

**Capital Improvements Committee Meeting Minutes
Montague Town Hall, Downstairs Conference Room
One Avenue A, Turners Falls MA
December 11th, 2019**

Attendees

Capital Improvements Committee Members Josh Lively, Fred Bowman, Bob Obear, Steve Ellis
Energy Committee members Ariel Elan and Pamela Hanold
GMRSD representatives Joanne Blier and Heath Cummings
Library Director Linda Hickman. Library Trustee Tricia Perham
Finance Committee members Jen Audley and Jon Hanold.

I. Approve Minutes of 11/13/19

Minutes not available at beginning of meeting.

II. Review GMRSD capital requests

Updates on previously funded articles: Mr Cummings debriefed the Committee re ongoing capital projects throughout the school district. Support columns at the Administrative Building are now installed and safety railings are in place. New security doors are installed at Hillcrest, but there are issues with the through wall that will house the security glass portal.

II. GMRSD capital requests for FY 21

Mr. Cummings and Mrs. Blier explained the school district's capital requests for FY 21:

1. Tractor Replacement- Cost \$ 48,000 (88% of cost to Montague \$42,240)

Replace 16 year old tractor with new 45 hp model that also include assorted attachments to assist in field maintenance and snow removal. Accessory attachments would be a (1) front loader attachment for hauling fill and the like, (2) front mounted snowblower attachment with a six foot wide cutting width and two foot tall cutting height which would operate from an included mid-machine PTO, (3) Rear mounted six foot wide power broom and hydraulic angling kit and (4) universal front forks with a 3,750 lb lift capacity. A fifth attachment which is a rear backhoe with a 12" wide bucket was removed from the list due to perceived cost constraints, the additional cost for the bucket would have been \$7,195.00.

Current tractor is underpowered and cannot pull triple mounted mower deck owned by the district. New tractor would be a higher powered model to enable use of the triple mower deck and thus increase mowing and snowplowing capabilities. Current tractor is 16 years old and shows signs of significant mechanical breakdown including hydraulic pump and hose issues, brake failure and frame bolt deterioration. Many of these operational issues were temporarily rectified with repairs made in 2019 although the life expectancy of said repairs is unknown given the overall state of the machine.

Numerous safety issues abound with current tractor. One of these issues is a worn out steering column that no longer locks and has a tendency to move back and forth with the pressure from an operator's body weight. The district would keep the existing tractor and put it on light duty and as a backup machine. The district is proposing to use the Kearsage stabilization fund as a funding source and furthermore plans to use the revolving Kearsage fund as a source to complete roughly a \$60,000 capital projects each year. This project would be roughly an 88% / 12% cost share with Gill.

2. Hillcrest facade/building envelope engineering study - Cost up to \$80,000

The capital request is actually two requests rolled into one. The first is a \$20,000 request for an engineering study to evaluate the extent of deterioration of the brick facade which covers Hillcrest school as well as evaluate the extent of carpentry damage on various window sills around the building.

The second component of the request includes \$60,000, which is something of a placeholder to fund implementation of repairs identified through the engineering study. This is best on current best guesses for repair cost. At minimum it will include window carpentry and the priming, painting, and sealing of carpentered areas to prevent further damage to wooden structures. Initial masonry evaluation found damage to be more extensive than previously thought and that contractor thought it best to procure an engineering study to first assess the damage and determine whether or not there are underlying issues causing the brick façade's deterioration prior to proceeding with any repair work.

Mr. Cummings believes that the two layers of masonry facade are flexing and without proper slip sheets in place the problem is likely to continue and worsen as years go by. No bricks have fallen yet due to vigilance on the part of Mr. Cummings and his team as they have been re-securing any loose bricks as they become apparent. It is observed by members of the CIC that the estimated cost of the engineering study is most likely too low. Noted by CIC members that the estimated costs are not certain for either portion of the capital request at this stage.

3. Brick repointing and concrete repair at Sheffield Gym and Admin Building - Cost \$20,000

Repoint the compromised exterior brickwork of the gym, auditorium, and administrative building. Additional repairs to be made to concrete "skirting" located on the gymnasium where spalling is beginning to occur and rebar is showing through the gaps created. The brickwork is beginning to detach in areas around windows. Compromised brick would be re-secured with mortar and hand pointed with jointers.

While the concrete skirt can be considered as a cost avoidance/cost escalation control project, the re-securing and repointing of the brickwork should also be corrected as a public safety issue. The current estimated cost is a placeholder as the district awaits an estimate from a reliable masonry firm. Members of the CIC expressed the opinion that the current estimate is most likely too low for the work scope as identified.

4. Sheffield Library Wall- Cost \$20,000

Divide the oversized Sheffield Library space with a wall to apportion more instructional space. Reason given for proposal is that Sheffield is in need of more instructional space. Dividing and separating this space for the purpose of creating another classroom would improve service delivery and program quality for students. Library is said to be underutilized currently. The annexed space would measure 46'x23', roughly one thousand square feet. Lighting and electrical modifications are expected to coincide with the erecting of diving wall including provisions for the fire alarm system. Heating and ventilation appear to need no modifications. There are already two doors into the library and each would serve one of the newly divided spaces. Mr. Obear and Mr. Lively agree that the estimate is realistic although some factors have yet to be fully considered.

