

LITCHFIELD CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2019
LITCHFIELD TOWN OFFICE BUILDING – 7:00 P.M.

Call to Order: Chairman Fran Carpentier called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Fran Carpentier, Barbara Putnam, Michael Kostecki, Sean Fogarty, Raz Alexe, Jim Koser, John Morosani, Amaechi Obi, and Denise Raap. Ed Gadomski and Erich Marriott were in attendance as Board of Finance hopefuls for appointment by the Board of Selectmen. Other fire personnel and Park and Recreation Commission members were also present.

Approve Minutes: Regular 11/19/19: Motion: J. Morosani moved to adopt the meeting minutes of 11/19/19 and J. Koser seconded. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Review Requests

a) Fire and EMS Commission: Sean Fogarty gave his background as a Litchfield resident, East Litchfield Fire Company member, and now Fire Commissioner. He said the Fire & EMS Commission members meet together monthly and effectively coordinate services and training. There are three capital items requested for 2020/21.

Bantam Ambulance: The request is for \$100,000 with \$75,000 already existing to update and replace. This had been pushed back a year from last year's request.

Litchfield Ladder 1: This is a repair/refurbish on the main truck and only ladder truck in town that is suffering from rust and corrosion and needs body repairs and lighting updates. This truck cannot go off the road. They are asking for \$100,000 and designating it as Priority 1. Ed Evers, Litchfield Fire Co., impressed upon the group the importance of keeping this vehicle in good repair. To replace this truck today would cost about \$1.3 million. They would like to extend its life by 15 years and have estimates on what was needed to do so, with the lowest one from Gowans and Knight.

East Litchfield Roof: The roof replacement for \$68,000 includes replacing a roof past its expected lifetime, wrapping the fascia soffit, replacing the gutters and painting the exterior of the building.

R. Alexe commended them and asked if there would be discussion on any money left over from East Litchfield capital projects that could be used to offset costs. F. Carpentier mentioned fire apparatus purchased by grants in Northfield and asked if there could be any grants that would support the needs. Jon Cattey, Litchfield Fire Co., explained that Northfield got the grants through FEMA, a long, complicated multi-year process. J. Campbell, Fire Commission Chairman, said it is a roll of the dice if the State is giving grants for what we need at the time, and it is a lot of work for volunteers. J. Morosani commended the planning and research done on the fire apparatus and its replacement schedule. He compared the trucks to aircraft frames that last a long time. J. Campbell said the trucks become obsolete much faster and safety features are always being improved. Highway corrosives are also very damaging. D. Raap asked if Morris helps fund Bantam's ambulance, and J. Campbell said they put money into a capital fund for replacement of the ambulance in Litchfield, as LVA holds the PSA for Morris. B. Putnam asked about a town-wide vehicle replacement list, which J. Campbell said was adopted in 2004, and the schedule is managed by the Fire Commission. They are in the process of refining it. They would like to give the Committee their ten-year projection next year.

b) Park and Recreation Commission: Brent Hawkins introduced himself to the group and said he is in his 14th year as Park and Recreation Director. He listed the names of the Park and Recreation Commission and said they had a special meeting to prepare their priority list according to their ten-year plan.

Community Field Basketball Court: Mr. Hawkins said the court was skim-coated eight years ago and is now in need of repair. Money from last year will be used to put in the new standards and the pavement will be redone and repainted. Ray Schmid added last year's priority was the bathrooms, and he explained the design is being done by an architect with bids to be sent out in the winter. Because of this, they have postponed the basketball court work as they did not know if there would be enough money left over. If they can get the \$34,000 now and combine it with the \$15,500 from 2018, they could do the whole basketball job at once. They are also waiting on the guard rails from the 2018 round. F. Carpentier asked Amaechi about a requirement to start a project paid for with bonded money in the next fiscal year. Amaechi said it costs the Town money to hold onto funds for two or three years. R. Schmid said they will spend most of the money by July 1. F. Carpentier stressed that project should be done in the year the money is bonded. D. Raap asked about the \$15,500 and Mr. Schmid said it was originally for the posts, backstops and hoops and patch where posts were put in. F. Carpentier asked why the guard rails were not done, and Mr. Schmid said they were a Priority 3 and they had to wait to see what funding they have left. The bathrooms were \$66,000; \$15,500 for the hoops and patch job; and \$15,000 for the guard rails, for a total of \$105,000. F. Carpentier noted that there was no plan for total reconstruction of the basketball courts in the out years. J. Morosani said he expected they would do all three projects in the proper year. Now there is a possibility they may only have enough money for the bathrooms and will have to come back next year for \$34,000 or more for the basketball court and guard rails. D. Raap questioned why, with a portable toilet there, it took so long for a bid, and they said they didn't want to shut the bathrooms down at the height of the season. R. Alexe said they were afraid they would not have enough money and dropped the ball. He suggested focusing on one project at a time and start working on it earlier. He then questioned the request for \$7,500 for the Northfield Pavillion Roof, which is less than the minimum required for a capital request. Further he questioned the problems with Casadei Field and asked if they should move it up from 2023/24. R. Schmid said the problems don't seem to be critical and might be easily addressed by Public Works.

Bantam Lake Jams: R. Alexe explained the course of events and long history of the quest for new jams on the Bantam River. They have spent \$75,000 so far and are now short \$100,000 to complete the job. Jon Torrant added it has been extremely difficult for Litchfield and Morris to get this job done. The hold-ups have never been because of Litchfield, but rather with Eversource. The interlocal agreement with Morris provides for them to split the cost 50/50 with Litchfield, so another concern is if Morris has their \$100,000 portion.

Northfield Pavillion Roof: F. Carpentier said the \$7,500 for this project does not qualify for the Capital Committee's criteria, so it was removed from the list.

Town Beach Docks and Ramp; Town Beach Facility Upgrade: J. Morosani noted that one third of all requests is for work at the Town Beach, and asked why this facility upgrade did not show up on the out years until now. B. Hawkins said that after seeing the new boat launch installed, they would like to continue to improve the rest of the area. They would like to have electricity (maybe \$100,000, but no quote) and a bathroom.

As far as the docks, they are 15 years old and need to be replaced for \$10,000. Raz said there are erosion issues with the Rowing Club, and he spoke to them about being more careful about disturbing the ground cover. There are many clubs and athletes that use the beach, so it would be beneficial to have better docks and an upgraded facility.

F. Carpentier passed out a Capital Budget 2020/21 Summary Sheet with a net Town cost of \$3,457,226. There has been a target in the past three years of \$3 million, and he asked the First Selectman if the Board has discussed its preference. She said she spoke to Jim Stredonsky, Board of Finance Chair, who is asking for a zero increase budget, so she would expect capital's budget to be no higher than last year's where they bonded \$3.2 million. F. Carpentier said they are paying principal and retiring debt each year and felt our net annual debt will be \$2 million lower than it is today after three fiscal years if we keep bonding \$3 million per year.

Adjournment: **Motion:** J. Morosani moved and B. Putnam seconded a motion to adjourn at 8:34 p.m. All voted aye and the motion carried.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Denise Raap".

Denise Raap
Secretary