

**SOMERSWORTH PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF CIP WORKSHOP MEETING
OCTOBER 17, 2018**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ron LeHoullier, Chair, Harold Guptill, Vice Chair, Dave Witham City Council Representative, Bob Belmore, City Manager, Paul Robidas, Chris Horton, Jeremy Rhodes, Jason Barry, Alternate and Mark Fearis, Alternate.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Harold Guptill, Vice Chair

STAFF PRESENT: Shanna B. Saunders, Director of Planning and Community Development and Tracy Gora, Planning Secretary.

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m.

1) PUBLIC MEETING

A) Review and discuss proposed 2020-2025 Capital Improvement Program.

City Manager Bob Belmore addressed the Board and stated he has a PowerPoint presentation of the 2020-2025 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and that City department heads, the City Engineer and the School Superintendent are here for questions. Stated that some of the slides from the presentation are redundant from years prior that explains how the CIP process works. Stated that the City Charter spells out the requirement for the CIP every year and NH RSA lists the Planning Board's role. Stated that the Council voted for whose responsibility it would be to review the CIP document. Stated that some communities have a CIP Committee but in Somersworth the Council delegated the Planning Board. Stated that he directs department heads for their proposals and then they meet to review them. Stated that the school district does not meet with the City Manager for this. Reviewed the criteria for an item to be in the CIP-has to cost at least ten grand and have at least a five year life. Stated that the department head assigns a priority and then he reviews that. Reviewed the priority one, two and multi-year projects. Reviewed funding sources. Stated that the proposed tax rate impact for 2020 is .63 cents. Stated that in the past the Planning Board has asked for continuity with brands for City vehicles and that they recently approved Ford vehicles. Stated that road resurfacing is underway and reviewed which road were being worked on. Stated that upgrades at the waste water treatment facility were approved and are being designed. Stated that they are hoping to go out to bid for that in 2019. Stated that the Board recommended bundling projects together for bonds to help avoid spikes in the tax rate.

Superintendent Dr. Robert Gadomski addressed the Board and reviewed the school portion of the CIP. Reviewed the projects that are included such as replacement of HVAC units throughout the district, asbestos removal at the high school, a new elevator at the middle school, renovation of bathrooms, among other things.

Belmore stated that the Police Department got a new K9 officer with dog.

Witham stated that the school department needs two vehicles and asked if they do lease purchases like the City does to spread the payment out.

Gadomski stated that he is not sure how it was done in the past but that he can look into that.

Witham asked if there is value in lumping City and school purchases together for leases. Stated that the CIP is a planning document and not set in stone and not tied to funding. Stated that the City has done a good job with the paving projects and suggested looking into putting the school's paving needs in with the City's.

Belmore stated that Somersworth is a tax cap community and that it is hard to commit to something and put it into the budget when there is a tax cap that they have to remain under. Agreed with Witham that this is a fluid document and that as things come up they can get moved around. Stated that he can talk with the school department about lumping their pavement project with the Cemetery Road complete streets project.

Horton mentioned bonding the maintenance needed at the high and middle schools.

Witham stated that lumping projects and bonding them together makes sense and should be looked into. Stated that the City looks for opportunities to replace one bond with another to limit spikes in the tax rate.

LeHoullier stated that he has seen a lot of improvements to this process since it started. Stated that instead of seeing the same project over and over again, they are getting done. Stated that he would like to know about a new fire department.

Belmore stated that the Council authorized a consultant firm to look into where the City is at for a new fire facility. Stated that they are having an objective set of eyes look at this and will present to the Council on November 5.

Fire Chief Keith Hoyle addressed the Board and stated that the CIP has what they need for equipment and that the brush truck is a major thing this year. Stated that radios have been a four-year plan and will be complete next year.

LeHoullier asked the Police Chief how their new apparatus is. Stated that Manchester, NH went back to the Ford Taurus and asked if Somersworth wants to do that.

Police Chief David Kretschmar addressed the Board and stated that Manchester is the only department that he knows of that is going back to the Taurus. Stated that Somersworth is happy with the SUVs and they give more room for the officers to do their work and more room to put people in the back. Stated in the coming years they are hoping to purchase sedans for unmarked units.

LeHoullier stated that they have \$42,000 for that and asked if that cost is for the vehicle to be fully loaded and set up.

Kretschmar replied yes and stated that number includes radios, computers, etc.

Witham asked if the crime scene vehicle is new or a replacement.

Kretschmar described the crime scene vehicle that they need and why it is needed.

Horton asked if the video equipment in the office has been upgraded.

Kretschmar replied yes and stated that it is phenomenal and so much better.

Witham stated that road resurfacing is up to a million dollars in the CIP now whereas it started off at only a quarter million dollars. Stated that the increased money helps the City chip away at the roads and are making progress.

Director of Public Works Mike Bobinsky addressed the Board and stated that they are making progress and he appreciates the Planning Board and Council reinvesting in the roads. Stated that they are moving in the right direction.

Witham talked about sidewalks and having money in a sidewalk reserve fund. Asked if the City needs another tractor.

Bobinsky stated that they are seeking an additional sidewalk tractor for the future. Stated that there are new sidewalks going in throughout the City. Stated that there may be sidewalks going in on Route 108 and although it is a State road, it will be the City's responsibility to maintain them.

Rhodes stated that the Conservation Commission talked about sewer cleanout and asked if the portable vacuum trucks will be enough.

Bobinsky stated that it would help with manhole cleaning and that they borrow equipment from other communities now.

Rhodes mentioned water mains and stated that the number of breaches seems to be increasing.

Bobinsky stated that the City did an assessment of all mains in 2013 and they are using that to prioritize the mains to be replaced.

Horton asked about the feedback on the new street sweeper.

Bobinsky stated that it has been great and that the sweeper is of high quality.

Witham asked for an update for the interconnectivity of water for Somersworth and Dover.

Belmore stated that Dover is the lead on that and there was a grant through the State. Stated that Underwood Engineers is working with Dover on that.

Barry asked what the nature is of the priority two project for Noble Pines.

Belmore stated that there is a pressure issue and it might involve work to the water tower. Stated that there is a new standpipe in the CIP for 2022.

Witham stated that the water study done in 2012 showed the need for a new standpipe.

Horton thanked Belmore and staff for improving the community and he sees the difference that is being made.

Motion: Witham moved that the Planning Board support the CIP as presented and forward on to the City Council.

Seconded by Horton. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: Guptill moved to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Witham. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:


Tracy Gora, Planning Secretary
Somersworth Planning Board

