

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
TOWN OF FOSTER
Benjamin Eddy Building
6 South Killingly Road, Foster, RI
Wednesday: January 17, 2018

Call to Order

Mr. Carey called the meeting to order at 6:42 p.m.

Roll Call

Board Members Present:	Ron Cervasio, Jeff Sheldon, Joe Carey (Chair), Anthony Renzi, and Helen Hardy (Secretary). Mike Carpenter and Richard Sparks (Vice Chair) were en route.
Staff Present:	Cheryl Maynard (Planner), Joanna Achille (Asst. Solicitor), Todd Howell (DPW), Bill Ziehl (Police Chief) and Kelli Russ (Treasurer)
Public Present	Michael Barnes, Guenter Bay, Tom Walden, Aaron Marsland, Kevin Lacaillade

New Business

(1) 2017/2018 Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Department Presentations

• **6:30 p.m. – Captain Isaac Paine Elementary**

Michael Barnes presented the request for the school, noting that they planned three projects: expand the parking lot, replace flooring, and painting.

1. Parking lot: expansion to the left side, leveling out the wooded area for about a 90' by 70' area. Bid estimates are from two different sources.
2. Renovation to physical education facility: putting down a new floor and installing soundproofing, and painting.
3. Renovation to bathrooms closest to main office: replacing fixtures, changing partitions, and making them ADA compliant

Funding: the school department will fund half directly from the school fund balance, the State of RI will provide reimbursement for projects, and the third source would be through town.

Discussion:

Mr. Cervasio agreed that the bathrooms are necessary. He noted that in the parking lot, the traffic increases every year. \$400,000.00 is spent for busing and the buses are only a third full. Mr. Cervasio suggested that the school control the amount of parents picking up children. As for parking for town meetings, the expansion is necessary. Mr. Cervasio suggested using reprocessed asphalt for a third of the price. Mr. Barnes said he would be reaching out to Engineering before starting the project regarding materials.

Mr. Carey stated that the project is intended for safety. Approval from the Dept. of Education will be needed, so there will probably be guidelines regarding types of materials.

Mr. Barnes stated that there is a process regarding the use of State funds, the project is submitted and the State approves or disapproves. He stated that the timeline would be moving forward with engineering in the Spring and said they would be going out for rebid at that time in response to the request. The bathrooms he said would likely be done in the summer. All the projects would be for next fiscal year.

Ms. Hardy said that the parking lot is frequently pretty empty. She asked if creating a different traffic flow would eliminate the need for an extended parking lot. Mr. Barnes said they have tried it and will continue to try that but it has not been effective. Ms. Hardy agreed the bathrooms and soundproofing are necessary.

Mr. Cervasio said it looked as though the project is \$600 per sq. ft. and the parking lot in the front was \$70 per sq. ft. Mr. Barnes noted that there is a retaining wall included, grading around the generator, but if there is a more cost effective way to do it, they will.

Mr. Cervasio asked if they had considered dropping off at the front door versus the back door?

Mr. Barnes said they had looked at all the different options.

Mr. Cervasio suggested not allowing pick up and drop off by parents and he believes it is within the school's power to do so.

Guenter Bay expressed concerns about damaging the environment by removing trees and paving.

- **7:00 p.m.—Engineering Board (including Foster Center Volunteer Fire Dept.)**

Tom Walden reviewed the Engineering Board's request for \$70,000 as part of a matching grant for just under 1 million involving communities from multiple communities for air packs.

Discussion:

Mr. Carey asked if the current equipment is outdated. Mr. Walden said, yes, it does not meet current specifications.

Aaron Marsland stated that there was a need for a new truck. The current one is 27 years old. The cost is approximately \$400,000. Mr. Renzi asked about the other trucks. Mr. Marsland said there were two others.

Mr. Cervasio said \$400,000 divided over three years is \$140,000 a year. He looked into leasing and a lease at 50 would free up \$90,000 worth of capital, the second year it would free up \$90,000 and more likely the third year \$40,000 which is a total of \$230,000 / \$210,000 / \$220,000 to the transfer of the two percent Kelli was talking about. He suggested it as a one-time project to free up the money.

Mr. Carey asked if that was an option.

Mr. Russ stated that it is always an option but you have to pay interest making the option too costly.

