would like to see Station 1 in North Weymouth replaced. He said there were a few issues with the present set up - one being the lack of male/female facilities. They are presently looking at the cost of upgrading and renovating the present station as opposed to replacing it.

The meeting concluded.

Form A Plan

Alachua Road, Sheet 19, Block 257, Lot 14

Mr. Fuqua referred to the existing finger lot, noting that the back portion had been cut off and attached to the abutter's property, adding this has been approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals. He further described the property as being untouched, adding that the abutter wants to purchase it and add it to his existing lot. He said it would not change the density or change any of the existing lot.

Ms. Akoury moved to approve the Form A Plan for Alucha Road, Sheet 29, Block 257, Lot 14.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED

Other Business

Mr. Flynn took a moment to say that he was pleased with the presentation of the Capital Improvement Plan documents, the information presented as well as the presentations, adding it was much better than last year.

Ms. Williams asked about the process with Tri-Town and Mr. Fuqua reported that, through Mayor Madden, they were all in negotiations.

Ms. Williams commented 'South Weymouth doesn't own it?' and the response was 'no'.

Chairman Hurley interjected "but we're obligated to respond".

Mr. Flynn added "then you bill them for the costs".

Chairman Hurley noted that Mills Corporation, a previous bidder, recently filed for Bankruptcy.

New Library

Ms. Akoury wanted to confirm that the Library would be coming before them at next week's meeting and this was confirmed.

A lot of discussion was expected re. the new library at Libbey Field and Legion Field.

A question arose on how it would affect the budget process.

Mr. Fuqua replied that the Fogg Library would be retained, adding although there may be an assessment on the others. He said that questions are: will they be kept, maintained or would they have different operating hours. He reported that Joanne LaMothe says the new library may not open until 2010, as she pointed out it is a long process.

Mr. Flynn commented they were also trying to get state funding. He noted that Fogg only has received funding for water damage, although he said they might possibly receive something from the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) based on its being a historical structure.

Mr. Fuqua told members there was nothing ready re. Libraries for Capital Improvement at this time. He said that Joanne LaMothe may give the members some glimpse at next weeks meeting.

Adjournment

Mr. Hawkins moved to adjourn at 9:22 PM.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED

Respectfully submitted,
Susan DeChristoforo
Acting Recording Secretary

APPROVED:


Paul Hurley, Chairman

DATE:

3/20/07