

Present: Christopher Morely (Chairman), Sherrill Cline, Jim Hill,
Richard Bell, Lynne Remington, Georgette Heerwagen,
and Bill Kneeland

Absent: Seamus O'Kelly and John Drobinski

At 7:38 p.m., Chairman Morely called the meeting to order.

Proposed 2011 Annual Town Meeting CPC Warrant Articles – Discussion

Ms. Kablack circulated copies of a listing of the CPC FY12 proposals received, estimated FY11 revenue and spending information by CPA-eligible category and a spreadsheet reflecting CPA Projections for Debt Service Capacity through 2024 to the Committee for review.

Chairman Morely recommended, and the Committee concurred, that tonight's deliberation commence with a review of the Town's CPA finances. He noted that the Committee has always acted in a cautious and conservative manner when recommending projects for funding. Chairman Morely asked the Committee to consider this again this year, in light of the Town's financial constraints.

Ms. Kablack reviewed the Debt Service Capacity CPA Projection information, noting that the most conservative perspective of what is expected for funds next year has been reflected. The information presents a forecast of how much money might be available for open space bonding. Ms. Kablack briefly reviewed the existing CPA-related debt. In 2012, it is anticipated that approximately \$1,225,677 will be used for debt service on projects of the \$1,450,000 expected to be available. The anticipated State match is \$430,000, and the anticipated Town surcharge collected has been presented as \$1,480,000 in FY12, from which the required 10% allocation to housing and historical categories (\$190,000 each) has been deducted, as has the budgeted \$80,000 for Administrative Funds. Ms. Kablack further reviewed how many large future projects could be funded by the CPA while still remaining within its budget. It has been concluded that the program could be sustainable for many decades to come. Ms. Kablack and Chairman Morely highlighted that \$180,000 of anticipated interest income has not been included, as this serves as a cushion for any unanticipated changes to other data. In response to a question from Ms. Heerwagen, Ms. Kablack stated that predominantly, the CPA debt is for open space.

Ms. Kablack summarized that the amount of monies available to fund projects after servicing the debt and covering Administrative Funds is approximately \$604,678.

Fairbank Farm APR and HPR

Ms. Cline asked if the \$750,000 would not be included in the total FY 12 project figures if the decision were made to bond this project. Chairman Morely noted that the bonding cost is too high for a \$750,000 purchase to make it financially preferable. It was noted that approximately \$2.5 million is considered the amount at which bonding begins to be fiscally advantageous. Chairman Morely further noted that the CPA does have nearly \$7 million in reserves. Thus, he stated the Committee would need to decide if it recommends funding projects utilizing some of those savings or whether some projects can/should be delayed for future consideration.

Chairman Morely stated that none of the four eligible categories have reserves to speak of at the present time. Ms. Kablack noted that the \$7 million in reserves was amassed in the early years of the CPA program in Town. Chairman Morely emphasized that if savings are used, it is important to be cognizant of the fact that those funds would likely not be able to be replenished at the same rate as may have been possible in the past.

Mr. Hill asked how the Committee could determine if it is more worthwhile to fund the Fairbank APR just to deter development rather than another property which could be purchased outright and be utilized. Chairman Morely noted that the Fairbank proposal includes intentions for public access to surrounding trails. He further stated that most property owners, and particularly farmers who want to continue farming the land, are preferring to offer the Town development rights rather than outright purchase of the property. Mr. Hill asked if the Fairbank property would continue to pay real estate taxes. Ms. Remington stated that they are entitled to pay a reduced rate under Chapter 61A if they choose to stay enrolled in that program.

Mr. Hill asked if there is a potential \$5-\$6 million property which might become available, which the Town would be interested in purchasing without bonding. Ms. Kablack stated she is not aware of any. She further stated the Town now has a good relationship with property owners, who are seeking out the Town as a potential buyer. Ms. Kablack stated that two small land purchases have arisen in recent weeks after the November 12, 2010 project deadline, and that one or both may request to proceed for consideration at the Annual 2011 Town Meeting. She described the properties as the Stone property one-acre house lot on Hudson Road, and a portion of the MacNeil property on Brimstone Lane. Ms. Remington asked if the Committee legally has the authority to consider a project outside of the funding cycle. Ms. Kablack stated it does.

Ms. Heerwegen asked what is likely to happen if the Town decided not to purchase the Fairbank APR. Ms. Kablack opined that eventually the owner would likely sell and the property could be developed, with preliminary subdivision plans indicating the possibility for between 9-14 houses. In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Kablack stated that the owner is actively farming the property now, and that the Town would be negotiating a right of first refusal if the owner decides to sell in the future. Chairman Morely emphasized that the property is a key location worth preserving on that stretch of Route 27 within the Historic District.

Ms. Remington asked if the Town would be able to condition where the worker housing and greenhouses would be located. Ms. Kablack stated these types of details would need to be negotiated. Chairman Morely stated the best location for the public access is at the peak, and thus the housing might be better located closer to the road. Ms. Kablack further stated that, if housing is sited closer to the road, the Town would have more input into the design because that area is within an historic district.

Preservation of Town Records

Last year, Chairman Morely recalls the Committee stated to the Town Clerk that it needed to have a long-term plan presented as to what the full financial scope of the preservation project would be and how many years it would take to complete. He emphasized he is not opposed to the project, but he would have preferred to have the requested information from last year presented to the Committee this year.

Mr. Hill stated it requires a considerable amount of work to project the answers to those questions. He opined that the Town Clerk might need a few years to ascertain that information. Ms. Remington noted that the money spent on intermittent projects is not wasted because the records ultimately need to be preserved. Chairman Morely stated that in the current economic climate, he believes it would be better to present the project at Town Meeting within the context of a long-range plan than to not offer a plan at all.

Mr. Hill opined that the project could be made smaller by allocating fewer funds than was requested. He further stated that a few of the historic projects submitted, such as the Town Pound stone wall could be delayed as well, although he would prefer attending to it sooner rather than later.

Ms. Cline questioned whether the Town Clerk could be asked to provide a long-term plan for review by the Committee at its next meeting. Chairman Morely opined that it is unlikely the information could be obtained in that timeframe, since he had attempted to ascertain that information from the Town Clerk during the public hearing.

Ms. Heerwegen stated she too would prefer to have long-term information regarding the project. Ms. Remington asked if a condition could be presented, stating that funding would be recommended this year, but the Committee expects a long-term plan to be developed after the vaults have been cleared and items can be more easily identified for preservation. Mr. Hill reiterated that he believes it might take two years to develop such a plan.

Ms. Kablack noted that the Goodnow Library Trustees forwarded a letter of support for this project, which she will circulate electronically to the Committee for review.

Town Hall Historic Structure Report

Ms. Kablack stated she has suggested this proposal be withdrawn. The Mass. Historical Commission grant that has been applied for has not been received favorably. She explained that the overall Town Hall project is not likely to be worked on actively in the near future. Thus, Ms. Kablack believes it would be best to withdraw the proposal and further explore other funding sources. She further emphasized that she believes it is important for the Committee to exhibit to the community its fiscal restraint by not recommending proposals be funded for projects not ready to come to fruition.

Melone Recreation Feasibility Study

Over a year ago, Chairman Morely stated he encouraged the baseball contingent to pursue its ideas. However, at this time, he believes this proposal has too many unknowns to proceed to Town Meeting. Chairman Morely further stated he does not think it is prudent to fund a plan/feasibility study before the privately owned out parcel is acquired, as this will potentially affect the overall development of the parcel. He also noted that, in the past, housing groups in Town have expressed interest in the parcel. Chairman Morely further stated that the Park & Recreation user needs could be better documented.

