

Community Preservation Committee

May 26, 2021

Via Zoom Webinar

Minutes

Call to Order

Andy Port- Director Planning & Development announced recording and broadcasting.
Chair Mike Dissette called a meeting of the Community Preservation Committee to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call

In attendance were Chair Mike Dissette, Vice Chair Jane Healey, Paul Healy, Don Little, Chuck Griffin, Tom O'Brien, Don Walters, and Glenn Richards.

Director Andy Port and Katelyn Sullivan from the Planning Office were also present.

Not in attendance: Mark Rosen.

Mike Dissette began with brief review of deliberation and voting process.

- Purpose of the meeting to deliberate on applications for funding by working off the worksheet of applicants listed. There are empty columns for various rounds in order to get a consensus from the Committee of amounts to recommend.
- Later they will look at proposed budget to determine what is a safe amount to hold back to allow some available funds in the event something comes up and shortens it. This will be set aside as a savings account that rolls forward into the next year.
- Will have preliminary review of each applicant where members can raise their hand if WOULD NOT recommend any amount for that application. If 5 or more hands show, then that application is put aside as non-recommendation. Then we would look at it again at the end of the meeting if necessary.
- Reminder: there are available funds in excess of total amount requested from applicants.
- Evaluate each application, apply criteria printed and discuss appropriate category if necessary. Categorization can sometimes have an effect; some require to receive by appropriation or reserve a minimum of 10% of available funds. At end of voting they will look at that to make sure it's been covered for the statutory requirement.

Mike Dissette questioned if any members would find a need to recuse themselves from any of the projects. Or if any members have solicited advise from the State or have conflict of interest to advise the group now. For example: If any individual has financial personal interest that could be effected by the grant or non-grant may need to recluse self from voting on that applicant.

Don Little requested to recuse himself from YWCA Hillside application as he is a direct abutter to that area.

1. Updates from the Parks Department and Parks Commission

Mike Dissette referred to packet regarding joint update from Parks Commission & Parks Department having to do with the Parks Department application. Letter dated 5/18/21 requesting to update the initial scope of the project for Bartlet Mall Frog Pond Improvements. The request is asking for the scope to be more flexible as the project evolves should more money for design-engineering work be necessary. Any balance remaining would be applied to the actual work that is determined to be done.

Chuck Griffin confirmed that is the case and need flexibility to move the money internally where needed. Also, he also lives next to Bartlett Mall. He submitted documents and received approval from the Mayor to discuss the Bartlet Mall

Paul Healy questioned if there is any clue how much this extra design-engineering might run to? What if engineer comes back and makes the project cost prohibitive?

Lise Reid – Parks Director, explained they have not solicited proposals for the design and likely any referrals will come in well below the request. Too early to know how much would cost for design-engineering but confident it will be well below amount requested with remaining balance could still be well utilized towards drilling of wells, bathometric survey, or purchasing or granite. All working into the approach being developed.

Don Walters had several questions which included clarifying scope of project for the two shallow wells, the granite stones, and cleanup of the pond.

Kim Turner, Chair of Parks Commission responded. She advised they recently had a meeting with the design team and will have a full report soon. Report will include a full feasibility study including dredging, lining the pond, and moving sediment around. All solutions will require/recommended we have a secure edge around the pond for various reasons. Secure edge will be recommended no matter what, so granite edge will be important. If solution is to line the ponds, which is what they're focused on, underground water source may be cut off so will need that from the wells. Recommended by Water Engineer to have the wells no matter which direction we take. Feel very strongly with work they are doing with consultants that each are necessary and have a full gamut of solutions to pivot with easily. She went on to clarify a cost estimate has been submitted for the actual installation of two shallow wells, that the application of granite stones to secure them, which will be needed with the cleanup of the pond but does not include installation.

Mike Dissette requested Chuck Griffin to provide answers to questions raised during the initial presentation of this project related to the fountain aspect.

Chuck Griffin started by reviewing the unframed pond and issue with the water height. This presents safety issues with the opening allowing easy access to the water which is a health hazard. He reviewed past proposals from leading landscape architects speaking to the need of granite curbing on the edge of the pond. The biggest expense and time restraints will involve the granite stone which includes cost of the stone along with cutting

and edging. Cost estimates range from \$300,000 to \$600,000 depending on the height of the stone; curb versus seat height. Installation is estimated at \$200,000. They estimate Fundraising could help cover about 40% of that cost.

He went onto review the steps for repairing and cleaning the fountain. Aeration for the pond was questioned and he addressed the main purpose of this piece of the project is the visual aspect to restore the beauty of it.

He also addressed the grading and walkways for that area and confirmed they already have the funding to cover that. Work on that is expected to start this year.

Mike Dissette asked to clarify that the fountain application stands as is? And the adjustment in scope applies to the improvement application?

Kim Turner confirmed.

