

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire  
**Capital Improvements Program Committee (CIPC)**  
Meeting Minutes – August 31, 2020

*Note: Draft Minutes are subject to review, correction and approval by the Board. Review and approval of Minutes generally takes place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.*

**CALL TO ORDER**

CIPC Chair Steven Bittel called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm via Zoom software for electronic conferencing due to the COVID-19 health emergency in the State of New Hampshire. Emergency meeting pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, Section 8 and Emergency Order #12, Section 3. Members present: Deb Davis at Whitcomb Hall, Selectmen’s Representative Sylvester Karasinski, Chair Steven Bittel, Jane Johnson, Lynn Rust, Larry Crowder, Bruce Bohannon and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard all via Zoom.

**PUBLIC ACCESS:** The public access to the meeting online via [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us), using the Zoom App on a cell phone or tablet or laptop, or using a landline by calling (929) 205-6099 and entering Meeting ID number 235 370 4380. If there is difficulty accessing the meeting, please call (603) 352-7411 ext. 108.

**Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Town Administrator Michael Branley, Department of Public Works (DPW) Director Glenn Smith, Director of Planning and Economic Development Matthew Bachler and Cemetery & Buildings and Grounds Foreman Geoffrey Davis were at Whitcomb Hall.

**MINUTES**

- The minutes for August 24, 2019 were considered. There was a **motion** by Johnson to approve the minutes of August 24, 2019. There was a second by Crowder. All were in favor by roll call. **Motion passed.**

**DISCUSSION**

**Presentation of un-expended prior year(s) appropriations**

Discussion was held regarding how to show current year charges as appropriated and either spent or not spent and moved out to another year. Bittel suggested asterisks and Bohannon suggested using green highlight. Bittel agreed that using highlight would make it easier to note such items and agreed to do so.

**Excavator**

Discussion was held regarding the request for an excavator. Smith said the excavator will be leased via a grant. Bohannon said the grant is long term. Bohannon noted Smith would like an excavator for the Town. Smith said it would be good idea for the DPW to have their own mini excavator. It could be beneficial for digging cemetery blocks without making ruts. They can rotate 180 degrees to dig a cemetery plot. Bittel suggested adding it to the DPW list of items requested but put it out several years in the plan. Smith estimated the cost at about \$100,000.

**DPW DISCUSSION**

- DPW-CEM Equip Tab – Bittel asked Smith to review each item. Smith said the department is having problems with the main line trucks (F550’s) and therefore he is putting off the chipper for now. He said it is more important to focus on the trucks since they are used year-round. International dump

truck is a part-time truck mostly used in the wintertime so it can be moved out a few years because of year and condition. F150 pickup is used by the cemetery. In years past, they have had access to a truck from the water department but now the water department has a single cab truck and DPW needs more room with extra cab and ability to tow. Smith said the mowers for years 2021 and 2022 are getting old and need replacing. Smith asked Geoff Davis to speak. Davis said the equipment trailer must be backed into a bay and therefore takes room from the workshop. He said that with an enclosed trailer, equipment could be stored in it outdoors and give them more room in the workshop. He added that the current trailer cannot move all three mowers at one time. A trailer large enough would be more efficient for moving the mowers. Davis said DPW needs \$10,000 in 2021 to replace primary mower. He said it would be good to replace the mower before it begins to have major repairs.

Bittel noted the cash contribution is holding steadily. Davis said trailer is ballpark cost of \$7,000. Bittel said the goal is for level funding over seven years. Bittel said \$185,000 should cover the needs for 2021.

Bohannon asked about moving the chipper to 2021 from 2020 and asked about the bottom number. Bittel said priorities change and that's why items get moved. Smith said the road grader was to be replaced in 2020 but the problems they had with it not shifting and smoking were fixed when they spent \$1,600 out of maintenance budget for a new turbo. Smith spoke about moving the International truck and F150 to 2022. And F350 pickup was moved out to 2023.

