

Capital Expenditure Committee

Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 3, 2022, 7:00 PM
Virtual Meeting

Members in attendance:

Mary Ellen Carter

Stephen Steele

John Carbone

William Moonan

Tom Rowan

Dave McClung

Other Attendees:

Amy Fidalgo – Assistant Town Manager

Sarah Stanton – Town Manager

David Castellarin – Town Finance Director

Meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM, noting that a quorum was present.

1. Remote Meetings Guidelines

Mary Ellen Carter provided a procedural overview of the guidelines for remote meetings in keeping with pronouncements made by Governor Charlie Baker on March 12th and 15th of 2020. Attendance was then taken by roll call.

2. FY23 Project Discussion

Amy Fidalgo began by saying the Select Board wanted the Committee to reconsider the three projects rated as “not this year.” The Select Board agreed with the Committee’s desire to combine the two space needs studies into one and wanted the Committee to hear some new information regarding the Munis conversion.

- Munis will help modernize the Town’s financial operations.
- Conversion first brought up internally in 2018.
- Having difficulty getting quotes from vendors, but have pieced together some information from two other vendors, which was shared onscreen.
- Chart of accounts redesign missing from current vendor upgrade proposal and the second vendor’s proposal seems unrealistically low for such a key piece of conversion.
- Concerns about training and support staff availability from other two vendors.
- Roughly 350 hours (annual) spent in manual labor reconciling different accounting systems used in town.

Questions and comments then followed:

- The extra manual time is only about 7 hours a week, but does increase chance of errors.
- Need to determine best spot to put recurring costs into budget.
- Will need to run existing system concurrently with new system during conversion – those costs should be made clearer.
- What is cost for outsourcing payroll system? This was missing from one quote, which would help understand actual difference between quotes. David Castellarin responded that the payroll cost was included in the price from the second vendor,

but that it was a third party solution, which is part of the problem with the current system.

- There was no answer from vendor as to why the estimate for new chart of accounts was so low. It was pointed out that the Munis chart of accounts estimate was not from Munis but from a consultant.
- The current system is not itemized by module, so likely will have to carry those full costs for the duration of the conversion.
- About 100 people in town would use Munis, many of whom have experience in Munis.
- Why the sudden request for Munis? Sarah Stanton pointed out that there had been conversations internally and with members of the Select Board and Finance Committee over the past few years. When asked, the town auditor had recommended Munis back in 2018. The current system will have to be replaced due to lack of support in the upcoming years. While this is new to the Committee, it has been discussed for a few years now.
- It is nice for projects to be put on the long range capital plan so that there is enough information for the Committee to make informed judgements.
- Why can't the consultant make a chart of accounts for the other proposals? Why is there no complete comparison between proposals – complete costs and pros and cons of each?
- Professionally trained Town staff have determined that Munis is the best option for the Town. It is not the role of the Committee to determine the best software.
- The process is important to help ensure passage at Town Meeting.
- Asking questions and wanting comparisons is about making sure the rationale behind requests is clear and complete, and to be able to answer potential questions at Town Meeting.
- Full five year costs would be helpful.
- Advantages to going to Munis are probably understated and employees need the right tools to do their jobs.
- Finance Committee gets into the details of costs and budgeting.

Motion to approve a Town Wide and Town Center Space Needs Study was made by John Carbone and seconded by William Moonan. The motion was approved by a vote of 6-0-0.

Motion to approve the Munis software conversion project was made by John Carbone and seconded by William Moonan. Motion was not approved by a vote of 3-3-0. (Voting yes: John Carbone, William Moonan and Tom Rowan. Voting no: Stephen Steele, David McClung and Mary Ellen Carter.)

3. Next Meeting Dates

Two other meetings still need to be scheduled:

- Joint meeting with the Finance Committee to discuss the Fire Station Land Acquisition; date TBD.
- Presentation to the Finance Committee; date TBD.

4. Documents & Exhibits Used

- Capital Expenditure Committee Agenda for 1/3/2022
- Financial Software Comparison Chart

5. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Stephen Steele and seconded by William Moonan. The motion was approved by a vote of 6-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted by David McClung, Clerk.