



Bedford

MASSACHUSETTS

Community Preservation Committee

Meeting Minutes

7:00 PM

September 19, 2023

Meeting Held via Remote Participation

Members Present: Lee Vorderer; Robin Steele; Christina Wilgren; Margot Fleischman; David Goldbaum; Chris Gittins; Erin Dorr; Lauren Crews

Also Present: Assistant Town Manager of Operations, Amy Fidalgo; Director of Facilities, Ron Scaltreto; Finance Committee Member, Tom Rowan; Bedford Citizen Contributor, Dot Bergin; Abby Hafer; Library Trustee Member Rachel Fields

Chair Lee Vorderer opened the meeting at 7:00pm and stated that pursuant to Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, which temporarily suspends certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, this meeting of the Community Preservation Committee is being conducted via remote participation. Persons who would like to listen or view this meeting while in progress may do so by Zoom or by phone. This meeting is being recorded by the Town of Bedford. All votes taken by this body shall be by roll call vote.

The CPC members were asked to announce they were present: Ms. Vorderer, present; Ms. Steele, present; Ms. Wilgren, present; Ms. Fleischman, present; Mr. Goldbaum, present; Mr. Gittins, present; Ms. Dorr, present; Ms. Crews, present.

1. Meeting Minutes from June 6, 2023

Ms. Dorr moved to approve the meeting minutes of June 6, 2023. Ms. Steele seconded.

Ms. Vorderer, aye; Ms. Steele, aye; Ms. Wilgren, aye; Ms. Fleischman, aye; Mr. Goldbaum, aye; Mr. Gittins, aye; Ms. Dorr, aye; Ms. Crews; aye. The motion passed 8-0-0.

2. Fall 2023 Program and Plan Public Hearing

Ms. Steele moved to open the public hearing. Ms. Fleischman seconded.

Ms. Vorderer, aye; Ms. Steele, aye; Ms. Wilgren, aye; Ms. Fleischman, aye; Mr. Goldbaum, aye; Mr. Gittins, aye; Ms. Dorr, aye; Ms. Crews; aye. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Ms. Fidalgo reviewed the Fall 2023 Program and Plan. There was no public comment on the plan as written.

Ms. Fidalgo provided an overview of the supplemental FY24 funding request for the Public Library HVAC Replacement Project. Funding is being requested at Special Town Meeting in November 2023.

This project proposes to appropriate funds from the Fiscal Year 2024 Community Preservation Budget in order to provide additional funding necessary to complete the Bedford Free Public Library HVAC Replacement project, which was originally approved at the 2021 Annual Town Meeting. The amount that was appropriated at the 2021 ATM for “HVAC Replacement—Bedford Free Public Library” was based on pre-pandemic design, construction, and material costs, and requires supplemental funding in order to complete this project. This article was originally funded through the capital budget; it is eligible for CPA funding due to the historic nature of the Public Library building.

Rachel Fields, Library Trustee, provided a statement of support for this project.

Ron Scaltreto, Facilities Director, presented this funding request.

Mr. Goldbaum asked for information on the useful life of the existing equipment. Mr. Scaltreto said the existing equipment was last replaced in 1997-1998 and has reached the end of its useful life.

Ms. Crews asked for clarification on the original funding source. Ms. Fidalgo stated that \$2.5m was originally approved at Annual Town Meeting in 2021.

Ms. Steele asked for the projected life of the new equipment. Mr. Scaltreto stated the replacement has a 15-20-year useful life.

Ms. Steele asked for Mr. Scaltreto to review the timeline of this project, specifically why it had been delayed for so long. Ms. Steele asked why this project was not brought to the attention of the Select Board and Library Trustees sooner. Ms. Fleishman stated that Facilities thoroughly researched if this project could be completed without further funding, and also coordinated with the Library Trustees to make sure that a replacement schedule would not interrupt library operations. Ms. Fleishman stated she feels comfortable with the fact that Facilities has exhausted all options leading up to asking the Committee for more funding.

Ms. Wilgren asked if there will be structural work associated with this project. Mr. Scaltreto said this work is non-invasive.

Ms. Dorr moved to close the public hearing. Ms. Steele seconded.

Ms. Vorderer, aye; Ms. Steele, aye; Ms. Wilgren, aye; Ms. Fleischman, aye; Mr. Goldbaum, aye; Mr. Gittins, aye; Ms. Dorr, aye; Ms. Crews; aye. The motion passed 8-0-0.

