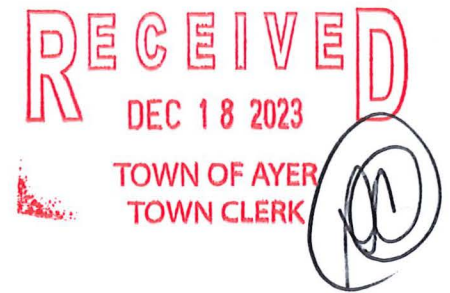


Town of Ayer
Capital Planning Committee
Meeting Minutes of November 30, 2023



Attendance: Scott Houde (Chair); James Stephen; Barbara Tierney (Finance Manager); Robert Pontbriand (Town Manager); Jim Pinard

Absent: Christopher Hillman; Kurt Fraczkowski

Also in Attendance: Dan Van Schalkwyk (DPW Director); Kimberly Abraham (Water and Sewer Superintendent); Police Chief Brian Gill; Fire Chief Tim Johnston; Sara Withee (Resident)

Call to Order:

S. Houde called the meeting of the Capital Planning Committee to order at 5:00pm in the First Floor Meeting Room of the Ayer Town Hall.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes (November 16, 2023):

The Committee reviewed the DRAFT November 16, 2023 meeting minutes.

Motion: A motion was made by J. Stephen and seconded by J. Pinard to approve the November 16, 2023 meeting minutes. **Motion Passed 5-0.**

Review and Discussion of the FY 2025 DPW Capital Plan:

Dan Van Schalkwyk, DPW Director and Kimberly Abraham, Water and Sewer Superintendent appeared before the Capital Planning Committee to present the FY 2025 DPW Capital Plan.

(Note: The FY 2025 DPW power point presentation can be found on the Capital Planning Committee webpage on the Town's website at www.ayer.ma.us/capital).

At the conclusion of the FY 2025 DPW Capital Plan presentation, D. Van Schalkwyk and K. Abraham answered questions and received input from the Capital Planning Committee.

J. Stephen asked for clarification on what the Town's Stormwater Permit is.

D. Van Schalkwyk advised that the Stormwater Permit is required by the EPA and DEP for the discharge of Stormwater in a piped system (the sewer system).

J. Pinard asked what the Army paid for the Grove Pond PFAS Treatment.

D. Van Schalkwyk advised approximately \$4 million to include three years of operating/maintenance costs of which we are in year-one.

J. Pinard asked that when the three years are over those costs will then go into the DPW Budget.

K. Abraham stated yes, and we are currently looking at \$12,000 to \$13,000 per quarter in costs which would translate to approximately \$260,000 a year.

DPW General Fund Capital Plan – Engineering Division: \$65,000 for Park Street Improvement Project Final Design

D. Van Schalkwyk advised that this request is for the final design of the Park Street Improvement Project which is currently at 50% design. This project involves putting the utilities underground; utilities upgrade; sidewalks; and streetscape improvements along the portion of Park Street from Main Street/West Main Street to Groton Street. The Town's Office of Community and Economic Development will be applying for a state MassWorks Grant for the construction of the project. This \$65,000 is for the final design.

J. Pinard asked if this project would improve traffic conditions.

D. Van Schalkwyk advised that it would not improve congestion/traffic but it is the next step before the project on the Transportation Improvement Plan which is the reconfiguration/redesign of that the intersection.

Jim Pinard stated that is encouraging to hear because we need to address the traffic congestion there. It is bad.

DPW General Fund – Highway Division: \$95,000 for Road Paving

D. Van Schalkwyk advised that this is the annual contribution from Capital to supplement the Town's Chapter 90 funds from the State for road paving. This is an increase from \$85,000 due to the increased costs of liquid asphalt because of inflation.

J. Pinard asked how much the Town receives in Chapter 90 funding.

D. Van Schalkwyk stated about \$240,000 a year.

DPW General Fund – Highway Division: \$175,000 for Municipal Tractor/Sidewalk Snow Blower

D. Van Schalkwyk advised that the Town has two municipal tractor sidewalk snow blowers. A 2009 model and a 2017 model. The Town can no longer get parts for the 2009 model. The request should be revised from \$175,000 to \$190,000 based on a revised quote.

J. Pinard asked if there was any trade-in value.

D. Van Schalkwyk stated, not much.

J. Stephen stated that if we can no longer get the parts, it is time to replace the vehicle.

DPW General Fund – Stormwater: \$410,000 Total Request

D. Van Schalkwyk stated that this the standard annual request for Stormwater in the amount of \$410,000 as follows:

\$50,000 for Stormwater Biofiltration/Outfall Improvements

\$130,000 for Stormwater Culvert Improvements

\$230,000 for Stormwater Storm Drain Upgrades

D. Van Schalkwyk stated that the Town is currently exploring outside funding sources for Stormwater needs in the development of a Stormwater Utility. There is currently a Working Group appointed by the Select Board working on this with support from a professional consultant. Ultimately, a Stormwater Utility would need to be approved by Town Meeting.

DPW General Fund – Cemetery

D. Van Schalkwyk advised that there are no FY 2025 capital requests for the Cemetery.

J. Pinard asked what the Town budgets to run the Woodlawn Cemetery.

D. Van Schalkwyk advised approximately \$45,000 a year.

J. Pinard asked how much revenue the Town brings in from the Woodlawn Cemetery.

D. Van Schalkwyk stated that this was the first full year of the Town taking over the Woodlawn Cemetery. The newly appointed Cemetery Commission recently reviewed the rates and recommended increases to the Select Board which were approved. We have not and do not expect to generate a lot of revenue from the Cemetery.

B. Tierney advised that a portion of the funds collected go into a special perpetual care fund and the remainder go into the General Fund.

DPW Water Enterprise Fund Requests:

K. Abraham provided an overview of the FY 2025 DPW Water Capital Requests.

\$300,000 for Water Main Replacement

K. Abraham advised that this is the Town's annual funding of water main replacement and that this would cover approximately 2,000 feet of water main replacement.

Washington Street Water Tank Painting

K. Abraham advised that no additional funding is going to be needed in FY 2025 for this project.

J. Pinard asked how the tank is painted.

K. Abraham stated that it is drained, and the Pingry Hill Tank provides the temporary water support.

J. Pinard asked about a third water tank for the Town.

K. Abraham stated that there will be some water storage from the New Clear Well once it is constructed.

\$350,000 for Spectacle Pond Well #3 Pumping Station and Transmission

K. Abraham stated that this is the next phase in the development of the Spectacle Pond Well #3.

\$100,000 for Spectacle Pond GAC Media Replacement

There were no questions.

\$50,000 for Grove Pond Green Sand Valve Replacements

There were no questions.

\$95,000 for 6-Wheel Dump Truck

K. Abraham stated that this would replace a 2008 truck that has 762,000 miles and is used for both water operations and snow removal. This price does not include the plow but the components to transfer a plow.

D. Van Schalkwyk stated that we would put the old truck out to salvage bid.

\$75,000 for Spectacle Pond Chemical Skid

K. Abraham advised this was last done in 2011 and the corrosive nature of the chemicals used has worn down the chemical skid and it needs replacement.

K. Abraham provided an overview of the FY 2025 DPW Wastewater Capital Requests

\$750,000 for I/I Repairs

K. Abraham stated that inflow and infiltration can add over one million gallons of flow to the wastewater treatment plant which then has to be treated. By investing in I/I repairs this will improve the overall operation of the sewer system and efficiency of the treatment plant.

\$4,000,000 for Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades

K. Abraham advised that this is for the final of four phases to upgrade the wastewater treatment plant. These costs have already been factored into the rate model for the development of the FY 2025 sewer rates.

\$33,000 for Pump Impeller for Main and Central

There were no questions.

\$45,000 for Pick-up Truck Replacement

K. Abraham advised that the current truck is a 2007 with over 138,000 miles. It is used for wastewater operations and snow removal. This price does not include the plow but will have the hook ups for the plow.

J. Pinard asked if the DPW has a scheduled maintenance plan for the fleet.

D. Van Schalkwyk advised yes.

S. Houde stated that the price of \$45,000 seems low and should be verified.

K. Abraham stated that she obtained the price from the State Bid List but will verify.

\$500,000 for Sewer Pumping Station Upgrades

K. Abraham stated that this request would be for sewer pumping upgrades at Bennett's Brook and the Wright Way Pumping Station.

\$80,000 for Pump Station Generator Connections

K. Abraham advised that this is a phased approach for the Main and Central Pumping Stations.

S. Houde asked how many phases there were in total.

D. Van Schalkwyk stated two more after this. This project will enable the portable diesel generators to effectively connect to both pumping stations in the event of loss of power or for maintenance purposes.

Solid Waste/Transfer Station

D. Van Schalkwyk advised that there are no capital requests this year for the Solid Waste/Transfer Station.

J. Pinard stated that we have been spending a significant amount of money on I/I over the years.

D. Van Schalkwyk advised that it removes the I/I for less treatment costs and pumping costs.

J. Pinard asked if these I/I repairs are forever.

D. Van Schalkwyk stated no. Probably over the next 5 years.

The Capital Planning Committee thanked D. Van Schalkwyk and K. Abraham for their presentation.

S. Houde stated that this concludes the meetings with the Departments with significant capital requests for FY 2025. For the next meeting we can begin our detailed review and start our recommendation process.

Scheduling of Next Meeting:

The Committee scheduled the next meeting for Thursday, December 14, 2023 at 5pm.

Adjournment:

Motion: A motion was made by J. Stephen and seconded by B. Tierney to adjourn the Capital Planning Committee meeting at 6:05pm. **Motion passed 5-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:05pm.

Minutes recorded and submitted by R. Pontbriand, Town Manager.

Minutes reviewed and approved by the Capital Planning Committee on December 14, 2023.

Signed: 
Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager