



TOWN OF KINGSTON
CAPITAL PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
ZOOM/2/08/23

The following minutes were approved by the Capital Planning Meeting during their March 8, 2023 meeting. Motion to approve was made by David Kennedy and seconded by Wayne Bouley: the motion passed 5-0-0.

Date: Wednesday, February 8, 2023

Location: Virtual (Zoom)

Committee members in attendance: Heath Emberg, David Kennedy, Mike Ladd, Chris Brielman, and Wayne Bouley.

Other attendees: Keith Hickey, Town Administrator; Mark Douglass, Fire Chief; Maurice Splaine, Police Chief.

Chairman Emberg called the meeting to order at 6:03pm by roll call vote: Mr. Emberg, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Brielman and Mr. Ladd.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPDATES

- This meeting is being recorded. Anyone intending to make an audio or video recording of this meeting should notify the Chair at this time.
- No additional announcements
- Capital Improvement Plan (C.I.P.) updates

Mr. Hickey informed the committee that due to flooding from a broken sprinkler pipe in the Town Administrator's office, which impacted his office as well as the Selectmen's office and the HR

Manager's office. The insurance company will replace the flooring in those areas which will reduce the estimated cost on the CIP for new flooring by approximately \$15,000.

Mr. Ladd mentioned that over the weekend, the power went off at Kingston Elementary School and when the backup generator was running, it sounded as though it was having mechanical issues. Mr. Hickey stated that he was unaware of an issue with the generator but would reach out to the Superintendent to follow up.

APPOINTMENTS

Review of Departmental Capital Improvement Requests & Planning Thereof:

- **Police Department**

Two Police Interceptors

Chief Splaine explained that the capital request to replace two Police Interceptor SUV's is the annual replacement for the patrol division. The vehicles that will be replaced are at the end of their life expectancy of 7-8 years and the replacement will maintain the fleet schedule. He added that in trying to maintain a commitment to Kingston's green energy initiatives, both vehicles are hybrid vehicles which have 40% better gas mileage than gasoline engines. He added that all electric vehicles are not available yet and are not practical, at this point as they require charging and there is a risk of them not being charged when they need to be used. Chief Splaine said the hybrid vehicles that the Police Department has now have been reliable so far and have had no major issues and, while the engines cost a bit more at first, with the fuel savings, the cost savings is realized quickly and believes they are smart investments. He stated that these new vehicles are wider and longer with more room for equipment and that their advanced technology is amazing with vehicles syncing up to synchronize their light patterns, the ability to switch to white lights, specialized interior lighting, and more, all of which enhance safety and improve the officers' ability to work, particularly at night.

Mr. Hickey added that Chief Splaine has been applying for, and receiving, grants to help offset the cost of the acquisition of new hybrid vehicles for the department.

Chief Splaine confirmed that he has secured grants with Old Colony Planning Council and, because of Kingston's status as a Green Community, we were in line to receive \$10,000 per vehicle. He explained that means that we will get a reimbursement check for \$20,000 at some point to offset the purchase and that reimbursement will be returned to the general fund.

Mr. Kennedy asked Chief Splaine to confirm the timing of reimbursement and Chief Splaine explained that for these grants, municipalities pay up front and then get reimbursed at a later date.

Mr. Ladd asked about the difference in cost between the all electric versus hybrid vehicle and Chief Splaine said that an all electric vehicle is not available at this time but that the difference in cost between the hybrid and the gasoline powered vehicles is about \$3,400. He added that if Kingston did not move forward with hybrid vehicles, that we would not have qualified for the \$20,000 in reimbursement grants as was mentioned earlier.

Mr. Ladd asked about the life expectancy of the hybrid vehicles and Chief Splaine confirmed that they are expected to last as long as the gas engines, which is about 6-7 years. He said that at that point, they usually have well over 100,000 miles on them before we replace them. He added that one of the cars that would be removed from the fleet would be re-lettered and fitted to the needs of the Animal Control officer for her to use. That cost is estimated at \$5,000 and would include moving the equipment from the old vehicle to this re-purposed vehicle, putting yellow lights on it, and remarking the car.

