

Capital Expenditure Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 6, 2016
Town Hall 2nd Floor Conference Room

Present: Brian Bartkus (BB), Tony Battaglia (TB), Eric Dahlberg (ED), William Moonan (WM), Jim O'Neill (JO), Barbara Perry (BP)

Absent: Mary Ellen Carter (MEC), Dan Brosgol (DB), Paul Mortenson (PM)

Other attendees: Michael Rosen (MR) – Assistant Town Manager

Meeting called to order by Chair at 7:32 PM

1. Nomination and Election (Vice Chair)

- a. BB nominates MEC, WM seconded. 6-0-0.

2. Strategy discussion regarding the Capital Plan and Future Capital Projects

- a. TB began what became a lengthy discussion on the CEC's approach to reviewing future capital project requests by describing the goals of the Capital Plan.
- b. WM stressed the need for closer scrutiny of departments' requests, noting that there is a distinction between "one off" big ticket items and recurring requests that re-appear from year to year. WB added that the CEC should approach requests from the perspective of what's needed vs. what's wanted, noting the sheer volume and scope of requests that the CEC considered from the School Department last year.
- c. BB noted that it's critical for department leaders to be cognizant of the CEC's charge and perspective in assessing their requests, and that there should be an expectation that departments are not amassing significant reserves while at the same time requesting projects that fall into the "what's wanted" category. BB added that the CEC should ask tough questions during the next budget cycle, and department leaders should prepare accordingly.
- d. JO shared that several of the department leaders' presentations last year tended to drag on and lose focus.
- e. ED suggested that a somewhat superficial approach to keeping department leaders' presentations to the CEC on track is to implement a presentation template, with maximum slide space per project request, that all leaders could make use of.
- f. BP shared that it's important that the CEC look at every single project, which means that the CEC may need to work with the Finance Committee more closely. BP added that it's important to understand departments' other funding sources, such as grants, in considering their requests.
- g. WM noted that there have been a number of projects that were approved – by CEC and ultimately by Town Meeting – that remain outstanding, which raises the question of whether they were truly needed when initially requested.
- h. TB summarized the discussion and identified the next steps that the group had reached consensus on: a future discussion on the protocols of department leaders' participation in CEC's project request reviews and presentations, a review of the questionnaire document that

department leaders will be charged with completing in advance of presentations, template presentation, a schedule of future CEC meetings, and a discussion with the Finance Director on projects that were approved but which remain outstanding.

3. Discussion on Debt Exclusion, and projects it may affect

- a. JO stated that he had asked for this item to be added to the agenda due to concern about the way last year's broader conversation about a debt exclusion for the school addition project became focused on the timing of a vote in order to maximize voter turnout.
- b. The CEC discussed and reached consensus that issues related to timing of elections are outside this body's purview.

4. Review and approve minutes of April 27, 2016

- a. Motion to approve minutes of April 27, 2016 meeting as amended made by BB, seconded by WM. 6-0-0.

5. Report on any Liaison information

- a. CEC discussed current liaison assignments and reached consensus that they should remain largely as-is for the next budget cycle. TB to prep and share list at a future meeting.

6. New Business

- a. TB invited CEC members to raise additional items for discussion under new business. No points of note were raised.

7. Future Meeting Dates (Spring and Summer to Review 6-year plan)

- a. The CEC briefly discussed dates for upcoming meetings, reaching consensus that no meetings are necessary for July and two meetings should be scheduled for August: the first – tentatively set for August 3rd – to focus on a presentation by the Finance Director on projects that were approved but which remain outstanding, and the second – tentatively set for August 17th – to be devoted to process and protocols around department presentations to the committee.
- b. The CEC also reached consensus that at least one September meeting should focus on a review of the 6-year plan.

8. Adjournment

- a. Motion to adjourn made by WM, seconded by ED. Meeting adjourned at 9:34 pm by a vote of 6-0-0.

Respectfully submitted by Eric Dahlberg, CEC Clerk.
Minutes approved on August 17, 2016