Jane Healey questioned Slide 11 which shows Income CPC 2021 \$132,000. This is less than the actual amount being asked for of \$186,000. Is that just an example or is it incorrect? She also questioned "Other Nonprofit" Funding of \$100,000 also noted on slide 11.

Chuck Griffin clarified the \$186,000 includes the survey, fountains, wells, and granite. The slide with \$132,000 is just for the granite. He advised he was unable to discuss the Nonprofit Funding but is comfortable that the number can be reached.

Don Walters questioned if any applications would require registration with the Local Historic Preservation Commission before the proposals went to City Council. He referred to information he received from DLS.

Andy Port responded that he didn't believe there were any issues here to review but would look the information over with Finance Director to be sure. He requested these types of requests or concerns be sent out for review prior to the meeting. Quick scan of verbiage sent by Don, don't believe anything of concern for these applicants.

Mike Dissette advised he too would be happy to review the information. In the past if there was an issue with registration, the Newburyport Historic Commission has sent communication to notify.

Mike Dissette reviewed guidelines to determine that this change in scope request can be added to the application as requested by applicant and Committee can accept it without separate votes to amend and approve the application. Opened for comments.

Paul Healy suggested it would be better to have two votes. One to take the changes of scope into the record and then the second vote for the funding of the project.

Mike Dissette advised will take this suggestion and both votes will be done when get they get to the actually voting for this project.

2. Deliberations FY 2022 Applications for Community Preservation Funds

Mike Dissette started discussion on the budget to work with and break down. The actual numbers have been updated and budget is higher than previously expected. Biggest change if the State predicted will have 32% match opposed to 12%-17% noted previously. Clarified money already spoken for primarily has to do with the two outstanding bonds for the Stadium and Cherry Hill. Those numbers will need to be spent on retiring principle and interest for this next cycle. Clarified Fuller Field, recommended bonding for few cycles back has worked its way through for approval with City Council. Probably see it next year for funds, not out of this year's.

Total available funds \$1,268,680, and Open space at \$629,965.

Usually set some aside funding to not appropriate to leave a cushion there if needed. In the past 4-10% has been set aside. Opened to discussion with what members are comfortable with setting aside and not use to allocate.

Paul Healy suggested \$50,000.

Jane Healey agreed with that figure.

Mike Dissette asked if Paul would you like to make that motion.

Paul Healy motioned to set aside \$50,000 of funds to keep in reserves and Jane Healey second.

Mike Dissette conducted roll call with all voting yes.

Mike Dissette advised available funds are now \$1,218,680.00.

Deliberations

Mike Dissette went on to discuss how the Committee will vote on each application. Start with an informal vote on any applicants a Committee Member would NOT recommend approval for in in any amount. Then they will continue with formal votes per applicant. Members asked to show by raise of hand if they have an applicant they do not wish to vote for recommendation.

Tom O'Brien raised his hand for applicant #12 Atwood Park Lighting Improvements. Provided reason as it doesn't seem to fit into the guidelines for recreation, but open to hear comments. Questioned what recreation increased lighting will increase?

Andy Port advised in terms of request for infrastructure or improvements to help those with recreation, this would be covered under a broader description of recreation. Deferred to Parks Department for further comment.

Glenn Richards added that he could see how people may be fearful to go when it's dark, therefore eliminating the problem with lighting and considered recreational improvement. For example, walking your dog.

Mike Dissette added always considered passive recreation in that category and considers walking the dog active.

Don Walters requested to recuse himself due to proximity of his home. He added if the reason for the request is due to vandalism and people hanging around at night, may be more security than recreational and would agree with Tom.

Mike Dissette advised if no other discussion, can put it to a vote. Offered Tom O'Brien form a motion to not consider this applicant.

Tom Obrien motioned to not approve as it does not fit description for CPA.

Call for Second? No second provided.

Mike Dissette advised no second, motion failed. Thanked Tom for his input and it will be well noted, but this will be considered as eligible among applications.

Mike Dissette called for any other opposes for funding of listed applicants. No additional comments made and official voting of each applicant for amounts began.

Project Title; Applicant; Request: Total: \$1,215,324.00

1. YWCA at Hillside, YWCA Greater Newburyport: \$50,000.00

Mike Dissette advised this request fell in the Category of Affordable Housing.

Don Little requested to recuse himself due to conflict of interest.

Mike Dissette motioned to recommend.

Motion from Don Walters to recommend and second from Chuck Griffin for amount of \$50,000.

Call for any discussion? No comments

Roll Call taken with all voting yes, except Don Little(abstained).

2. Newburyport Rental Assistance; Affordable Housing Trust: \$200,000.00

Mike Dissette opened for motion to recommend.

Motion from Chuck O'Brien and second by Paul Healy.

Roll Call taken with all voting yes.

3. Custom House Door Restoration \$43,832.00

Mike Dissette opened for motion to recommend.

Motion from Chuck O'Brien and second by Paul Healy.

Roll Call taken with all voting yes.

4. Cushing House Landscape Phase III: \$45,717.00

Mike Dissette began with request of a motion from any of the members.

