

TOWN OF LUDLOW, MASSACHUSETTS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE

**Minutes of March 10, 2025, Capital Improvement Planning Committee.
Meeting began at 5:30 p.m.**

Members Present: Marc Strange, James Gennette, Luis Vitorino, Tony Sanches, Josh Carpenter

Members Absent: Ron Saloio

5:30 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance

I. Committee Business

- Review & discuss five-year capital plan

Mr. Gennette: We don't have a 5-year yet so I think we're going to hold off.

- CIPC requests

Mr. Gennette: \$93,371 for the Town Hall elevator repair.

Mr. Carpenter: We're good with our certifications?

Mr. Gennette: We have 4 million certified.

Mr. Strange: It's a conservative estimate. It will be somewhere between 4 – 4 ½.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to recommend approval of the Town Hall elevator repair in the amount of \$93,371. **Mr. Vitorino second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Mr. Gennette: Additional funding for the LHS sports. That's done. Veteran's Center Ford Ranger XL, \$22,500. For everyone to review, we had a volunteer using their truck and different trailer to haul food for the shelter at the Vet's Center and I'm worried about the liability.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to approve the Ford Ranger XL at the Veteran's Center in the amount of \$22,500. **Mr. Vitorino second.**

Mr. Gennette: I want to add that the VFW did donate a bunch of money towards funding this vehicle and they will be buying their own trailer so this is almost like a match.

All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.

March 4, 2025

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Mr. Gennette: Community Center, nothing there. DPW. The trash and recycling bins we had talked about it last time and we made a recommendation that we would pay for the trash bins out of free cash. \$152,136 this year or at least for 2026.

Mr. Carpenter: We're leasing these for 5 years?

Mr. Gennette: Lease to own.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to recommend approval for \$152,136 for the first year of a 5-year lease on the trash and recycling containers. **Mr. Sanches second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Mr. Carpenter: We took the plow off but not the plow with utility package?

Mr. Strange: You pushed it to 27.

Mr. Sanches: They have an extra vehicle they can put a plow on.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to recommend approval in the amount of \$79,727 for the F350 with the plow and utility package for the DPW. **Mr. Sanches second.**

Mr. Gennette: To let the community know, there are 2 vehicles that we did not approve; one for \$60,975 and another for \$53,118 that did not pass. They were denied at a previous meeting so this is the only plow vehicle they're getting this year.

All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Gennette: DPW Bobcat Bandit 1390 XP chipper. They've been asking for this the past 4-5 years and we're hoping the existing chipper is going to go help the Westover Golf Course.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to recommend approval of \$96,977 for the Bobcat Bandit chipper. **Mr. Vitorino second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Mr. Gennette: Volvo L60 GP Wheel loader, the 2nd of 3 years.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to recommend approval for \$69,653 for the Volvo L60 GP Wheel loader for the 2nd year of the 3-year lease. **Mr. Sanches second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Mr. Gennette: The Fire Department. The Lucas CPR device replacement. This is a 1-time purchase. \$40,000 for 2 devices. These are the chest compression devices.

Mr. Carpenter: If I remember correctly, there is a grant out for this?

Mr. Gennette: There is a grant out for this and if it comes in they will not be taking these funds. Either way, he needs these devices.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to recommend approval for the Lucas CPR device replacements in the amount of \$40,000. **Mr. Vitorino second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Mr. Gennette: Ladder truck. This is the 4th year of the 5-year lease.

Mr. Carpenter: Is it cheaper if we pay off both years that are remaining?

Mr. Gennette: I think Chief is trying to keep these organized with his budget. We have the other truck coming behind it.

Motion made by Mr. Goncalves to recommend \$335,000 for the 4 of 5-year lease on the ladder truck. **Mr. Sanches second. All in favor. Motion passed 5-0.**

Mr. Gennette: Ambulance. This is the 2nd of a 4-year lease.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to recommend \$100,000 for the 2nd of 4-year lease for the ambulance.

Mr. Gennette: This is coming out of the ambulance subscription fund. This does not come out of free cash. The Fire Department pays for it themselves.

Mr. Sanches second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Gennette: Nothing from the Council on Aging this year. Nothing from the Library. We held off on the computers. For the Police Department we turned down a Ford Explorer and Chevy Tahoe, both totaling \$120,000. We still need to replace 2 patrol vehicles. This is the annual replacement.

Mr. Carpenter: For clarification, what do we do with the vehicles they take out of rotation?

Mr. Gennette: Sometimes we use them for Town departments or they'll go back to auction.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to recommend \$140,000 for the 2 police vehicles. **Mr. Vitorino second.**

Mr. Gennette: Marc, did we find out about cameras being a part of that?

Mr. Strange: No, it's not a part of that.

Mr. Gennette: If we did that, would that be part of the union?

Mr. Strange: Yes, we'd have to negotiate with the union.

