



Town of Winchester

Helen S. Philliou, Chairman, Capital Planning Committee

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To: Town Meeting
From: Helen S. Philliou, Chair, Capital Planning Committee

cc: Select Board
Lisa Wong, Town Manager
Peter Haley, Town Moderator
Finance Committee

We are pleased to submit our annual FY 21 report of the Capital Planning Committee (CPC). The CPC has completed its evaluation of all capital project requests for the next five Fiscal Years.

The Capital Planning Committee would like to gratefully acknowledge the Town's decision via the Spring Override to provide an additional \$2 million in funding to the Stabilization Funds.

Tempered by the elimination of Retiring Debt, the override resulted in an annual net increase of \$400,000 into the Building Stabilization Fund (BSF) and approximately \$820,000 into the Capital Stabilization Fund (CSF) in FY20. While not realizing the full \$2 million provided by the override, the replacement of Retiring Debt with a guaranteed source of funding will increase the certainty of capital projects funding going forward. Even with this increased funding, the BSF and CSF cannot come close to matching the \$20 million in requests that were screened this year alone.

Typically, capital projects within the town go unnoticed. Fire Engines get replaced, roofs get repaired, and potholes eventually get filled. Though these capital projects affect every resident of Winchester they generally get completed with little regard. In the coming year, the impact of these funds will be substantial and very visible throughout the Town.

In FY21, Capital Planning is proposing to increase to \$500,000 the Town's Roads and Sidewalks budget – an increase of 54% over FY20. There will be additional spending on Capital Projects in Schools (Muraco classroom sinks/bubblers, Manchester Field track replacement, McCall classroom heating controls, ADA work to prepare Parkhurst for student use), as well as more funding for snow removal equipment (4 pieces of equipment). Traffic safety has been an emphasis of the Select Board and Capital Planning has voted to fund 3 major intersection construction projects.

After a delay of one year due to problems securing permission from property owners, Capital is requesting an increase of \$240,000 in bonding authority to cover increased construction costs, due to that delay, on the Swanton Street Bridge flood mitigation project. That project is now expected to begin in the summer of 2020. Repairs to the Waterfield Bridge will also begin in the summer of 2020. Finally, replacement of the 83 year old Lake Street Bridge is also scheduled to occur in the summer of 2020.

So, while we will have fewer potholes to dodge, travel through the town next summer is going to require patience, planning, extra time, and perhaps some creativity.

The scope of all of these intersection and bridge projects is too much to accomplish with the cash generated by the Funds even with the increased funding from the override. The unanticipated Lake Street Bridge project alone will require \$1,500,000. We had hoped for assistance from the State through its Municipal Small Bridge Program, but at this point in time it does not appear that funds through that program will be forthcoming and we will be required to pay for and bond that project in its entirety. Additionally, to accomplish other traffic projects with money in the CSF and to take advantage of currently favorable interest rates, it is being proposed that the estimated \$1,000,000 in repairs to the Waterfield Bridge also be bonded. The debt service for these bonds would be serviced through the Capital Stabilization Fund.

To say that the extent of indebtedness of the funds is a matter of concern to the Capital Planning Committee would be an understatement. Decisions to bond projects have invoked intense debate within the committee. That debate has led the committee to consider a policy restricting the amount of debt service that either fund may take on to a maximum of 50% of its annual Inflows.

The effect of this policy would be to restrict bonding of the Building Stabilization Fund immediately. In FY20, after the injection of new funds following the 2019 override, the Building Stabilization Fund has a Debt Service / Inflows ratio of 72.4% (it reached 89% in FY19) and will not be below the 50% threshold until FY25 (50.7%). The Capital Stabilization Fund has a Debt Service / Inflows ratio of 17.7% in FY20 (26% in FY19). The CSF ratio is expected to rise to 24.5% in FY21 as a result of the anticipated bonding of the Lake St. and Waterfield St. bridge projects.

