

Community Preservation Committee

March 27, 2018

Police Station Conference Room

Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chair Mike Dissette called a regular meeting of the Community Preservation Committee to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were Mike Dissette, Don Little, Jane Healey, Joe Lamb, Paul Healy, Mark Rosen, Dan Koen, Steve Sawyer and Sarah White. Kate Newhall-Smith was also in attendance.

3. General Business

City Finance Director Ethan Manning attended the meeting to discuss the reason the Community Preservation Fund balance is greater than expected. An amount equal to approximately one-year's debt service had been withheld each year as a cushion. This amount had not been reported to the Committee, which was withholding its own cushion of 10 to 20%. It was agreed that from this time forward, the figures reported to the Committee would be actual ones, with no amounts being withheld without the members' knowledge.

The fund balance is \$561,369 and the estimated FY2019 revenue is \$960,351, bringing the total available funds to \$1,521,720. After the FY2019 debt obligation of \$397,220 is deducted, the estimated total of available funds would be \$1,124,500. This amount does not include a cushion for the FY2020 debt service.

4. FY2019 Applications for CPA Funding

Open Space Reserves

Open Space Committee

\$150,000

Michael Frey requested that funds be added to the open space reserve in order that they might be available when the opportunity to acquire a desirable parcel arises. The reserve was last used to purchase land along Curzon Mill Road. A target amount to hold in reserve would be \$750,000 to \$800,000. The fund balance is currently \$529,965.98.

Fuller Field Track Renovation Phase 2

Parks Department

\$125,000

Lisë Reid said funds are being sought to continue the renovation of the Fuller Field track. The track has been replaced, the infield has been improved and a fence has been installed. Additional funds are needed for the construction of a grandstand, the installation of the electrical and sound systems and the expansion of the restrooms in the field house. The lack of a grandstand limits the use of the facility for competitions. A future goal is the creation of a drop-off and parking area along Low Street. Some of the funds requested in this application might be used for the construction document phase of the future work. Local banks have committed money for three years of maintenance for the facility and funds have been earmarked for the replacement of the track surface, which will be necessary in a few years. Fundraising for the facility will continue.

The amount of funds on hand totals \$225,000, \$179,00 of which is CPA money that has not yet been used. An estimate has not yet been received for the field house or the electrical work. The Committee members wish to receive this information, along with design costs.

Restoration of Swan Fountain at Bartlet Mall

Parks Department

\$10,000

Lisë Reid said funds are being requested for historical research and engineering services for the restoration of the swan fountain at the Bartlet Mall. The fountain has been inoperable for several years. It appears the foundation has shifted, causing the hatch that allows entry into the fountain to be partially submerged. The work is a part of a larger restoration project for the Mall.

Little River Nature Trail Kiosks

Parker River Clean Water Association

\$8,500

Jerry Mullins said the Parker River Clean Water Association is seeking funds to install kiosks that would educate hikers and visitors to trail system. Three existing kiosks provide information on the watershed, vernal pools and turtles. Floodwaters and flora and fauna would be the topics of the proposed kiosks.

Specimen Trees for Bartlet Mall

Parks Department

\$11,760

Lisë Reid described the plans to remove damaged, failing or invasive trees at the Bartlet Mall. The funds would be used to purchase ten large Liberty elms to replace the trees that are to be removed. The allée along the Greenleaf Street side of the Mall would be recreated in accordance with the historic plan designed by Charles Eliot. The Bartlet Mall Commission and the Tree Commission support the plan.

Master Plan for Lower Atkinson Common

Parks Department

\$25,000

Lisë Reid said the Parks Department is seeking to create a parking and drop-off area at the Pioneer League field that would improve safety along Merrimac Street. The clubhouse would be relocated and reconfigured to accommodate meeting spaces for the league and community. The requested funds would be used for design services and construction documents.

Gateway Trees, Phase 2b

Tree Commission

\$35,800

Jane Niebling described the five-year project to plant street trees at every available site along High Street. Twenty trees were planted last year and a fall planting is planned for 30 more trees, which would leave 56 sites remaining. A request was originally made for \$12,800 to purchase and maintain 20 trees. The applicant later submitted an addendum requesting an additional \$23,000 for the 36 trees that would complete the project.

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5. Late File Applications

Three applications for funding were received during the third week of March. The deadline was February 8. Late filings have been accepted in the past in emergency situations when the need for funding was not known before the application due date. Newburyport Public Schools is requesting \$59,040 for the restoration of the exterior woodwork at the high school, the Friends of Newburyport Trees is requesting \$7,600 for the Edible Avenue along the Rail Trail and the Maritime Society is requesting \$101,914 to replace the slate roof on the Custom House.

The members discussed the acceptance of the last applications. Mark Rosen said he would like the Committee to distribute its available funds as soon as possible. Dan Koen said any money not distributed at this time would be available for worthy future applicants. Sarah White and Paul Healy said accepting the late files would not be fair to those who completed their applications on time. Don Little said he is very much against accepting the late files because many current applicants would probably wish to resubmit their requests now that it is known more money is available than has been requested and some members of the community who decided not to apply this year might have done so if they had known funds would be available. Jane Healey asked if the deadline would now be a rolling one. Mike Dissette said accepting the late applications would set a precedent and all applicants should be on an even playing field.

The three applicants were asked to provide the reason for the late submittal. Steve Bergholm said Mayor Holaday recently informed him no City money would be available for the exterior woodwork of the high school and advised him to file a late application for CPA funds. Michael Mroz said it wasn't until February, when the flashing on the observatory was being replaced, that workers were able to determine the poor quality of the work that had been done on the roof in the 1970s. Jane Niebling said she respects the need for a deadline and only submitted a late application for the Edible Avenue on behalf of the Friends of Newburyport Trees because she heard the available CPA funds exceeded the requests.

Dan Koen moved to accept the three late applications. Mark Rosen seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

The five remaining applications and three new applications will be presented at the April 24 and May 22 meetings. Deliberations are planned for the June 26 meeting.

6. Minutes

Dan Koen moved to approve the minutes of the November 28, 2017, meeting as amended. Don Little seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Paul Healy, Mark Rosen, Dan Koen and Sarah White abstaining.

Mike Dissette moved to approve the minutes of the February 27, 2018, meeting as submitted. Jane Healey seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Dan Koen, Steve Sawyer and Sarah White abstaining.

7. Upcoming Schedule

The next meeting of the CPC is scheduled for Tuesday, April 24 at 7:00 p.m.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:38 p.m.