A brief discussion ensued regarding whether CPA funds could be used to expand/improve existing fields such as Davis and Feeley. Ms. Kablack opined that she believes an expansion of Davis Field could be CPA-eligible, and she will be researching this issue further. She asked Ms. Heerwegen if Park & Recreation would be amenable to delaying the project for another year while it conducts more analysis.

Ms. Remington stated that the project seems to be ahead of itself. She noted that the Gale report is seven years old and suggested that a precise evaluation is first needed of what the Town's needs are before any fields are reconfigured. Ms. Kablack stated that Department of Public Works Director Bill Place has several ideas as to how existing fields could be better used. Ms. Heerwegen stated she thought Mr. Place had expressed concern for how much Feeley could be improved and that he thought it might always have drainage issues.

Ms. Kablack referenced a copy of the 2000 Community Preservation Coalition guidebook on potential uses of CPA funds, stating she would like to further research whether CPA funds can only be used for recreation purposes on land acquired with CPA funds.

Ms. Remington asked if the property could possibly be needed by the Town in the future for a school. Ms. Kablack stated it is possible, although the Schools have passed on this opportunity in the past.

Ms. Kablack asked Ms. Heerwegen if the 2004 Gale report data is still believed to be accurate. Ms. Heerwegen stated there is an increased need expressed by women's softball and lacrosse groups. She emphasized the express need for diamonds of various sizes over rectangular fields.

Chairman Morely stated the Board of Selectmen has yet to decide the highest and best use of the property. Thus, he believes the use of this property needs to be further studied.

Ms. Remington asked if the issues related to the Sudbury Water District had been resolved. Ms. Heerwegen stated the issues would require more study.

Ms. Kablack asked if Park & Recreation wants to proceed with the proposal. Ms. Heerwegen stated it might not want to proceed if the Town had another use in mind. However, in the absence of any other viable proposal, and given that Park & Recreation has an expressed need, it would prefer to use the property.

Ms. Cline stated there is a real need for affordable housing in Town, and a large parcel to work with would be welcomed. However, she too believes the single-family house lot in the middle of the parcel needs to be resolved by the Town. Ms. Cline opined she does not believe the location of the property presents any additional transportation issues than any other location in Town does for an affordable housing project.

Chairman Morely reiterated that there is more proactive planning that needs to be done by the Board of Selectmen to avoid the property being unused for another decade. However, he also noted the great job done with the Cummings property recently, and he questioned if commercial use of the property should be further explored to help alleviate the residential tax burden.

Mr. Kneeland opined there seems to be a need for baseball users, but he believes the Town first needs to determine how this 33-acre parcel should be used. He further stated that, in light of the Town's fiscal constraints, it is imperative that the Town first decide on the use of the property.

Ms. Heerwegen asked if there is a sense of how long it would take the Town to make a recommendation to the voters on a use for the property. Ms. Kablack noted that, this year, Town staff members have often

had to shift priorities, but it is not possible to conduct a highest and best use study without financial or personnel resources. She noted the Board of Selectmen would need to further discuss the proposal and determine its priority in relation to other projects.

Chairman Morely stated that it would be helpful to get Town Counsel's opinion on the eligibility of CPA funds for work on Davis Field. Ms. Kablack noted that this and a few other options would be pursued. She further asked Ms. Heerwegen to discuss with Park & Recreation if it would want to delay the project at this time. Ms. Heerwegen stated clarification on the Davis Field question would be welcomed and that a meeting with Nancy McShea and Bill Place might also be useful.

Water for Center Islands

Ms. Kablack stated the consensus is that this proposal is not eligible for CPA funds. However, she further stated the Sudbury Garden Club is very interested in the idea.

Mr. Hill and Chairman Morely stated they like the idea, but it falls into the realm of maintenance. Ms. Cline stated she views the proposal as an installation, and she also believes it is not CPA-eligible. Ms. Remington believes the development of the irrigation and adjustments to the curb cuts and immediate area would be more costly than what was proposed.

