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Town of Ludlow, Massachusetts
Capital Improvement Planning Committee

Minutes of May 15, 2023, Capital Improvement Planning Committee.

Meeting began at 5:30 p.m.

Members present: Marc Strange, James Gennette, Josh Carpenter and Tony Sanches,
Kathy Demetrius

First Order of Business: Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Gennette: We are starting a little early this year, this is the first meeting after Town Meeting. We do have four members present; Mr. Vitorino will join us shortly. So, we don't have any visitors tonight. First order of business is to discuss the May 8th bylaw changes. So, there were a few changes to the bylaws once we went through because of the Board of Public Works, we had seven members that were going to be, we should have waited, we could have thought that out a little better before changing the bylaw just to change it back again, but we didn't know how it was going to go. But once it happened, we needed to change it back and we are back to a five-board member, one resident voter. With the new bylaw that just went to the AG and Kathy we need to talk about it because I think this is, when that comes through it's probably going to end your time with us as an employee with the school department. I was talking to Marc before and I just want to say that we love having you here, you know what I mean. You've been great and we're so appreciative of all of the things that you've done. We are just trying to keep on improving it. So, I think the new bylaw put a member of the school committee in your place. So, I hope you can do with one less meeting.

Mr. Strange: Motion to make Kathy Demetrius an ex-officio member of the CIPC.

Ms. Demetrius: I thought you said he wanted me around, boy that was fast. I'm just kidding.

Mr. Strange: No, that would ensure that you'd have to come to all of the meetings just like me.

Mr. Gennette: He's trying to keep you here.

Ms. Demetrius: Oh, he's trying to keep me, oh.

Mr. Gennette: Actually, that's an official motion. Is anybody going to second that?

Mr. Carpenter: Second for discussion.



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Mr. Gennette: Yeah, we're going to let her pass unless you want it.

Ms. Demetrius: I think whatever is best for the committee and best for the Town as a whole.

Mr. Carpenter: Do you want to stay on?

Ms. Demetrius: You know, if it stays as once a month, I can stay on.

Mr. Gennette: Yes, it's important to have somebody in your position here. So, as a voting member of the Board, I think we would probably that's the only hang up.

Ms. Demetrius: Right.

Mr. Gennette: So, we can technically do that, I mean were you making that comment in jest?

Mr. Strange: I was, I was making it in jest but I would love to see Kathy once a month.

Mr. Gennette: Yes, I mean we could do that. How many ex officio's can we have?

Mr. Strange: That's right. I'm limited, I'm limited.

Ms. Demetrius: I would not have a problem staying on in that manner.

Mr. Gennette: Well, why don't we table it.

Mr. Strange: Well, in a...matter when items come up that impact the school and typically there are school items that this board...

Mr. Gennette: It's a big part of the budget, that's for sure. So, we'll table that for another day, another discussion. I think the AG is going to be a while anyways. So, we're going to have you for a few meetings anyways.

Mr. Carpenter: What did it take like a month last time?

Mr. Strange: A few months, yes.



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Mr. Gennette: So, any other items on the bylaw that are notable, Marc, that you can think of, other than the positions changes?

Mr. Strange: No, that was it and you summarized it perfectly. The DPW member would be eliminated, and we would go from 2 to 1 resident and then we would change from the School Superintendent or his or her designee to a school committee member.

Mr. Gennette: Perfect. Alright, does anybody else have any comments on the bylaws whether it pertains to any of the changes or anything that they may have any concerns with? No, you're good.

Mr. Sanches: I'm good.

Mr. Gennette: You guys are good? Alright, excellent so we'll move onto the next thing. The committee to discuss the 2022 Finalized Annual Report. I was talking to Tony about it and the report you give was more in depth I think, then what we were actually working on. So, what would you like to see going forward? Do you want the Board to handle that report or are you comfortable just putting it out the way you have?

Mr. Strange: I don't know where, so what you're saying is that the Capital Improvement Planning Committee's piece of the annual report was more in depth than you guys were working on?

Mr. Gennette: Yeah, so you were giving, the report that you gave had the past couple of years, it had this year, it didn't have projections for the future but it did have more information we were trying to gather together and then when you put that out we kind of looked at each other and said well we are doing the same work twice.

Mr. Strange: So, typically what happens is, you know a lot of the information is templated to be honest and its calendar 22, which I always found to be a little bit awkward because you've had so many changes from January 1st until May. What's the information that's in the town report isn't always, it's definitely not the most up to date information. So, that's something that we were kind of working through this year in terms of who do we put in as members of committees and relative information. So, that's sort of an...comment but in terms of the CIPC section itself, I don't remember looking at it that closely. It must have been Amy or Sandy kind of creating that section from past town reports.



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Mr. Gennette: Alright, so if we can do that, the only thing that I would recommend is when it comes in, Tony is that we vet out the information, take a look for accuracy that kind of thing. You know we would really like to have what we were talking about, with the pictures of whatever the items are that we are buying. Maybe the old whatever we are getting rid of, and this is what the cost is going to be and then the new stuff coming in. So, we can put it on the website so the community can see what we are actually purchasing with their money. I think that other towns have done that with good success. I mean if they put in a new tennis court, you show people that, what they've done, and it has a little bit more of an impact. I think that's something that we should strive for. So, the five-year plan was another thing and we had talked about it originally, but I don't think we ever got to it. We are looking at becoming a green community down the road and with the five-year projections, I'm thinking vehicles have to be EV at some point and we are buying two police vehicles every year. In my mind we should have a five-year plan, a ten-year plan to try to start rotating in electric vehicles. Especially if we can obtain any funds from the state to help put in charging stations, those kinds of things without having a major impact on departments that are going to be using them. You know right now the school has charging stations, but they also have vehicles that are funded through capital. Maybe that's another area, maybe we have to talk to Lori about it. Maybe get an EV vehicle when those need to be replaced, that kind of stuff. You guys have any thoughts on any of that?

Ms. Demetrius: I don't have a lot of knowledge on the EV vehicles. I know that is where everybody is going. Our bus company has some grants on getting electric buses and as much as the charging stations are used, there's obviously a lot of people going that route.

Mr. Strange: Mr. Chairman. So, the Board will talk a little more about this tomorrow night but in order to become a green community there are five criteria. One of them is the town has to adopt a policy to replace vehicles with at least hybrids but preferably fully electric vehicles. So, that's kind of the first I guess hurdle. Then once the town has the policy in place, it doesn't mean that we can't do it now, but it will be a requirement if and when that policy gets accepted.

Mr. Gennette: Perfect. Yes, I think we could do a lot of good things with that moving forward.

Mr. Sanches: No, that's great. I didn't know the school had a charging station.

Mr. Gennette: Well, Harris Brook does. The other ones don't but that's something we will have to plan for the future. I mean charging stations are going to be a thing and however we can manage it. I don't know, there's something out there with aggregate charging stations. I had stumbled across it when we were looking at aggregate electric and I'm wondering if that may be an avenue down the road is aggregate charging stations.



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We may even be able to help residents with charging stations if that became a thing. So, there's different avenues by which we could do that. Maybe that's more of a Board of Selectmen discussion but it will impact what we do here as far as capital and funding. Anybody else have anything as far as an annual report or planning out five years, ten years, those type of topics like that? We seem to be on point. I think we did some pretty good stuff over the past couple of years. I also think we need to let things settle down after the bylaw change back again before we move into other stuff.

Mr. Gennette: Committee to discuss 2023 Preparation and Scheduling.

Mr. Carpenter: The only thing I remember was we were having David Eisenthal coming in to discuss our bond rating, I don't know.

Mr. Gennette: He came into the Board of Selectmen meeting already. We were supposed to have a dual meeting and he was going to show up. We didn't end up having a dual meeting and things were getting thrown back and forth. We just didn't end up at that meeting. David Eisenthal did come in and did give us a good report for it. A couple of questions I asked was are any of them callable? We're trying to put a lot of money into stabilization but is there a cost benefit to maybe calling back some of these bonds instead of stabilization and he pretty much said no, it will take you forever to save that much and your interest rates in calling the bonds instead of putting that money in your stabilization. You're better off in stabilization, so that was that. Then he gave us an overall prospectus of the bonds. You still have that on file of what he gave us, right? Can we put that in an email and get it to Capital Planning members that way you have it, and you can see it?

Mr. Strange: Sure.

Mr. Carpenter: The only other thing we discussed amongst ourselves was joint meetings with the Finance Committee around the time everybody and all their budget requests are coming in. We didn't get to do it last year just because it didn't pan out the right way, but it was definitely a goal so maybe we can get that one done this year.

Mr. Gennette: I agree. We had a lot of changes. Finance Committee is a brand-new group of people. They were struggling there. We got a brand-new Superintendent of Schools with a brand-new Business Director, brand new Town Administrator. We're in the middle of influx this year. Everybody is trying to get stuff done and there was a lot to do. Maybe we can do that again in the future. Anybody else as far as preparation schedule?



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Mr. Strange: On my calendar for the summer is to revise the budget calendar that we sent out for this past year. Along the way I was making notes in terms of what was working, what wasn't working, what was too much, what was too little. I'm going to revamp that. It will be largely the same but there will be some changes. I can send it to this group, FinCom, obviously the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee for whatever information or comments you guys have.

Mr. Gennette: That would be great. The only thing I really have on the process that we did, and I think we touched on it a little bit last year afterwards, but for me, the door should be open right now for anybody to make any requests they have. They should be putting their requests in now and as those requests come in and you see fit you can see if it's valid first off. You can get together with Lori to see if she has any insight as to what can happen there. Even if it's an estimate because we need a decent number to validate the number that people are putting in requests for. Once you guys are comfortable with that, you can schedule a meeting to go over what's there without bringing everybody in, because a lot of times they don't need to sit here to tell us they need this and we're just going to go, yeah, great they need it, and we can move on about our day. If we have questions, at a subsequent meeting we can have them come in and answer any questions they may have after that. Having you and Lori in accounting vet it out would probably be the best preliminary action. What do you think?

Mr. Strange: I agree.

Mr. Gennette: That's the only thing I had as far as the preparation for this coming year. Again, making sure that everybody knows that they have to get their requests in before November 15.

Mr. Gennette: Committee to sign the meeting minutes of January 11, 2023.

Mr. Carpenter: I did have one change that I noticed. It states that Mr. Bertini was here and speaking and he was not. I believe Mr. Asoff was the one speaking at that time. I didn't go back to the meeting to look at it.

Mr. Gennette: And Mr. Tiano.

Mr. Carpenter: And Mr. Tiano. They were both here, but Mr. Bertini was not.

Mr. Gennette: Can we get a motion to approve those minutes with the changes?



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Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to approve the minutes of January 11th with that one change. **Mr. Sanches second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Mr. Gennette: Marc, do you want us to sign that now?

Mr. Strange: I don't know how extensive the changes are. I would cross it out then you can initial it and you guys can sign it.

Mr. Gennette: Committee to sign the meeting minutes of January 23, 2023.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to approve the minutes of January 23rd meeting with all members present. **Mr. Sanches second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Mr. Gennette: I think that's it. Does anybody have anything they would like to discuss? Open floor.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to adjourn at 5:50 p.m. **Ms. Demetrius second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

James T. Keith
[Signature]
[Signature]
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