Mr. Emberg asked if one of the vehicles being removed from the fleet could be re-purposed for Facilities to use as they are asking for a vehicle and Chief Splaine said he was open to the idea if it made sense to do that.

Mr. Ladd questioned if we should keep some of these older vehicles as back up and Chief Splaine said that we have enough vehicles in the fleet so that if something happens we can shuffle who is using which car. He added that the first few years of having a new vehicle, the maintenance costs are minimal but as the vehicle is used over the course of its life, there are more issues at a greater cost. He explained that the department used to have something called "hot cars" which were cars that were never turned off and were run 24-7 but they had to be replaced every year.

Mr. Kennedy explained that replacing two vehicles each year is consistent with the normal rotation.

Body Cameras

Mr. Emberg asked for clarification on body cameras, which is on the capital plan but it shows as being funded through grants.

Mr. Hickey explained that having police officers wear body cameras is considered a change in working conditions and has to be negotiated with the union. He added that while there will be an ongoing cost

for maintaining a file server to save the footage and software that will be able to call up any footage as needed, the purchase of the body cameras themselves are not expected to be funded through taxpayer funds but he added them to the capital planning list so that if we are able to negotiate them in and get a grant, then everyone will understand we are trying to move in that direction. He clarified that at this point it is a policy decision, not a capital request.

- **Fire Department**

Repaving Station 2 (Smiths Lane) Parking Lot

Chief Douglass explained that the asphalt at the Smiths Lane Fire Station (station 2) has reached its end of life. He explained that the parking lot is “vintage 1986” and has degraded considerably. Mr. Hickey confirmed that he moved this capital request forward to a future year.

Mr. Bouley joined the meeting at 7:03pm.

Station 1 Addition

Chief Douglass shared that Eversource declined our request of having the town acquire 2 acres of property that they currently own adjacent to the Pembroke Street Fire Station so at this time, there is no project estimate on the costs of expanding the station but a needs assessment has started with the architect and is ongoing. Chief Douglass gave a short history of the design of Station 1: It was built in 1999 and during the process, they cut a bay and a basement which limited the space available to the department. As they are one bay short, Chief Douglass explained that they have to double up on apparatus that we currently have, which he said is difficult now, never mind when we add more equipment. Even now, he said that there is equipment and apparatus that must be stored outside. He added that Station 2 (Smiths Lane) could be upgraded but would make sense to wait and see what new development comes before we redo anything there. For reference, that station covers the Sacred Heart area and he recommends we wait until we know what is going to happen with that property before suggesting any significant changes to that station.

Mr. Ladd asked if it would make sense to build a new police station with a small additional fire department there so we would have 3 fire stations in town. Chief Douglass explained that it would be best if we can build a police station adjacent to the Pembroke Street Fire Station and eliminate the Main Street Police Station while simultaneously expanding the Fire Station and referenced economy of scale. He added that if there came a time that we were to consider adding a third fire station, he would recommend that it be placed in the Route 80 area, which he believed might not be the ideal location for the police station.

Chief Splaine responded that the Police Station location is flexible as their response time would be the same regardless of the location of the station.

Mr. Kennedy stated that he agrees that the best place for the new police station is adjacent to the Pembroke Street Fire Station and asked for clarification on the reason Eversource is unwilling to sell or give the land to the town and offered to help with the negotiating process.

Mr. Hickey explained that he met with representatives from Eversource along with both Chief Splaine and Chief Douglass and that their hesitation is simply that they intend to install a large solar array on their 30-40 acres and they believe that the elimination of those 2 acres would impact their ability to generate the power they hope to generate. He added that although we were very supportive of working with Eversource creatively to potentially place solar panels on the roof of the buildings or perhaps over-covered parking for police cars, ultimately they declined after taking considerable time to consider our proposals. Mr. Hickey explained that we are now looking at alternatives while we continue to try to convince members of Eversource to reconsider and we still hope to be able to convince them that it would not negatively impact their ability to install a solar array.