5. Resurface Tennis Courts at TFHS - Cost \$50,000

Resurface the tennis courts at Turners Falls High School so they are a smooth, solid playing surface. MIAA has advised the athletic director that the defects in the tennis courts will become an issue in future seasons and may jeopardize the tennis team's ability to host home matches. The surfaces are currently experiencing cracking and there are places where weeds grow through the cracks. Areas around the net posts seem to be the trouble spots and Mr. Cummings has noted poor workmanship and planning in the original construction of these areas. Future surface to post transitions would receive more scrutiny and both sets of the current posts would be replaced as part of the project.

After prep work is complete, approximately four hundred feet of cracks would be filled and three coats of resurfacer applied as a primer and filler followed by one coat on finish surface coating. Color to be red and blue with regulation hand painted tennis court lines. Estimate received from Tennis Court resurfacing company out of Vermont. Cost estimate was approximately thirty six thousand dollars but did not include provisions for Massachusetts prevailing wages, so the estimate was increased by around forty percent to adjust for wage differential. This project would be a 92% / 8% cost share with Gill.

6. Update staff bathroom plumbing fixtures and stalls at Hillcrest - Cost \$100,000

Plumbing fixtures and stalls in the teachers' bathroom would be addressed with this capital request. Plumbing fixtures are thought to be original to the building, which was built in the 1950's, and are showing their age. Mr. Cummings advises that all fixtures in the building should be upgraded to low flow variety at some point in the near future. Moreover, the stalls in the teachers rest room were built for an elementary school and do not meet the privacy needs of staff members.

Mr. Lively asked about ADA compliant bathrooms in Hillcrest and it is answered that there is an accessible stall located in the nurse's office. The CIC ponders whether or not a bathroom renovation should include the addition of ADA compliant stalls/lavs, and what effect this may have on cost. No estimate has been provided so the cost is very much unknown at this time. It is noted that bathrooms are complicated and expensive systems to renovate and an accurate estimate cannot be acquired without a clear and concise work scope identified first.

Mr. Lively inquires whether repairs to stall privacy issues can be made if article isn't approved. Mr. Cummings states that some plywood or PVC paneling could be installed for privacy but the finished product may not be pleasing to look at.

III. Review Library capital requests

Updates on previously funded articles: Mrs. Hickman and Mr. Ellis updated the CIC on the previously funded capital projects and they are as follows:

- Millers Falls Library basement structural and mold project is complete.
- Montague Center Library roof project is complete.
- Carnegie Library interior door hardware/hinge project is complete.
- Carnegie Library exterior door has been removed and taken away for refinishing, a temporary door has been installed in the meantime.
- Montague Center Library basement mold remediation project is almost ready to go to bid.

Library capital requests for FY 21

1. Carnegie Basement Office Space Moisture Remediation/Rehab

This special article request would fund the removal of impacted building components including exterior insulation, drywall, and drop ceiling tiles. Air quality questions alongside the health concerns of staff have long been an issue with in the Carnegie Library basement office space. After gutting, the space would be treated for mold and then the foundation sealed from the inside and insulated with foam insulation. Cement board would be used in lieu of drywall to help prevent against future moisture issues. Some improved lighting and some electrical upgrades would also be included in the project work scope.

Mrs. Hickman explains that the Library Building Sub Committee conducted an internal study of all three branches and that she has also received a proposal from architect Richard Smith that outlines a study that would result in a phased plan for improvements to the Carnegie Library. Unfortunately, the Trustees won't receive that plan and any associated cost estimates until April.

Members of the CIC are concerned that the proposed request doesn't include measures to address the underlying causes of the moisture issues. It is suspected that without treatment from the exterior of the building the water will continue to enter the basement office space and corrupt new components. It is noted that this is project is a public safety/ health concern and the top priority of the Library Trustees. This basement space would ideally be used to resolve a critical shortage of office and program space, in the building. Accessibility will be a central issue in any future use. Discussion of whether a grant for preservation could be applied to the basement project.

2. Replacement windows for Montague Center Library/Old Town Hall

Remove and replace all windows in Montague Center Library with Historical Series single pane energy efficient windows. These would not be perfect visual replacements from an historical perspective but but were described as an excellent choice in that regard. All windows, frames and trims would be removed and disposed of. New vinyl replacements would be installed along with proper cavity insulating and interior and exterior casing. It is explained to the CIC that the windows are failing. Some of the sills are visibly rotting and paint is peeling. The glazing on some of the panes has failed from overexposure to southern light. Current windows are drafty and most no longer open.

It is stated by members of the CIC that it is important to maintain the building envelope and safety. Noted that at the moment a new library is not possible, so the Director and Trustees are just trying to keep the buildings usable and healthy. It is wondered if the 2nd floor of the Library could be used for storage. This request is the second priority due to health concerns at the Carnegie. Firm quotes are in hand for this project.

IV. Adjournment

Mr Lively moves to adjourn, Mr Obear seconds. passes 4-0