The Committee continued to discuss the HVAC Replacement Project.

Ms. Steele stated that she feels strongly that the presentation at Special Town Meeting should address topics such as timeline, lack of initial funding, lifespan, and why this project is going through CPA for additional funding rather than the capital process.

Ms. Fleischman agreed and stated that these topics will be part of the presentation to Town Meeting.

Ms. Vorderer, aye; Ms. Steele, aye; Ms. Wilgren, aye; Ms. Fleischman, aye; Mr. Goldbaum, aye; Mr. Gittins, aye; Ms. Dorr, aye; Ms. Crews; aye. The motion passed 8-0-0.

3. Special Town Meeting Preparation

The Committee had a lengthy discussion about the FY24 supplemental funding request for the Bedford Free Public Library HVAC Replacement.

Ms. Crews moved to recommend to Town Meeting approval of \$1,457,867, for the historic preservation project, Bedford Free Public Library HVAC Replacement from FY24 funds.

Ms. Vorderer, aye; Ms. Steele, aye; Ms. Wilgren, aye; Ms. Fleischman, aye; Mr. Goldbaum, aye; Mr. Gittins, aye; Ms. Dorr, aye; Ms. Crews; aye. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Ms. Fidalgo reviewed the annual surcharge for the upcoming fiscal year.

This article would authorize the Town to continue to levy in Fiscal Year 2025 a surcharge of three percent (3%) on property taxes to be used for purposes authorized under the Community Preservation Act, which the Town accepted in 2001. Each year the Town receives matching funds from the Commonwealth, as a result of having accepted this Act. In Fiscal Year 2023 the Town received a total of \$830,221 from Commonwealth distributions. This total match was 43.87% based on \$2,801,285 contributed by Bedford taxpayers in Fiscal Year 2022. A conservative 20% match is projected for next year because it is not known at this time how much money will be available and how many communities will be participating in the program.

Both municipal and Commonwealth funds are to be used exclusively for affordable housing, open space preservation, historic preservation, and recreation. Under the Act, municipalities are required to spend or reserve for future expenditure at least ten percent (10%) of the fund for each of the first three above purposes. The property tax surcharge may be any percentage up to three percent (3%). The Select Board is placing this article on the Warrant of this Special Town Meeting in keeping with a commitment made at the time the Community Preservation Act was accepted. If Town Meeting were to adopt any percentage other than the current three percent (3%) in effect, this change would also need approval of Bedford's registered voters at the Annual Town Election in March 2024. This article requires simple majority approval.

Ms. Steele recommended to Town Meeting continuation of the 3% surcharge for FY24. Ms. Wilgren seconded.

Ms. Vorderer, aye; Ms. Steele, aye; Ms. Wilgren, aye; Ms. Fleischman, aye; Mr. Goldbaum, aye; Mr. Gittins, aye; Ms. Dorr, aye; Ms. Crews; aye. The motion passed 8-0-0.

4. Bedford Day Promotional Ideas

Ms. Fidalgo reviewed the newly created CPC brochure that will be shared at Bedford Day, and distributed in municipal offices to promote the CPA Committee and the application process.

Ms. Dorr shared a draft article which will be a three-part educational series published in the Bedford Citizen. The Committee provided feedback that will be incorporated.

Ms. Fleischman moved that the Community Preservation Committee allow Ms. Dorr to edit and publish the educational articles with the Bedford Citizen on behalf of the Committee. Ms. Steele seconded.

Ms. Vorderer, aye; Ms. Steele, aye; Ms. Wilgren, aye; Ms. Fleischman, aye; Mr. Goldbaum, aye; Mr. Gittins, aye; Ms. Dorr, aye; Ms. Crews; aye. The motion passed 8-0-0.

5. Upcoming Meetings

The CPC will continue to meet virtually until further notice. Upcoming meeting dates have not been determined yet.

6. Adjournment

Ms. Fleischman moved to adjourn at 8:25pm. Ms. Steele seconded.

Ms. Vorderer, aye; Ms. Steele, aye; Ms. Wilgren, aye; Ms. Fleischman, aye; Mr. Goldbaum, aye; Mr. Gittins, aye; Ms. Dorr, aye; Ms. Crews; aye. The motion passed 8-0-0.