Mr. Renzi stated that his experience no one buys a truck outright, they lease them. Would I rather give \$400,000 this year and have no money, or would I rather give \$50,000 this year, next year, and the year after that, and I always have this money in. It frees up a lot of money.

Mr. Marsland stated that the least program has been brought up in the past, and it's been shot down in the past. Lease options will open things up. If he can get it for \$50,000 cheaper, he would do it.

Ms. Hardy asked if the police department had been doing for the past few years.

Chief Ziehl said that last time they bought two vehicles outright but has used the lease program. Mr. Carey stated that they have discussed it with DPW as well and it is an option they have been considering.

Ms. Russ said that the last time leasing was brought up, the need was for three fire trucks, a rescue and other things. They wanted to buy all the equipment at once. When they didn't have a lease payment any longer, they spent all that money on other projects that needed to be continued every year, so when all the trucks needed to be replaced there was an outpouring of funding that needed to be done all at once, so to get them off of that system where they needed to replace everything all at once and weren't saving in the off years we decided to spread it out over time. Ms. Russ indicated that they are now on the last vehicle in the fleet, so rather than lease over 10 years, she would suggest they do it over less time because before the 10 years are up they would probably need another vehicle. You want to have one paid off before the next vehicle needs to be replaced. Since it is the last vehicle, it would be appropriate. She stated that they had discussed it with DPW as well and it is something we need to look into

Ms. Hardy said that after that disaster a number of years ago when everybody needed a truck, the Engineering Board did an excellent job, of reversing the problem, and that she thought someone could do a cost analysis on relevant options.

Ms. Russ stated that now we are in a better place overall because we put off that leasing back then. It was a good plan.

Mr. Renzi asked when the next truck was needed.

Mr. Carey stated it would be in 2020.

Mr. Renzi stated that the need for the truck is not an issue.

Mr. Bay stated that the repairs to the trucks are paid by the fire departments. He said he knew Providence got fire trucks through the HUD program.

Mr. Carey referred this option to the Engineering Board.

Mr. Walden said there's a Fire Act grants but they are far and few between.

Mr. Renzi asked if they could work up with other fire companies.

Mr. Walden said not to buy a truck. Mr. Renzi asked why. Mr. Walden explained both Towns would want and need the truck.

Mr. Marsland said the fire trucks they use in Foster are different than the ones used elsewhere because we pull water out of ponds. They aren't all the same. The fire trucks are ordered to specifically meet the needs of Foster.

• **7:15 p.m.—Department of Public Works**

Mr. Howell, DPW Director, stated that he had three requests:

1. Paving, continue paving 2 miles of roadway each year and gravel roads which are a priority, particularly Maple Rock, Gene Allen, Jencks, and Central Pike (covered bridge to Balcom). Requested amount is \$200,000.
2. Convert Fire Engine Truck #2 to use as a plow. \$25,000.00. Truck is only worth \$2,000 if sold. It has all the parts that is needed, however, to convert to a brine system. He tested a molasses-based system on Mill Road. It acts as pre-treating and saves costs all around on sand and salt and is safe for the environment. Conversion would save \$10,000.00.
3. New roof for Town Hall for \$25,000.

Discussion:

Mr. Cervasio questioned cost benefit analysis of the truck conversion, reviewed the recent history of the roads, and noted that a shingle roof has a life of 25 years, a metal roof, 50 years. Mr. Renzi asked if the truck was worth converting. Mr. Howell said it was.

Mr. Carey asked the size of the fire truck. Mr. Howell stated it was a single axle with a longer body, large enough for the purpose of plowing and sanding.

Mr. Carey asked how many roads need repair, and what it would take to pave the dirt roads. Mr. Howell suggested performance bonds. Millings were discussed. Mr. Carey stated that he hoped the paving could be done this year. Before there were roads paved but they stretched it out and the layers were too thin. Mr. Howell said he would be careful of where the asphalt was coming from to insure best quality. Mr. Howell said he would keep track of the tonnage.

• **7:45 p.m.—Finance/Town-wide (including Police)**

Police

Chief Diehl presented a \$39,000 request for police / fire radio updates. The current need for radios is urgent, the ones being used are out of date, are not made anymore and even the parts are not available. The last time there was an issue and the system went down there was an exchange program, that is no long functioning. Public safety is in jeopardy. The request is to replace and upgrade with a reliable radio system for police and fire departments. He stated that he plans to include current funds that he has available in the LESO program.

Discussion:

Mr. Carey asked if this would solve the problems. Chief Ziehl replied that it would.

Mr. Carpenter asked if the transmitters would be in the bay stations. Chief Ziehl said yes, at Foster Center. Mr. Carpenter asked if that was FM and Chief Ziehl stated it was VHF. Mr. Carpenter asked Mr. Walden if the back up towers also had VHF. Mr. Walden said the repeaters are located here in Foster Center, the receivers are on the cell towers.

Chief Ziehl stated that other projects are desirable but not urgent this year. He reviewed the current status of the police vehicles.

Chief Ziehl stated there was a need for an AFIS Fingerprint machine tied into the State Police, Attorney General, and FBI estimated at a cost of \$20,000.00. It's a computerized system and the current system is no longer supported because it's on Windows XP. Mr. Sparks asked how the new system worked. Chief Ziehl said it was a whole hand scan. Mr. Sparks noted that it was listed at \$40,000.00. Chief Ziehl said there was a lease plan for \$20,000.00.

Finance

Kelli Russ, Treasurer, presented two requests:

- 1) Copy machine in Town Clerk's office. Mr. Russ stated that the current machine is ten years old, was on a lease, rotating every five years. When the lease expired we let it run out and we pay the maintenance on it every year. We've owned it for another five years outright. It's started to make noises and at some point some point soon it will run out of parts. We are required by law to take some of our recording fees, 10%, and set it aside in a technology fund for records maintenance. We are putting it in the plan because it is a \$10,000.00 item but we will not be requiring the use of the capital funds. Ms. Russ said the plan is to let the machine

- “die” and then replace it. She stated they would not lease a new one because the master price agreement goes through the State, the math shows that the interest is astronomical, over the course of five years you would pay for three by leasing two. We can pay for it outright and save the money and keep it for 10 years.
- 2) Server. Ms. Russ explained the server is in its seventh year and we have put aside a certain amount for this. purpose Right now we have a virtual server which has worked out well for us. The server is actually six servers in one and it is federally-mandated for the police department, they have at least two active servers, the Town Hall had three all in one. When we started the price was estimated at \$30,000.00 but it could go up as high as \$40K because you’re buying the maintenance, and all the products, we we’re recommending that be upgraded to \$10,000.00 a year instead of the \$6,000.00 that we have.

Discussion:

Ms. Russ explained the fund balance in capital is \$425,000. \$100,000.00 is already earmarked for the school department, so there is \$325,000 for all other projects. The second component is the Foster Reserve fund is based on an ordinance that 10% of the operating expenses have to be put aside, anything over that goes into capital. We have used \$30,000.00 for Providence Water, and \$30,000 for police station planning.

Mr. Carey said that if we fund this, we can look into the lease by next year. We can make a motion tonight to fund what we have and can look into options in the future.

Mr. Cervasio moved, Mr. Sparks seconded, that we fund the recommendation of the CIP of \$548,000.00 with the transfer of \$498,230.00 from capital.

Motion passed 7-0.

Approval of Minutes

1) December 20, 2017

Mr. Cervasio moved, Mr. Renzi seconded, to approve the minutes of December 20, 2017.

Discussion: Ms. Hardy said she had a number of non-substantive corrections and would like to have them corrected. Mr. Cervasio amended the motion with the proper corrections Mr. Carpenter seconded, to table the minutes. Mr. Cervasio withdrew his motion, Mr. Renzi withdrew his second. Mr. Sparks moved, Mr. Carpenter seconded, that Helen correct the December 20th minutes and resubmit them at the next meeting.

Motion passed 7-0.

3) January 3, 2017

Mr. Cervasio moved, Mr. Renzi seconded, to approve the minutes of January 3, 2017.

Motion passed 7-0.

Correspondence

Ms. Maynard discussed the previously scheduled site walk for the Hartford Pike solar installation proposal. The site walk was cancelled due to bad weather. Ms. Maynard provided two dates for rescheduling, either the 27th of January or the 3rd of February. More members were available on February 3, 2018. An agenda will be posted, a police detail requested, and abutters will be notified.

Board Members’ Reports

1) Land Trust

None.

1) Conservation Commission

None.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn passed 7-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.