

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLANNING COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022

The Capital Improvements Planning Committee (CIPC) is comprised of seven members...which is required to include the Town Administrator, one member from the Finance Committee, one member from the Board of Assessors, and four members from the electorate as appointed by the Select Board. All seven members are equal voting members.

The Committee meets with sponsors having various capital needs and requests of a project, improvement, vehicle, equipment, or like capital nature which cost exceeds \$10,000. Such sponsors generally includes, but are not limited to, town department heads that are invited to make all manner of presentations to explain and support the request of, the need for, and the cost associated with such proposals.....and to respond to any questions which any given CIPC member may pose. All such meetings are likewise open to the general public, who too are invited to speak and to have their respective questions addressed as well.

Thereafter, the entire CIPC membership individually scores and ranks each capital request...and the committee in turn lists the preferred choices in priority order from the highest to lowest score. Decision is then made as to which capital needs projects to put forward to the Select Board for warrant article consideration at the Annual Town Meeting. Projects selected to put forward are done so formally in the form of an official Committee Report as is submitted in accordance with the CIPC's own by-laws dated March 15, 2013.

That which was submitted by the Committee on March 7, 2022 is attached...and is an integral part of this CIPC Annual Report. Notes and highlights of the Committee Report and related matters are as follows:

1. The Committee Report was dated and submitted on March 7, 2022. All items contained in that attached report were advanced as Warrant Articles for consideration at the Annual Town Meeting that was scheduled for and held on May 2, 2022. Note that there were six capital needs initiatives listed.
2. At the CIPC meeting held on March 1, 2022, whereupon the aforementioned ranking, scoring, and priority listing took place...there were originally seven capital needs initiatives selected by the CIPC Committee to put forward.
3. The seventh initiative (which was actually fifth in priority ranking) was that of the Security System and Cameras for the Paxton Center School....which the CIPC Committee gave strong and considerate regards to.
4. But, after the CIPC meeting of March 1, 2022.....and before the submission of the CIPC Committee Report on March 7, 2022....the CIPC was advised to remove that single particular capital initiative from our Committee Report by town administration....as information had been obtained that the Wachusett Regional School District (WRSD), the sponsor of the initiative, had agreed to subsidize that particular initiative.....the PCS Security System and Cameras.
5. Request for follow up confirmation as to that matter was made by the CIPC to town administration and return email confirmation was received...in the affirmative....that the WRSD would indeed subsidize that initiative...and to please remove same from the CIPC Committee Report before submission. The Committee did so. Hence, six initiatives appeared in the report....and not seven as first planned.
6. Unfortunately, that information to and from the WRSD was subsequently determined to have been incorrect. However, the Warrant Article closing date of March 8, 2022, for all Warrant Article to have been submitted had since expired.

7. Note too that the Tanker/Pumper fire truck was a high priority of the CIPC Committee. But also note that it was submitted as a Warrant Article. That was the clear choice of the CIPC Committee notwithstanding that it had full knowledge that recommendation had been made by the ARPA Committee to use American Rescue Plan Act funds for the acquisition of that fire truck.
8. A clear distinction should be made here....that such use of ARPA funds was the ARPA committee's recommendation...and subsequently the Select Boards decision on a split vote to do so....but it was not the CIPC Committees recommendation to do so.....as is reflected in our Committee Report that is attached.
9. Attention is also directed to the final Warrant Articles that were submitted at the May 2, 2022, Annual Town Meeting (which Articles are not included as part of this report, but which can be found on the towns website)
 - That the Pumper/Tanker which was listed on the attached CIPC Committee report was thereafter not listed as a Warrant Article.
 - That the Security System and Cameras for the Paxton Center School....which the CIPC Committee was directed to remove from its report and so it is not listed on the attached CIPC Committee report.....is listed on the ATM Warrant Article...which is a violation of the aforementioned CIPC by-laws. That matter was first disclosed/discovered by a member of the town's Board of Registrar's...and subsequently deemed to be an inappropriate inclusion on the Town Warrant by Town Counsel and the Town Moderator at the ATM.
 - N.b. Fortunately, the proper voting on this matter did take place at the subsequent Special Town Meeting held on July 18, 2022.
 - That certain Town Warrants were changed from the original submission by the CIPC Committee report to insert language to the effect of "assessing additional real estate and property taxes" to the taxpayer....with the accompanying notation...."Capital Improvements Planning Committee Recommends Approval". That notation is not at all correct. The CIPC did not approve of that, nor was the Committee ever contacted, consulted, or asked about such "recommend approval" matters.

While this may not be seen as a typical Annual Report....this was not a typical year for the CIPC. Mention then of these matters serves to point to the clear fact that consequential errors were made this past year, and certain misrepresentations were also made. All of which need to be recognized and corrected and a certain reform of process needs to occur going forward.

From our CIPC Committee's view, this is currently not a perfectly functioning system...especially to have our CIPC Committee associated with declarations such as... "recommends approval"....when we, in fact, do not approve.

Furthermore, the resignation of two extremely valuable and outstanding members from our CIPC committee over just the past few years...both of whom candidly stated their reasons for resigning....is testimony that the current process....once the CIPC Committee Report is tenderd....is in need of amending or clearer understanding.

That said, we pledge to discuss, to improve, and to work to remedy these matters with all appropriate persons and boards going forward.....as the public deserves nothing less than a perfectly functioning system and process.

Mark L. Love
Capital Improvements Planning Committee
October 28, 2022

Town of Paxton

The Capital improvements Planning Committee (CIPC) of the Town of Paxton does hereby respectfully submit to the Selectboard, the following capital needs requests for consideration to be included as Warrant Articles to be presented at the Annual Town Meeting scheduled for May 2, 2022.

The presentation of such items below is in accordance with the CIPC's own summary results following the individual ranking of each request as submitted to, and in most cases presented to, the CIPC committee and thereafter the individual ranking of each request by each member of the CIPC committee. Such ranking was held at the CIPC's public meeting held on March 1, 2022. They are:

1. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow, or otherwise provide the sum of \$750,000 for replacement of Engine I (1995) and Tanker I (1987) with a single Pumper/Tanker. (Sponsor: Paxton Fire Department)
2. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow, or otherwise provide the sum \$18,500 to replace a Side Boom Mower with same but which will have additional excavating capabilities thereby having two pieces of equipment to replace the existing one piece. (Sponsor: Paxton Department of Public Works)
3. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow, or otherwise provide the sum of \$21,500 to update/upgrade the telephone systems collectively for the Town Hall, the Council on Aging, the Department of Public Works, and the Richards Memorial Library. (Sponsor: Town Hall)
4. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow, or otherwise provide the sum of \$88,500 to replace two existing cruisers/vehicles with two like cruisers/vehicle, one an SUV and one a utility pick-up truck. (Sponsor: Paxton Police Department)

n.b. The CIPC wanted to note that while this individual item ranked 4th in our summary ratings, its overall favor and preference among committee members was that of 2nd. However, a peculiar feature in the ranking system used, that has long been in practice and observed by this and previous CIPC committees, calls for a low score as related to expected useful life of the capital asset, when the committee viewed that factor to be a favorable feature of this vehicle trade in program being instituted by this department. The committee however opted not to revamp its entire ranking system at this time. But felt compelled to make mention that its favor and preference for this item is higher than that of its technical score.

5. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow, or otherwise provide the sum of \$80,000 for the replacement of outdoor lights at Tivnan Field and the basketball court. (Sponsor: Recreation Department)
6. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow, or otherwise provide the sum of \$60,000 to install a new telephone and public address system at the Paxton Center School. (Sponsor: Wachusett Regional School District)

March 7, 2022