Motion to recommend by Glenn Richards and second by Paul Healey.

Roll Call taken with all voting yes.

5. Garrison Birthplace Signage: \$1,800.00

Mike Dissette began with motion to recommend.

Motion by Tom O'Brien and second by Chuck Griffin.

Discussion?

Glenn Richards asked for clarification the amount requested was reduced?

Jane Healey confirmed the amount had been reduced from original application.

Roll Call taken with all voting yes.

**6. Open Space Reserve Fund; Newburyport Open Space Committee
\$100,000.00**

Mike Dissette motioned to approve recommended full amount with second by Paul Healy.

Don Walters questioned Mike Dissette if Open Space ever reaches a limit or do they continue to increase without upper limit?

Mike Dissette explained haven't seen an upper limit. The savings have increased and decreased. Imagine there is a time when Committee will say there is enough in there and no need for additional funds at that time.

Confirmed currently \$629,000 in the reserve now before the additional \$100,000 is added.
Roll Call taken with all voting yes.

7. Market Landing Park Expansion: \$250,000.00

Mike Dissette made request for motion on this application.
Don Walters moved to recommend and Chuck Griffin second.
Roll Call taken with all voting yes.

8. Lower Atkinson Master Plan Amendment: \$3,850.00

Mike Dissette began with request of a motion from any of the members.
Motion by Tom O'Brien and second from Mike Dissette.
Roll call taken with all voting yes.

9. Bartlet Mall Frog Pond Improvements: \$186,035.00

Mike Dissette began with request of a motion from any of the members.
Moved that scope of project be amended to include any additional design and engineering expenses. Second by Don Walters.
Roll Call on amendment to scope with all voting yes.

Mike requested motion on application and amount.
Motion by Tom O'Brien and second from Jane Healey
Roll Call taken with all voting yes.

10. Restoration of Swan Fountain at Bartlet Mall: \$126,000.00

Mike Dissette began with request of a motion from any of the members.
Motion by Jane Healey and second from Glenn Richards
Don Walters mentioned concerns over materials being used and long term conditions.
Suggested getting warranty or more parameters set by the contractors. Glenn Richards agreed.
After some discussion and information provided by Lise Reid on the impact of the budget and strong reputation of the contractor, a decision to withdraw the concern was made by Don Walters and second by Glenn Richards.

Mike Dissette confirmed Don Walters withdrew motion.

Mike Dissette questioned any other discussions on approving this full amount? None mentioned.

Roll Call taken with all voting yes

11. Restoration of Nock Middle School Tennis Court: \$175,000.00

Mike Dissette began with request of a motion from any of the members.

Motion from Tom O'Brien and second from Jane Healey

Roll Call taken with all voting yes.

Glenn commented on meeting court size regulations for this project.

Lise Reid, Parks Director confirmed this will allow the court to be regulation size.

12. Atwood Park Lighting: \$33,000.00

Mike Dissette began with request of a motion from any of the members.

Paul Healy motioned with second from Jane Healey to approve.

Don Walters recused himself from this motion.

Glenn Richards added after further review is in full favor of this project.

Roll Call taken with majority voting yes. Exception: Tom O'Brien voted no.

Final review and vote on applicant requests: \$1,215,234.00

Mike Dissette advised of approximately \$3,000 left which will stay in the CP account as non-attributable.

Mike Dissette move to approve FY22 payments of Bonds of \$127,080 for the Stadium and \$11,940 for Cherry Hill.

Jane Healey and Chuck Griffin moved to approve.

Roll Call taken with all voting yes.

Mike Dissette advised carried amount \$12,000 to cover administrative support expenses each year. What is not spent carries forward. Allowed under statute to go up to 5%.

Moved to allocate \$12,000 towards administrative functions.

Glenn questioned where it goes towards.

Mike advised some goes towards Katelyn salary, ad expenses, and note taker. Obligations like the Bond payments and so is administration; "spoken for" expenses. Confirm by vote that those can be paid.

Motion to approve Tom O'Brien and Jane Healey.

Roll Call taken and all voted yes.

3. Updates from the Chair or Planning Director (if needed)

Mike Dissette asked Planning & Development Director Andy Port if he had any updates to mention. Andy Port advised they may want to set their next meeting with summer coming.

4. Approval of meeting minutes 4/28/21

Mike Dissette motioned to approve meeting minutes from 4/28/21.

Tom O'Brien and Mike Dissette moved to approve.

Roll call taken with all voting yes with exception of Don Walters who was not present for that meeting.

5. Next Meeting date

Mike Dissette suggested keeping the 4th Wednesday of each month open. Generally, won't have a meeting until October. He also advised to keep track of the order of recommendations going to City Council and attend when necessary to give additional input on why they're supporting these applications.

6. Meeting adjournment

Mike Dissette motioned to adjourn.

Mike Dissette and Glenn Richards moved to close.

Roll call taken with all in favor.

Adjourned at 8:40p.