All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Gennette: For the school we already nixed a couple of requests for classroom upgrades and that looks like a total of \$75,000. For the HVAC units we have the Baird Middle School cafeteria heat only.

Mr. Carpenter: There's 2. 1A and 1B, same dollar amount just 2 different units.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to recommend \$202,000 from free cash for middle school 1A and 1B heating units. **Mr. Sanches second.**

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Vitorino, I know we talked about the prices of these and I know you won't quote anything like that but you felt this was within the parameters.

Mr. Vitorino: You have to make the assumption that they didn't just pull this number out of the sky. We didn't see many quotes in the past from the School Department but I know they have to get 3 prices. Some of the quotes we've seen like the windows for the library were coming in at a low number that once they went out to bid they were nowhere near it. Sometimes it's a little bit higher knowing you have to get 3 prices anyway. It would be nice to see these like they were in the old days.

All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Gennette: Moving on to the Ludlow High School fire panel replacement. I know we replaced a fire panel over at East Street School last year. This one is a little more robust. We did talk to Chief Pease and his staff about the panel and they do agree that it needs to be replaced.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to recommend \$175,000 for the high school fire panel replacement. **Mr. Vitorino second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Mr. Gennette: The LHS emergency power network closet for both the high school and Baird Middle School. I'm still not comfortable with this for this year. It's not something I wouldn't approve next year but I'm not prepared to do this yet until I get a little more information. It's up to you guys.

Mr. Carpenter: Is this a back up generator power for these 2?

Mr. Gennette: No, it's to equip the closet.

Mr. Sanches: The write up from the school is it is emergency power to network closets like more organizations like schools are heavily dependent on technology and communication safety. This is evident in our daily operations and even more so during emergency situations. Our internet, including our ability to communicate with parents and our voice over IP phones are run by network service at each school. When the power goes out there is a battery back up in the closet where they are housed to keep us going for X amount of time. It sounded to me like the closets and servers were set up throughout the schools but the generator was installed way before any of this internet stuff was installed. They are not on the generator back up at all. When the power

goes out, these things are heavily relying on battery backups. I thought they had given us a write up with further clarification.

Mr. Gennette: They gave us a detailed overview of all the work that would need to be done.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to approve \$56,000 for the emergency power to the high school network closet. **Mr. Sanches second.**

Mr. Carpenter: If the power goes out right now, there's no power to that except for the battery backup.

Mr. Gennette: There is to the school, just not the network.

Mr. Sanches: No internet or phones.

Mr. Gennette: We did just switch over their phones. I want to know how old that generator is, how often it's tested and used. Let's take care of the high school this year at \$56,000 and Baird next year.

Mr. Vitorino: I was on the building committee when they did the renovation and I don't remember. I'm positive they didn't provide enough emergency power to the entire building. The other thing is back in those days it was all those UPS systems. As the network goes on, I guarantee all those network closets were taken to today's standards. They probably never thought about emergency power along the way. Every time we have a power outage the network goes down because we put everything on the network that wasn't there before. I can see that becoming an issue. It does seem like a lot of money but most of those systems you can't just run a cord from one room to the other. You've got to run power to that from the emergency power panels. I'm sure they're as far away as they can be.

Mr. Carpenter: Do you think that price will be \$24,000 next year?

Mr. Sanches: The schools are heavily relied on as our safety complex too. If the power is out most of the school is up and running but your education is gone because everything relies on technology. You'll have no PC's running whatsoever. Your safety is gone as well if the cameras are hooked up to that same internet. I would say it does have other uses. \$24,000 is not a huge hit. And it's a one-time fee. Next year it looks like they have a bigger request. Two more HVAC units. We have the funds this year and could get it done now. It's a one-time expense.

Mr. Gennette: I'm sold.

Mr. Carpenter: That's where I am. Not to mention we cut \$72 in requests from the classrooms.

Mr. Gennette: This is infrastructure. I do consider this part of the facilities.

Mr. Carpenter: We have a motion for the high school right now. We can start with that and see where everybody goes.

All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to approve \$24,000 for the middle school emergency power. **Mr. Vitorino second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Mr. Gennette: Golf. These are all out of retained earnings from the golf course. Ground Master 4500 rough mower.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to approve \$101,927 from the golf course retained earnings for the Ground Master 4500 rough mower. **Mr. Sanches second.**

Mr. Gennette: Do we know what their total retained earnings are?

Mr. Strange: Not yet. We'll get that certified with free cash. They're comfortable. They looked at the past 3-4 years retained earnings and they're comfortable that they can cover this.

Mr. Gennette: At some point I'm hoping they can return some cash to the Town.

All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Gennette: Golf carts. The 3rd year of a 4-year lease.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to approve \$73,428 from the golf operating budget for the 3rd year of a 4-year lease on the golf carts. **Mr. Sanches second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Mr. Gennette: Toro Sandpro 340. We're paying this one off this year.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to recommend \$9,439 from the golf retained earnings for the Toro Sandpro. **Mr. Vitorino second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Mr. Gennette: Also, the last year of a 3-year is the Kubota 360.