Gear Replacement

Chief Douglass explained that over the past several years, a number of studies have shown that PFAS is linked to cancer and PFAS has been incorporated into the gear that firefighters have been wearing. The studies show that when heated and then on the skin, PFAS is absorbed into the fire fighters' bodies and contributes to development of cancerous cells. He added that gear is typically replaced every 10 years and each firefighter has 2 sets so they can alternate them, giving the example of when one set of gear is wet or dirty, they have another set they can wear while the other set dries or is laundered. The current set of gear is 7 and 9 years old and given their age combined with the PFAS concerns, Chief Douglass said he would like to replace the gear now with PF-0 sets, which means it has no PFAS. He added that the delivery time from order to delivery is between 12 and 16 weeks and the cost estimate is \$112,100. He stated that there is no need to replace the helmets and boots along with these.

Mr. Hickey asked Chief Douglas to clarify the cost estimate as it was higher than initially expected and Chief Douglas acknowledged that the original estimate was \$106,000 but that it has gone up \$6,000 in the last 6 months.

Mr. Ladd asked how soon the firefighters would have the new gear, assuming it is approved and Chief Douglas said that once Town Meeting approves it, they can measure and order the gear but they can't pay for it until 7/1, the start of the new fiscal year. He added that with the supply chain issues, it is

difficult to estimate how long things will take so it could take longer from order to delivery but it is impossible to know at this point.

Ambulances

Chief Douglass read through the details regarding age and mileage of current apparatus provided in the committee's packet (see packet for specs). He explained that based on his experience on when modules need to be remounted or replaced, Ambulances are usually replaced on a 7-year cycle, however, it depends on the cost and time, meaning when the manufacturer can produce a vehicle versus when they can remount one. He shared that it is easier to do a remount than to manufacture a new vehicle and there is a significant cost savings in a remount. He noted that with remounts, we typically incorporate a brand new stretcher, which are each about \$35,000, and a new module that loads the stretcher (a lift system), which are each about \$27,000, both of which need to be replaced every 8 years or so. Chief Douglass said that project time is usually about 3 months but again, timing is unpredictable in the current market.

Mr. Hickey asked Chief Douglass when Kingston started remounting on the chassis and Chief Douglass said in 2010. He added that the cost to replace for a new unit is \$465,000 where the price to remount one is \$380,000. Mr. Hickey noted that by recommending remounts, Chief Douglass has found a creative way to save money and extend the life of the body of the vehicles.

Chief Douglass added that 1 remount is equal to the life of the initial mount so if a vehicle is remounted after 7 years of service, we will likely get another 7 years out of that vehicle, which gives us a lot of flexibility. He noted that the \$380,000 estimate is hopefully higher than the actual cost will be but we won't know for sure until we go out to bid on the projects. He explained that he prefers to use the higher estimate so that we don't run into a situation where we estimate too low and don't have enough money for the project.

Leases

Mr. Emberg asked Mr. Hickey and/or Chief Douglass to explain leases and interest and Mr. Hickey explained that when municipalities lease vehicles, it's not like when an individual leases a car from a dealership. He added that it is basically getting authorization to borrow from the public for more than one year. He said that when leasing, we purchase a vehicle over a 4-5 year period and pay an annual payment for the vehicles and then, at the end of the lease period, we own the vehicle outright. Chief Douglas added that there are many options available such as starting the payments right away and paying a set amount each year, starting the payments right away and skipping a year, having the first year be a 0 payment, and so on. He said that not only are the leases flexible, if we have multiple leases with the same company, we can often negotiate a lower rate. Mr. Hickey added that in a year

where Streets, Trees & Parks has to acquire a new vehicle, we could lump all of the equipment we need and finance them together, which will lower the interest rates. He said we plan to do that in the future.