He noted a sidewalk tractor is requested out to 2023 because the ones they have are still running well. Bittel spoke about the snow sidewalk fund with \$50,000 in 2024. Smith said West Swanzey does call when they need sidewalk plowing. Smith said if the West Swanzey sidewalk committee can help out with funding for sidewalk plowing that would help. Smith said the amount of time it takes to plow all the sidewalks makes it difficult to do it quickly. Bittel suggested if a sidewalk plow is dedicated to West Swanzey, then the Sidewalk Committee might be willing to purchase it. He asked Smith to look into that possibility. Branley agreed that it might be helpful to do that.

- DPW Facilities – There was a discussion about DPW roof scheduled for 2021. Bittel asked about 120 Pine Street and Smith said there was talk about putting an office over there in the past (\$10,000 is in the plan for 2021). Smith said there are no good rain gutters and there is rot in certain areas. Bittel said the larger questions is Major Facility Upgrade and Smith said he hasn't had the time to look into getting any estimates for engineering or whatever needs to be done for the building that badly needs to be improved. Bittel said he would like to see a bond for DPW and Recycling Center together for improvements.

Bohannon asked if a roof was ever put on 120 Pine Street. Smith said not to his knowledge during the two years he has been with the Town. Smith said he isn't going to do the DPW roof because there are only a few minor leaks and if there is going to be a major upgrade at some point he would prefer to wait for that to do a complete re-roofing. Bittel suggested that Smith check the status of the roof. Smith suggested pushing the \$40,000 for a DPW roof out a few years. Crowder said Smith could use the money to do some patch work especially around pipes. Smith agreed that sounded like a good idea. Bittel suggested making 2021 \$5,000 and put out to 2024 for \$40,000. Smith said he can use the planned \$10,000 for minimal improvements for 120 Pine Street. Bittel asked Karasinski what the Board of Selectmen have in mind for 120 Pine. Karasinski said the Board of Selectmen were hoping to use the space for office space. He said he thought some roof repairs were done in the past. Smith

said for now it is being used for storage for the Town. Karasinski said there is a DPW and Recycling upgrade in the future, the Town might include Pine Street repairs in 2024. Karasinski said the \$10,000 is just ongoing maintenance of the building. Bittel suggested spreading out \$10,000 to \$5,000 in 2021 and \$5,000 in 2022 and all agreed by consensus.