While this idea is under consideration and may not be the exact policy enacted by the Capital Planning Committee, the committee believes that some safeguards must be put in place to ensure the responsible stewardship of the funds in meeting essential Town needs now and in the future

This year the CPC is recommending use of the following funds for the FY21 Capital Projects (excluding Water & Sewer Enterprise and Cemetery Permanent Care):

Capital Stabilization Fund	\$3,009,000
Building Stabilization	\$1,010,000
Borrowing	<u>\$2,740,000</u>
Total	\$6,759,000

Capital Planning Process

The process for evaluating capital project requests is a long and arduous one. It begins in June of every year and culminates at Fall Town Meeting. Requests for potential capital planning projects for the next five years are distributed to all elected and appointed Boards and Committees and municipal and school departments in order to create a comprehensive five-year needs assessment for the Town. This involves participation of the EFPBC, School Committee, Select Board, Town Manager, Energy Management Committee, Disabilities Access Commission, Library Trustees and department heads. These requests are prepared by professional staff and submitted to the CPC for review and prioritization.

The CPC consists of the following members per the Town's charter. Two members appointed by the Finance Committee, one member appointed by the Planning Board, one member appointed by the School Committee and three members appointed by the Select Board. The makeup of the CPC was designed to be inclusive of all Town agencies and relies on each member representing an appointed Board or Committee to report back to said Committee and also bring forward concerns and/or issues back to the CPC.

The CPC in evaluating each project relies on each Town entity submitting a proposal to take into consideration their immediate and long term capital needs. A major tool that is used by the Town in developing our long term immediate building repairs is the VFA/Accruent Building Envelope Program. This program helps to develop the expected life cycle and cost estimates for building system maintenance upgrade and replacement. This program allows for long term capital planning which helps the Town prioritize its five-year plan.

Additionally, the Department of Public Works and the Engineering Department have developed a comprehensive program for sewer, water, drainage, roads, traffic, sidewalks and flood mitigation projects. The Field Management Committee together with the DPW and School Department has developed a five-year field capital improvements plan. All of these tools utilized by the various Town agencies contribute to the development of a comprehensive plan for maintaining and improving the Town infrastructure and assets. It is important to note that per the Town Charter the CPC makes its final recommendation for its annual plan to the Town Manager and the Select Board who then approve the final Capital Plan.

Project Evaluation Criteria

The backbone to the Capital Planning process was the establishment of a ranking process that allows the CPC to evaluate each individual project in a consistent manner. The ranking is based on the following criteria:

- Public Health and Safety
- Mandates by State or Federal Government
- Necessary for Maintenance of Town Assets
- Demonstrated Increased Efficiency and /or Cost Savings

Each project request is required to address the following items when submitting to the CPC.

- 1) Expected lifetime of the item/project.
- 2) Expected operating costs of and manpower available to complete or use the item or project.
- 3) Comparison of purchasing versus leasing or outside contracting of the service and, where relevant, the cost of multi-town sharing of resources or equipment.
- 4) Need for the item/project and its effect on the operating budget-what it might save in maintenance and repair.
- 5) Departmental priorities for the current year's projects/items.
- 6) Estimated cost estimates of the item/project, supported by bids or quotes whenever possible.
- 7) A plan detailing item/projects awarded during the past three (3) years and those to be requested over the next three (3) years.
- 8) A schedule of implementation for approved items and projects, including a time line within the proposed FY.

One of the critical steps in completing the CPC's evaluation of each project is meeting with the individual responsible for requesting the project. At this meeting we discuss with the individual where the request fits into the overall goals for their long range capital plans. During this time we make sure that alternative strategies for meeting their needs have been evaluated. We also require that each party submitting a request has looked at utilizing alternative funding sources as well.

Long Term Capital Requests

Capital 5-Year Request Summary Table			
Departments	FY 21 Request	FY 22-25 Request	Total Five Year Request
ADA	125,000	500,000	625,000
DPW Buildings	350,000	6,455,000	6,805,000
DPW Cemetery	170,000	430,000	600,000
DPW Roads and Sidewalks	500,000	2,000,000	2,500,000
DPW Vehicles	690,000	1,159,000	1,849,000
DPW Water/Sewer	2,715,000	3,350,000	6,065,000
I&I 10 Year Plan		4,000,000	4,000,000
Engineering Stormwater & Drainage / MS4	205,000	TBD	205,000
Engineering Traffic /Bridges	3,555,000	TBD	3,555,000
Fire Department	9,030,000	470,000	9,500,000
Town Manager Flood	240,000	10,000,000	10,240,000
Town Manager Other	150,000	TBD	150,000
MIS	30,000	125,000	155,000
Police Department	100,000	220,000	320,000
Recreation Department	275,000	2,890,500	3,165,500
Town Clerk	20,000	TBD	20,000
School Department	1,284,223	17,183,250	18,467,473
Total FY 21 Requests	19,439,223		
Total FY 22-FY25 Requests		48,782,750	
Total Five Year Requests			68,221,973

This year alone there were in excess of \$20 million in Capital Stabilization Fund, Building Stabilization Fund and Water Sewer requests. The Building Stabilization Fund (BSF) is used for building maintenance, repairs and new construction. The Capital Stabilization Fund (CSF) is used for fields and playgrounds, roads and sidewalks, equipment, flood mitigation and bridge repair. Even though there was additional funding for the FY 21 capital budget there still remains several critical unfunded projects which include in no particular order; West Side Fire Station, DPW Complex, Fire Alarm Systems at Town Hall and DPW, Records Management, Parkhurst School Improvements, Carriage House Improvements, the final flood mitigation project, (The Railroad Bridge near Muraco School), the turf replacement at Manchester Field, and finally the renovation of Lynch and Muraco Elementary Schools.

FY 21 CPC Recommended Projects

Fall Town Meeting Borrowings:

Lake Street Bridge Construction	\$1,500,000
Waterfield Bridge Road Bridge Construction	\$1,000,000
Swanton Street Bridge Supplemental	\$240,000
Total	\$2,740,000

Fall Town Meeting Building Stabilization Fund

Parkhurst Elevator	\$910,000
Total	\$910,000

Fall Town Meeting Capital Stabilization Fund

DPW New Sidewalk Plow and Blower	\$148,000
DPW New Swaploader Hook Truck with Packer/Salter/Plow	\$187,000
DPW Bobcat for Downtown sidewalk Snow Removal	\$35,000
DPW New Salter Truck	\$184,000
Muraco School Classroom Sink/Cabinet Units Replacement	\$110,000
Construction of Church Street at Waterfield Road Traffic Improvements	\$130,000
Replacement of Manchester Field Track	\$150,000
Removal of Underground Fuel Tanks	\$25,000
McCall Middle School Traffic Improvements	\$925,000
Total	\$1,894,000

Fall Town Meeting Water & Sewer Enterprise Fund

North Reservoir Dam and Low Level Outlet Engineering	\$340,000
Total	\$340,000

Spring Town Meeting Building Stabilization Fund

Town Hall/DPW Fire Alarm Design	\$50,000
McCall Unit Vent Controls Phase One	\$50,000
Total	\$100,000

Spring Town Meeting Capital Stabilization Fund

ADA Projects	\$125,000
Public Safety Radios – Police & Fire Year 3 of 4	\$125,000
DPW Roads and Sidewalks	\$500,000
Risk Assessment Implementation	\$75,000
Records Management Feasibility Study	\$20,000
Lincoln Exterior Maintenance/Repair of Flatwork& Walkways	\$100,000
Engineering of Main Street Bridge Railings	\$75,000
Fire Chief Vehicle	\$45,000
Police 4 Wheel Drive for Reservoir Patrol	\$50,000
Total	\$1,115,000

Spring Town Meeting Water & Sewer Enterprise Fund

MS4 Year 3	\$205,000
North Reservoir Dam and Low Level Outlet Construction	\$2,000,000
Lead Neck Removal & Replacement (MWRA interest free Loan)	\$600,000
New F550 Dump Truck	\$65,000
Replacement of Water Meter Heads	\$50,000
Total	\$2,920,000

Spring Town Meeting Cemetery Trust Fund

Road Resurfacing/Signage/Tree Maintenance	\$60,000
Cemetery Holding Tomb Repairs	\$20,000
Total	\$80,000

FY 21 Project Descriptions – Fall Funding

Borrowings

Lake Street Bridge Construction

In January 2019, the town received a bridge inspection report from MassDOT for the Lake Street Bridge that identified significant deterioration. The engineering was funded at the Spring Town Meeting and this request is for the construction improvements, which will consist of a full bridge replacement.

Waterfield Bridge Road Bridge Construction

In the spring of 2016, the town received a bridge inspection report from MassDOT that identified several deficiencies. The project has been fully designed and final permitting will be complete in the fall of 2019. This request is for the construction improvements which will consist of bridge deck replacement/repairs and rehabilitation of the historic bridge railings.

Swanton Street Bridge Supplemental

In the fall of 2018 Town Meeting approved the \$2.8 million dollar appropriation for the construction of the Swanton Street Bridge Improvement Project (Project 8 of the Aberjona River Flood Mitigation Program). The project construction was delayed a year due to problems securing permission from property owners. This request is for the estimated increase in construction costs due to that delay.

Building Stabilization Fund

Parkhurst Elevator

This appropriation seeks funds for the installation of an elevator at the Parkhurst School. The installation of the elevator will allow for the lower level of the building to be utilized as potential classroom space or as rental space and is an ADA requirement.

Capital Stabilization Fund

DPW New Sidewalk Plow and Blower

New sidewalk plow blower will replace a 1984 sidewalk tractor. We use these machines to plow about 30 miles of sidewalk. Additionally, this machine will be able to sweep sidewalks as well.

DPW New Swaploader Hook Truck with Packer/Salter/Plow

New Loader hook truck with trash packer/ salter/plow will replace a 2001 Ford dump truck. The new truck will have multiple uses because of its many attachments; trash packer, dump body, chipper body, and salter body.

DPW Bobcat for Downtown sidewalk Snow Removal

New Bobcat to replace a 1986 bobcat. DPW uses this machine on construction and snow removal in the Town center.

DPW New Salter Truck

New salter truck is replacing a 1995 truck. The new truck will be used for construction and plowing and salt operations.

Muraco School Classroom Sink/Cabinet Units Replacement

The Muraco School Classrooms are served by a modular cabinet/domestic water supply units. These units are comprised of a metal base cabinet with a work top, sink basin with faucet and water bubbler combination. The present units have suffered leaking over time causing the cabinets to rust out and become a safety hazard and the fixtures present a constant maintenance issue. There is only one common water fountain located near the gym/cafeteria and these units as designed satisfy the offering of potable water requirements.

Construction of Church Street at Waterfield Road Traffic Improvements

The intersection of Church and Waterfield Road is difficult to navigate for pedestrians and vehicles alike. There was a pedestrian fatality at this location in 2018. Engineering services were funded through the Engineering Department and this request is for the construction of the intersection.

Replacement of Manchester Field Track

The track at Manchester Field is in need of refurbishment. The rubberized artificial running surface needs to be replaced. This fall appropriation will allow the work to be bid over the winter and the replacement work will occur over the summer.

Removal of Underground Fuel Tanks

The Public Safety Building and the Public Library have converted from oil to gas for their heating and the underground storage tanks needs to be removed from each site.

McCall Middle School Traffic Improvements

As part of the McCall Middle School Classroom Expansion Project the town allocated \$500,000 towards a traffic study and construction related improvements. The Town has been working with a traffic engineer to develop plans for improvements to the intersections of Main Streets and Washington Street and Mystic Valley Parkway and Waterfield Road. The remaining funds in the original appropriation are not sufficient to cover the costs of both intersection improvements. This request is for the balance of funds needed to complete these improvements.

Fall Town Meeting Water & Sewer Enterprise Fund

North Reservoir Dam and Low Level Outlet Engineering

The North Reservoir Dam consists of an earthen embankment with a benched downstream slope, a primary spillway, and a gatehouse with two outlets. This appropriation would provide funding for the development of plans and specifications and permitting required for the rehabilitation of the Dam and the Low Level Outlet.