Brush Truck

Chief Douglass explained that when the brush truck was upgraded from the prior vehicle in 2000-2001, the thought process was that Kingston would build out at such a rate that there would be no significant forest left. Instead, Kingston has continued to acquire land for recreation and conservation and maintains large tracts of land in close proximity to residences. He added that the smaller brush truck has significant limitations and explained that it doesn't have crew protection, the foam is no longer functional and parts are not available, and it doesn't have a "pump and roll" capability, meaning you have to rewind the hose and then move the truck and then unwind again and has a 150 foot maximum range. Chief Douglass said in 2005, some modifications were made to the smaller brush truck in an attempt to increase its capabilities with minimal success as it is still restricted to flat areas with minimal vegetation. He stated that the replacement truck would have crew protection and 4x4 capabilities and is a close match to our 1992 unit. He added that the new trucks are versatile and they can use them for more than just brush fires but also for protection in wind storms. He expects the receipt of the truck could be up to 18 months but might be less, depending on the supply chain.

Mr. Emberg asked for clarification on mutual aid and Chief Douglass explained that we can ask for mutual aid but that we also have to provide back up to the other communities within Plymouth County. Chief Douglass added that at a minimum, we need to have the capabilities to serve our community, which means having two brush trucks to start fighting any brush fires to flank the fire, and it would be irresponsible to rely on mutual aid rather than purchasing the necessary equipment.

Mr. Ladd asked for details on how old the brush trucks are in other communities and Chief Douglass shared that Duxbury has a 1989 truck, Pembroke has 3 smaller 2009 trucks, Carver has a 1993 and a 2011, Middleboro is 1989. He summarized that most communities have trucks from the 1980's and 1990's with a few exceptions and shared that all communities are having the same conversation as we are since all of the trucks are getting old, most of the companies that used to manufacture the trucks have gone out of business, and very few companies are willing to make them. He added that only our area, the Cape, and NJ use these brush trucks. Mr. Emberg asked why only those three areas and Chief Douglass explained that the types of trees areas have changed the type of brush truck needed. He said that Pembroke has more oak trees so they use the smaller brush trucks because oak trees do not have any give whereas in Kingston, we have a lot of pine trees and because they don't have deep roots, they can be pushed 5-6 inches over to the side and the large brush truck can work its way into the areas that need to be extinguished. He added that because of the sandy soil and the pine needles

that fall and act as fuel, the capacity and capabilities of the large trucks are a better fit for the needs of our community.

Mr. Bouley asked how often mutual aid is requested and Chief Douglass responded that it depends on the size of the fire but said that we typically request it about 70 times per year. As for brush truck mutual aid, he said that in the last year we had 14 requests for mutual aid and 4 of them were responses that they operated at and that the last one was on Raboth Road which was an early evening fire that went into the late evening and required 4 mutual aid large brush trucks. He mentioned that the smaller brush truck remained parked at the mall during that fire because it was not useful in that case.

Chief Douglass suggested that the committee look at the history of fires and to think about where houses are now as there is a tremendous amount of forest near residences and it is a challenge to keep fires from the houses.

MEETING MINUTES

- Prior meeting minutes: 1/25/23 Remote/Zoom

Motion by Mr. Brielman, second by Mr. Kennedy:

Move to approve the minutes from January 25, 2023.

4-0-1 by roll call vote, Mr. Kennedy abstained

FUTURE MEETINGS

Committee confirmed the site visits to various locations across town to begin at the Town House on Saturday, February 11, 2023 at 8am.

Committee discussed future meetings and some concerns about Conservation as their meeting conflicts with Capital Planning meetings. Mr. Emberg proposed potentially meeting on evenings other than Wednesday nights and offered to work with Mr. Hickey on scheduling.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS, QUESTIONS & ANSWERS:

Mr. Emberg mentioned that he offered to add a public comment or open forum section to the Capital Planning agendas but as there are rarely members of the public in attendance it may not be necessary but offered to revisit the topic should there be interest in the future.

There were no other committee member comments or questions.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Kennedy, second by Mr. Bouley:

Motion to adjourn.

5-0-0 by roll call vote

Meeting adjourned at 8:03pm.

Documents and Reference Materials Used During Meeting:

Town Administrator's Memo and Proposed FY24 Capital Improvement Plan, 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan Packet including Project Detail Sheets