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to approve from retained earnings of the golf course \$16,127 for the Kubota 360. **Mr. Vitorino second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Mr. Gennette: I think that's all of them on the list. It was a relatively light year.

Mr. Carpenter: Next year is going to be the big one.

Mr. Gennette: You don't need any other approvals from us?

Mr. Strange: No.

Mr. Gennette: When we do this list this year, the recommendations to the Board of Selectmen, I'll read them off at the meeting and I'm sure Tony will read them at FinCom, can you also put in what was turned down? I want everybody to know that we didn't just approve everything

under the sun. I think that's pretty important. We didn't do that over the past couple of years but I think that might be a good practice going forward.

Mr. Strange: Just because it does relate to capital and how much free cash we're going to have I'm inclined to un-fund the OPEB this year so we have a little bit more, depending on how the Board votes, to give us a little bit more wiggle room for using free cash to balance the budget.

Mr. Gennette: This 2.4 is not including what we're moving to stabilization or OPEB.

Mr. Strange: It includes all that.

Mr. Gennette: So, 2.44 has OPEB.

Mr. Strange: There's \$200,000 to OPEB.

Mr. Vitorino: And you're taking that out to move to free cash?

Mr. Strange: That's my thinking. Everything else is mandated by a policy or bylaw. We do have an OPEB policy but it's a little ambiguous. It does not define either a percentage or number minimum that needs to be put into the trust fund.

Mr. Gennette: Your thought process is that we need room in case we need it for the operating budget.

Mr. Carpenter: How are we on some of these other general government expenditures? Like snow & ice.

Mr. Strange: We're over on snow & ice. I don't know exactly but we can raise that next year. We typically raise and appropriate that instead of using free cash. Last year we had trouble balancing as well.

Mr. Carpenter: The opioid fund is new this year. I say Marc types them up and presents them on a Tuesday night.

Mr. Gennette: OPEB is sitting at 1.29 now and we're expecting 200 but we're going to hold off.

Mr. Strange: Right now, that's the plan. Obviously if the Board decides to make cuts to balance the budget we may not have to back out the OPEB. I'd like to keep a million dollars in free cash moving into next year.

Mr. Sanches: I'm looking forward to your 5-year plan. You're adding on radio communication maintenance.

Mr. Strange: I still don't understand why it was deferred for the first couple years but this is the first year it's coming due. The choices are to put it into the operating budget or to use free cash.

Considering the state of the budget we put it in as free cash this year. The current contract is 10 years and the first 2 were covered.

Mr. Gennette: At \$81,715 every year?

Mr. Strange: Yes.

Mr. Sanches: You're putting it aside in case it needs repair, just like the school turf?

Mr. Strange: There's an annual maintenance every year. The turf is a savings account.

Mr. Gennette: So, the turf at \$100,000 is a savings account for future repairs and ongoing?

Mr. Strange: The thought is to put in \$100,000 into an account for 10 years so at that time we'll have enough money to replace the turf.

Mr. Carpenter: Could that be an enterprise fund?

Mr. Strange: There's no user fees generated. Some organizations pay to use the high school I just don't know if it's going to be enough to cover \$100,000/year.

Mr. Gennette: Will this be part of an investment account?

Mr. Strange: I have not asked the investment company yet. Whether we do a stabilization fund or revolving fund I'm not quite sure yet.

- Committee to approve & sign meeting minutes from February 10, 2025

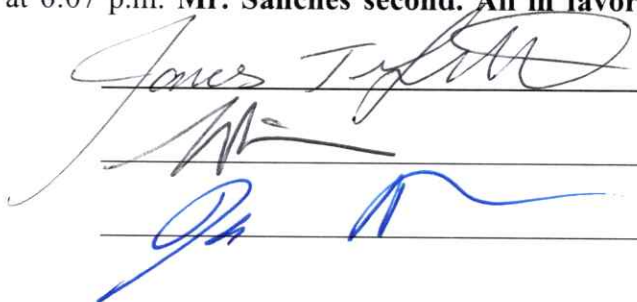
Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to approve the minutes of February 10, 2025, with all members present except myself. **Mr. Vitorino second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

II. Committee Open Discussion

- New Business
- Old Business

Mr. Gennette: I'd like to wish Mr. Carpenter and Mr. Saloio the best of luck at the election

Motion made by Mr. Carpenter to adjourn at 6:07 p.m. **Mr. Sanches second. All in favor. Motion passed 4-0.**

Three handwritten signatures in blue ink are written over three horizontal lines. The top signature is the most legible, appearing to read 'James T. Saloio'. The middle signature is a stylized 'M'. The bottom signature is a stylized 'J'.

