

**Capital Improvement Planning Committee**  
**November 10, 2011 Brookfield Elementary School Library**  
**Minutes**

**Members Present:** Heather Lemieux, Jerry Johnson, Barbara Wilson, Sharon Mahoney and Peter O'Connell

**Members Absent:** Sheila Frangiamore and Kermit Eaton

The meeting was called to order at 7:09.

1. **Minutes:** Jerry Johnson moved and Barbara Wilson seconded the motion to approve the minutes of September 22, 2011 with one minor edit. So Voted.

2. **Presentation by David Nixon, Hadley Town Administrator**

Heather Lemieux thanked David Nixon for coming to brief the committee about how he uses expense and revenue data to identify positive and negative trends in Hadley's financial position. Mr. Nixon presented hard copies of handouts relating to Hadley's capital plan and 26 financial indicators that he has developed over the past several years and noted that he had emailed these documents to Donna Neylon. He pointed out that Brookfield could use the forms as templates, substituting readily available Brookfield data to generate indicators for Brookfield.

Mr. Nixon noted that there are several good reasons to do financial forecasting and trend analysis:

1. The Department of Revenue expects it and gives you points if you do it;
2. Bonding and Loan Agencies will request this data;
3. The Analytical tools help you move away from a reactive mode focusing on a single fiscal year by looking at trends over the past 3-5 years, to identify issues and to formulate options for addressing them in immediate future;
4. Once problematic trends are identified, a more detailed analysis can be undertaken in a handful of areas that will make the most difference to the financial well-being of the Town.
5. The tools allow decision-makers to assess the impact of **past** decisions on current town finances and then to project and later to measure the impact of **current** decisions on future town finances.

Mr. Nixon then took the committee through the capital plan and the 26 indicators. Each indicator focused on a single area of the budget, analyzing how each area's share of the budget had changed over the past few years, whether the area posed an immediate danger or should be watched, and whether any policy changes were to be recommended. He updates his indicators annually and uses them to shape the budget he proposes to the Board of Selectmen.

He strongly recommended that the Board of Selectmen, Advisory Committee and Capital Planning Committee purchase and **A Handbook for Local Government**, published by the International City and County Manager's Association, which gives additional indicators and also provides an explanation about how each indicator can be used.

The members thanked Mr. Nixon for his presentation, which all found to be eye-opening.

3. **Capital Improvement Committee By-Law:** Mr. O'Connell distributed the changes in wording for the By-Law proposed by the Committee that would make the CIPC into a standing

committee, if approved by the Town Meeting. On a motion by Sharon Mahoney, seconded by Jerry Johnson, the committee voted unanimously to request that the Selectmen limit the committee to seven members (plus the Town Accountant, ex officio, non-voting) by appointing no more than three community members. Also the committee needs to find out what the required quorum will be given that the Town Accountant is an ex officio, non-voting member.

4. **Town Meeting Capital Articles:** Mr. O'Connell briefly reviewed the capital articles on the November 18 Special Town Meeting Warrant.
5. **Status of Capital Requests from Various Committees and Departments:**
  - a. Barbara Wilson was surprised that no one from the Recreation Committee was present since she had invited them to the meeting. She will ask the committee to submit its requests for the December meeting.
  - b. Jerry Johnson said that the Highway Department has been delayed by the recent storm in submitting its capital requests, but that he would ask them to submit their request for the December meeting.
  - c. Heather will present the committee with information about permitting software for the Planning Board;
  - d. Peter will seek updated information from the other Selectmen on capital requests for the Town Hall, Police station, computers and software, and energy.
6. **Capital Planning Request Form:** Jerry Johnson moved and Sharon Mahoney seconded a motion to recommend to the Board of Selectmen the Capital Planning Request Form developed by Sheila Frangiamore and Kermit Eaton with the provision that it be reformatted to a 2-sided form with no boxes, that it be made available to budget planners on-line, and that the Selectmen include it in the FY13 budget packages. So voted.
7. **EMS Revised Expense and Income History:** The committee reviewed the revised excel spreadsheet of expense and income figures for EMS.
8. **The date for the next CIPC meeting will be December 15th at 7 PM at the Brookfield Elementary School.**
9. **Adjournment:** Sharon Mahoney moved and Barbara Wilson seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. So voted at 9:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter S. O'Connell, Clerk