Sudbury Zoning Coordinator Sally Hild stated it is possible that the Sudbury Garden Club could qualify for grant money, if it is an organized non-profit. Ms. Kablack suggested Ms. Hild share this information with the Club.

Town-wide Walkways

Chairman Morely asked if the requested funding for this project could be reduced.

Ms. Kablack stated although not ideal, funding could be reduced and the program could still be continued.

Fairbank Farm Historic Preservation Restriction and Agricultural Preservation Restriction

At this time, Ms. Kablack stated it is difficult to determine the value of the Historic Preservation Restriction (HPR). Mr. Hill asked if the Town could give the owner \$25,000 per year to be used for maintenance rather than a lump sum payment. He also suggested a payment plan structure be considered for the \$750,000 APR. Ms. Kablack stated a meeting is scheduled next week with the owner's lawyers and these options could be broached, since the owner has expressed some interest in payments received over a span of years.

Ms. Cline asked if there is a probability of any other Town Meeting articles needing to be bonded. Ms. Kablack stated that there is a possibility the Route 20 Wastewater System Design proposal for \$1 million would likely go to a debt exclusion vote, but she is unaware of others articles at this time. Ms. Cline asked if the Fairbank Farm APR could be bonded with the Noyes School Repairs. Ms. Kablack stated the Noyes School project timing, which will be voted on this month, does not coincide with the Fairbank project. It was further noted that Sudbury's Finance Director would likely advise that the CPA pay cash for the Fairbank proposals, which Ms. Kablack noted could easily be paid from reserves.

Town Historic Projects

Chairman Morely asked the age of the Wadsworth Cemetery Gazebo, which Mr. Hill will provide at the next meeting. Mr. Hill asked if Cemetery Supervisor Scott Taylor would have funds in his budget to contribute to the gazebo project. Chairman Morely asked that the information regarding Mr. Taylor's budget be ascertained for the next meeting.

Chairman Morely questioned the validity of the proposed \$4,500 cost for the Florence Hosmer gravestone. It was noted that the gravestone cost estimate appears to be in an acceptable range, and that it factors in installation by the DPW. From an historical perspective, Mr. Kneeland questioned if the gravestone should be installed. Chairman Morely stated that the CPA statute allows for historic markers. Mr. Hill emphasized that an argument could be made that, since the Town was responsible for Ms. Hosmer in the last 20 years of her life, it was the Town's responsibility to provide her with a gravestone. He believes Ms. Hosmer deserves a gravestone, given her historical significance to Sudbury.

Chairman Morely expressed concern as to whether the estimated \$500 for Invasive Plant removal is CPA-eligible. Ms. Kablack believes the project is eligible for funding as it can be considered restoration of historic landscapes. Mr. Hill noted CPA funds were used similarly to clear an area at the Wayside Inn.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the proposed \$10,000 to restore the stone walls at the Town Pound and the Revolutionary War Cemetery. Mr. Hill explained the purpose of the wood cap. He stated that, although the project could be delayed another year or the project cost could be reduced, the intent was to restore the stone walls and enhance the safety of the area. Mr. Hill also emphasized the need to restore the Hosmer House four chimneys.

In response to a question from Ms. Heerwegen, Chairman Morely stated that the Committee has been able to save funds in previous years and has not exceeded its annual revenue. Thus, a decision would need to be made this year as to whether to recommend that reserves be used to fund projects or whether recommended projects for funding should be reduced to exhibit the Committee's fiscal restraint to the community.

Minutes

The Board was previously in receipt of copies of the draft meeting minutes of December 1, 2010 for review. Ms. Kablack requested additional time to finalize the minutes.

CPC Future Meeting Schedule

Ms. Kablack suggested the Committee next meet on January 26, 2011. She noted Warrant articles are due on January 31, 2011. Thus, the proposals could be voted on January 26th and preliminary draft articles could be written in time for the deadline.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 9:47 p.m.