



TOWN OF WARNER

P.O. Box 59

Warner, New Hampshire 03278-0059

Land Use Office: (603)456-2298 ex. 7

Fax: (603) 456-2297

Email: landuse@warner.nh.us

Planning Board - CIP Meeting

Minutes of September 30, 2021

Town Hall Lower Meeting Room at 7:00 PM

I. OPEN MEETING and Roll Call

ROLL CALL: Ben Frost (Chairman); Don Hall (Vice-Chairman) and Andy Bodnarik.

Also present: Secretary Ray Carbone worked from recording.

Chairman Frost said this meeting would address the proposals from the Pillsbury Free Library, the Fire & Rescue Department, and the Conservation Commission for inclusion in the Capital Improvement Program.

II. Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

A. Pillsbury Free Library

1. HVAC

Library Director Nancy Ladd said she's provided updated information on price quotes from contractors regarding this work. The project may be eligible for some Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) funds; because there is a \$50,000 ceiling on the grants, the CIP paperwork has been adjusted to indicate how much would be needed from the project's previously established Capital Reserve Fund.

In answer to questions, she explained that there are some complicated issues related to the project and the grant funds. Making the new HVAC system both efficient and aesthetically pleasing will be challenging, particularly because the original library building's masonry walls are 16-inches thick.

2. Carpeting

Nancy said she has not altered the estimate submitted earlier. In fact, the current carpeting, purchased in the 1990s, is holding up remarkably well. At this time, the estimate for replacing it has been moved out to 2025.

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This led to a general discussion in which Nancy laid out some of the ideas for changes that are being considered for the library building. She is thinking about changing the location of book stacks, but that decision should be impacted by new information about how the public is using community libraries. One trend is moving away from single computer spaces and smaller workspaces to enclosed pod spaces (similar to phone booths) where people can make a Zoom call, do a job interview, or participate in an in-class meeting. In addition, people want larger “collaborative spaces” where they can work with others without being disturbed or disturbing others. She is applying for a grant that would fund at least one of the smaller “pods,” which would be movable around certain building spaces.

B. Fire & Rescue Department

Former Chief Ed Raymond and Second Deputy Brian Monaghan represented Chief Jonathan France.

Ed addressed the department’s vehicle fleet. He said that the Rescue 1 vehicle needs to be replaced. It’s older, bigger and is now more than 21 years old. The vehicle that Chief France is proposing to replace is smaller and better equipped. There is some additional research that needs to be done, but the idea is to replace the older vehicle in 2022 at a cost of roughly \$250,000.

Ed briefly reviewed other vehicles noted in the Department’s long-range CIP information, including replacing the 1984 forestry vehicle in 2023, and the smaller rescue vehicle (Suburban) that responds to most emergency calls in 2026. Chief France hopes to be able to maintain three rescue vehicles by rotating their individual projected replacement dates.

He also addressed the need to upgrade the Department’s radios, some of which are 20 years old. New ones will cost roughly \$5,200 each but the current older ones are wearing out and replacement parts are becoming difficult to find.

The Chairman said that one of the issues the Board needs to resolve is whether to continue to list the Department’s separate non-vehicle equipment items under a single line in the CIP. He noted that last year Selectmen Clyde Carson pointed out that these are mostly individual purchases that are below the \$15,000 threshold for inclusion in the CIP. The Chairman said the Fire Department can have warrant articles presented to annual Town Meeting voters without the costs being part of the CIP. Several Board members favored keeping those costs in the CIP because it shows residents exactly how much it costs to support and equip the Fire & Rescue Department.

The Chairman suggested that the Department consider breaking up the costs of some items, such as, the costly Self-Contained Breather Apparatus over several years. The actual purchase could be made in 2026, as the Department currently proposes, but by adding \$100,000 to the fund in 2023, 2024, etc., the tax impact will be less severe. Vice Chairman Don Hall said that Warner residents are typically supportive of Fire Department expenses and suggested that the leadership stand up and explain their CIP requests at the annual Town Meeting, especially since there are always new residents moving into the community.

C. Conservation Commission

Commission Chairman Nancy Martin said that the Commission is requesting money from the Town for the first time in nine years.

There is currently \$43,000 in its fund but the request is for another \$25,000. The money would allow the Commission to move forward in helping to secure the use or ownership of two parcels that are significant, in both size and location, to the Town.

Nancy said she cannot publicly identify the parcels, or their current owners, and that the negotiation process has just begun. It's always difficult to plan for these kinds of projects because they come up – and are sometimes resolved – in an unpredictably manner, timewise.

She also noted that, in the past, the Commission has worked well with other organizations and funding entities, including the NH Land and Community Heritage Investment Program, or LCHIP to protect properties that have special significance to the Town.

The Chairman asked Nancy how much money the Commission annually gets from NH's Land Use Change Tax revenues. Martin said it averages about \$25,000 annually, but it can vary and the revenue is the group's only regular source of income.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IV. ADJOURN

Without objection, Chairman Frost adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.