- DPW Road Rehab – Bittel said he worked on this list with Larry Crowder. Bittel reviewed the line items. He noted Muni Trans fund being used for several years. Bittel said the plan leaves a meager amount in the road fund at the end of the period. Crowder said there was a compromise to funding the roads. He noted a need for Talbot Hill Road which had “Band-Aid” work this year. He said \$100,000 does not get the Town much improvement for these roads. Smith said he was pushing for Talbot Hill to be done this year because of its condition. He said if we keep pushing these roads out to be done years away from now, they will continue to deteriorate. There is no flat section to Talbot Hill and the water cannot get to the ditch lines. They need funds in 2021 for these roads: South Winchester Street, West Street, Swanzey Street, and Talbot Hill Road. Davis said she thought bonding was going to take care of the neediest streets. Matthew Bachler asked about Marcy Hill and North Winchester, why are numbers spanning two years. Smith said they are split it out for two years. Crowder said you can do a portion of Marcy Hill one year and another the next. Smith spoke about the poor condition of North Winchester Street. Crowder said it should be done before Marcy Hill. Bittel spoke about the financial reasons for splitting the costs over two years. Bittel said it would be a major move planning for the yearly contribution to go from \$150,000 to \$300,000. He asked for comments. Karasinski how the money is being handled for projects that are coming in with costs under planned expenditures. Branley said it all does get accounted for by allowing the bond to cover more streets. There isn't \$200,000 left over. Bittel said the budget numbers come to \$3,100,000 but we are only spending \$3,000,000. He explained that the projects need to come in under budget to do all the roads that need to be one.
- DPW Sidewalks – Branley spoke about the sidewalk expansions. Amounts are placeholders. He said grants will be continuing to be applied for and assume grant funds will help offset costs. Branley spoke about the sidewalks to be added. He noted this fund covers sidewalks not eligible for West Swanzey Sidewalk Fund. He spoke about possible areas to improve with sidewalks like on State Route 12 and State Route 32, among others. Bachler noted the Planning Board update for the Master Plan and said that sidewalk improvements were discussed. He noted that having money in the plan will help with grant approval. Bittel asked about the 50/50 grant relationship for matching funds? Bachler said we came in at 50/50 for the current grant and that is typical. Bohannon said the sidewalks around the Cutler School and the high school and Mt. Caesar might be paid for through a project called Safe Routes to School. He there might be funds for sidewalks near schools. Branley said he was aware of that project and the matching ratio is 80/20 and it is a high cost project. Branley added that he thinks it is part of a Transportation program now. Johnson noted that she was down by the Cresson Bridge this past week and there are ruts in the parking area entrance caused by erosion. Smith said he is aware of the issue but has not had a chance to do repairs.
- DPW Covered Bridges – The committee reviewed the plan for expenditures for painting and replacing decking. Smith said tarps need to be placed beneath the bridges while work is being done and he didn't know how much that would cost. Smith reviewed the years scheduled for decking. Thompson is scheduled for 2021, Carlton for 2022, Cresson for 2023, and Slate Bridge in 2025. Bittel asked Smith about timing. Bohannon asked if there is any annual maintenance for these bridges. He said they do check the conditions periodically. Bohannon said Cresson Bridge has some loose boards that bounce

up and down when cars pass over them. That bridge may need to be moved up form 2023. There was a brief discussion about damage to the Cresson Bridge.

- Cemetery Expansion - All the items are 2022 items: erosion mitigation at Mt. View, wall repair at Oak Hill and tree work. Total is \$55,000 for that year. And another \$5,000 of tree work in 2025. Geoff Davis said trees are a huge issue for the cemeteries. There is no 2020 contribution planned. Geoff Davis said there is \$30,000 worth of tree work that needs to be done. He said he will research some numbers for the future. He noted no contribution planned. He said he would sit down with Lee Dunham to get more detail. Bittel said the number \$40,000 for erosion mitigation a guesstimate. Geoff Davis said that does need attention. He added that trees cause a lot of damage to headstones over the years. Smith said at Mt. Caesar Cemetery there are a lot of large pine trees near to the walkway and he would like to see these taken down before someone gets hurt or before they damage more headstones. Bittel asked Smith and Davis to research numbers for the need. Bittel noted the historic value of some of the headstones and perhaps there are grants that could be obtained. Johnson asked about repairing the stones in the wall behind the Grange and the school building. Smith noted the roads are getting rutted deeply and that might do damage to cars with low clearance in the future. Bohannon asked for contributions for the future. Bittel asked Smith and Davis to get numbers in September. Bohannon suggested \$7,500 for upkeep of the cemeteries – Crowder suggested adding a road item. Smith will come back with a plan. Bittel suggested \$5,000 and the others agreed for now.

Bittel thanked Smith for his work on this project.

Bittel asked about which group to tackle next. Police Department was noted to be reviewed. Bittel said Town Hall needs to be discussed. Libraries will need to be visited. Bittel said there is nothing budgeted for Whitcomb Hall and Carpenter Home, which makes for major savings.

Bittel suggested meet with Police and Town Hall and then circle around to Fire Department again. He said Recycling needs to report their numbers before they can be interviewed.

**Next Meeting:** September 21, 2020 at 1pm. Hybrid meeting with some on Zoom and some at Whitcomb Hall is planned.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There was a motion by Bohannon to adjourn the meeting with a second by Crowder. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary