

Town of Foster
Planning Board Meeting Minutes
Via Zoom™
Wednesday January 6, 2021

A. Call to Order

Chair Anthony Renzi called the Planning Board to order at 7:04 p.m. via Zoom.™

B. Roll Call

Planning Board Members: Michael Carpenter; Hilary Downes Fortune; Vice Chair Warren Ducharme; David Paolissi; George Sackal; Chair Anthony Renzi; Secretary Helen Hardy.

Staff: Michael Antonellis, Planner; Joanna Achille, Solicitor; Kelli Russ, Treasurer.

Town Officials: Denise DiFranco, David Paolino, Town Council.

Department Heads:

School Department, Michael Barnes, Superintendent; John Obiurka, Head of Maintenance; Brendan Mara, School Committee

Engineering, Tom Walden

Police Department, Chief Breit

DPW, Gordon Rogers

Land Trust, Linda Tibbetts

Members of the Public: Joe Carey; Lynne Rider.

C. Approval of Minutes

Mike Carpenter moved and Warren seconded the motion to approve the Minutes of the December 16, 2020 Planning Board Meeting as corrected. Motion carried 7-0 (Mike C., Hillary, Warren, David, George, Anthony, Helen – aye).

D. Correspondence

Letter submitted by Anthony

E. Election of Officers

Anthony nominated himself as Chair; Warren agreed to continue as Vice Chair and Helen agreed to continue as secretary. Helen read the description of the Role of the Chair from *Democratic Rules of Order*, which has been adopted by the Planning Board to govern its proceedings. Warren moved the slate and Mike seconded the motion. Motion carried 7-0 (Mike C., Hillary, Warren, David, George, Anthony, Helen – aye).

F. Capital Improvement Plan

By Charter, the Town must dedicate 2% of its operating budget toward Capital Expenses.

Department Requests (See Finance Department Spreadsheet).

Townwide: Kelli Russ presented the request of \$20,000 to purchase a car for the use of Town Hall employees.

There was a discussion over the advantages of renting-to-own vehicles versus buying vehicles outright, with different participants citing the pros and cons of each choice. This discussion came up again while discussing the DPW budget. The Police Department has used this mechanism for maintaining its fleet for many years.

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School Department: Dr. Barnes detailed the need for a new well, to replace the existing well which is located under the floor of the original part of the school building and is seventy years old. This would be a two-year project involving the drilling of a new well capable of supplying water for normal school operations and also being a public water source, as the school is designated as an emergency shelter. Corrosion control treatment and the construction of a pump house are also required. Another Capital Expense request from the School is for the repair / replacement of the flat roofs over the Main Entrance and the Cafeteria and Hallway. The final request was for the replacement of the Playground. Some of the funds needed for these projects can be provided by State Housing Aid. Head of Maintenance John Obiurka and School Committee member Brendan Mara also answered question about the condition and maintenance of School equipment and systems.

Engineering Board: Tom Walden requested the first payment of a planned replacement of a Fire Truck and a Rescue vehicle, and also the addition of Radio Equipment that would provide communication with Cucumber Hill Road, which is not currently connected to the Police and Emergency systems.

Police Department: Chief Breit requested the planned replacement of one Police Vehicle on a lease to own schedule, as the Department has done for the last ten years. The vehicle will replace a 16-year old vehicle.

Department of Public Works: Gordon Rogers presented this request. The main items include a wash bay, to be added on to the existing garage, which would allow the cleaning of the undercarriages of the vehicles, to extend their useful condition. There would have to be a water-reclaim system to prevent the contamination of the ground water. The roof of the existing garage could then be replaced as a part of the construction of the addition.

The Covered Bridge deck – Gordon is going to see if the State would replace / repair the deck if the Town agrees to maintain it.

Paving - \$200,000 for this on-going project.

Bridges – The condition of a number of the Town bridges, including the Anthony Road (closed) and Hemlock Road bridges continues to be a concern. Gordon is asking for the approval of an Engineering Study to assess the condition of Town bridges and make recommendations.

DPW Vehicles – The condition of various vehicles was discussed. Gordon noted that a number of the vehicles were only used seasonally. He suggested that snow plowing for some routes could be subbed out so that fewer vehicles were needed for that purpose. Mike C. suggested that Gordon create an “Ideal Fleet” document, that the Town could then work to modify the fleet for the real needs of the Town.

Town House roof – The Town applied for a matching grant for \$62,500 for this project, which was denied. The Finance Dept. recommended that this money be appropriated toward completion of the Athletic Fields, which did receive Grant Funding.

Recreation: The Town was awarded a \$100,000 matching grant and is also committed to an additional \$37,500 toward the completion of this project by Crossman Engineering per the Grant agreement. The Finance Committee

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recommended also applying the \$62,500 from the Town House roof toward the completion of the fields, which would add a soccer / football field and basketball and tennis courts.

Lynne Rider expressed concern about the condition of the Town House roof, and the on-going damage to the Town House.

Foster Land Trust: The Foster Land Trust did not request funds from the Capital Budget, but the Chair, Linda Tibbetts, wanted to inform the Planning Board of the work that they were doing and had funding for, on the Land Trust properties. (Land Trust spreadsheet attached). Anthony asked Linda to come to the next meeting.

Final recommendations to the Town Council from the Planning Board will be determined at the next Planning Board meeting.

David moved to adjourn at 10:08. Motion carried 7-0 (Mike C., Hillary, Warren, David, George, Anthony, Helen – aye).

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Hardy, Secretary