

***CAPITAL PLANNING COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes***

Nov 2, 2022

***Scituate Town Hall - Select Board
Hearing Room***

- I. Committee Attendees, Richard Taft, Michael Gibson, Curt Gunther, Peter Gates, Jack Whittaker, Chris Carchia
- II. Invitees Nancy Holt (Town Accountant); James Gilmore (Advisory)
- III. Call to Order
- IV. Approval of Agenda – 5 yea / 0 nay
- V. New Business
 - 1) Capital Request
 - a) Police Capital Budget Review – Chief Thompson
 - i) **Public Safety CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) / RMS (Record Management System)
Request - Estimated at \$488 K**
 - (1) Findings:
 - (a) CAD / RMS is heart of police record keeping.
 - (b) In 2008, SPD upgraded to IMC software technology. At the time, it was a migration out of a DOS based system to a Unix based, client / server architecture.
 - (i) The Unix technology has not met up with the need for today's police needs.
 - (c) Everything as part of records management goes into this system.
 - (i) Newer system / software designs allow more data manipulations / user analytics to improve productivity.
 - (ii) Newer systems can be web based, can be run from mobile technology which allows officers in the field to complete tasks without returning to the office or needing to operate a laptop computer.
 - (iii) SPD has similar needs as other departments and towns in Massachusetts that are also in the investigation stages. Braintree made the migration to newer technology about 2 years ago. Budget value is based, in part, on the cost that Braintree spent on their software upgrade.
 - (d) Request for capital approval in this fiscal year is intended to allow the police department the flexibility needed to move forward on a new platform when all the information has been gathered.
 - (e) If not approved, police could continue to run IMC system.
 - (f) Estimated Capital Expense has accounted for future inflation when the system is actually purchased assuming capital is approved in this cycle.
 - (g) Yearly subscription, software upgrade is estimated to cost \$75K per year but is somewhat unknown.
 - (h) At this time, intended life span of the new technology platform is unknown.

- (i) Advantage for approving this now, is potential lost opportunity cost to work with other districts or town districts on collaborating on group proposals.
- (j) Disadvantage for being part of the leading group of towns in this type of technology upgrade is not being able to learn from best practices developed by those towns to reduce integration costs. Current capital request tries to estimate some of those integration costs.

ii) Police Portable and Mobile Radio Upgrades \$315K

(1) Findings:

- (a) Increasing cost for failures and repairs. Current radios are about 5 years old.
- (b) There is a long duration for to get replacement devices when there is a failure or need for repair.
- (c) Current police radios do not communicate by marine channels. Request includes some marine channel capable radios that are more expensive.
- (d) Request is for 97 radios, which is a full system change over.
 - (i) The need for a complete changeover versus a more gradual replacement cycle that is part of the department operating budget was questioned. The reasoning for a full replacement was:
 - 1. This is how it was done in the last replacement cycle 5 years ago.
 - 2. There are some training / knowledge differences between newer and older radios. It was expressed that the amount of training on new radios is relatively minor.
 - 3. There could be a possible salvage cost to replaced radios that currently fully operational.
 - 4. Supply chain concerns expressed have extended delivery.
 - 5. Currently about 10-15% of radios are on resupply or in repair.
 - 6. Putting rolling radio replacement as part of operating budget, would require about a 1 – 1.5 % increase in police operating budget.
- (e) The difference between mobile and portable terminology means, car based versus handheld.
 - (i) Examples of differences between operating budget expense vs. capital budget expense is police car replacement. Since the car is expected to operate for a long-term item, it is part of operational replace / repair budget.
 - (ii) Suggestion was made to have Town Administrator provide review of benefits of operating expense versus capital expense.

iii) Police Shooting Range Discussion – 2025 Budget

- (1) Review of Modular Shooting range facility, that would be a permanent part of police infrastructure.
- (2) Police department is experiencing less access to range usage as more restrictions are placed on existing facilities or less facilities are available. This limits ability for some police training needs.
 - (a) Current guidelines require 2 yearly certifications for various skills that require officers to go to remote sites.
 - (b) Some ranges test some skills in a virtual environment. That does not replace requirement for live fire training.

- (c) There are some companies that lease mobile shooting ranges that have the similar construction basis as the modular system being proposed. Mobile facilities are leased on an as needed basis for departments to fulfill various training needs. The mobile ranges are then picked up by the leasing company.
- (d) Sheriff's department does have a mobile range that is transported and used by various towns in MA. Due to the high demand for that mobile range, it is not a reliable avenue for needed use by SPD.

iv) Video Wall Discussion

- (1) This is part of the IT capital budget request presented in the Oct 26 meeting.
- (2) Video wall technology is more than just multiple screens. There is an interactive capability that allows real time video information to be presented from different networks simultaneously, such as video feeds from weather reports, security cameras and other systems around town.
- (3) The Emergency Operations Room which has the video wall is booked 3-4 times a week, but not necessarily just for use of video wall technology. However, the video wall technology may be used during those sessions. The number of times of video wall is actually a necessary enhancement for understanding emergency operations meetings is very small number of times a year. Admittedly, a video wall technology which encompasses more than just multiple screens does enhance emergency operations, but it was very hard for the Police Chief to quantify how much that enhancement adds over much less expensive video systems. It was expressed the difference was not impactful enough to materially affect historical use of the Emergency Operations Center.
- (4) Current wall is failing. It is not believed the wall is failing due to overuse.
- (5) Scituate TV uses the room for its audio capability and large room capacity.

b) Fire Capital Budget Review – John Murphy

i) **Replace of Diver Truck - \$82K**

(1) **Finding:**

- (a) Originally purchased in 2005 as a used truck. It has been an excellent addition to the Fire Service for dive operations.
 - (i) In the last 16 months, 5 near drownings / 2 actual drownings.
 - 1. Dive team is used to search and / or rescue for individuals who have drowned or are in distress.
 - (ii) The existing truck needs a lot of ongoing maintenance to keep existing truck operational.
 - (iii) Truck is used to support other towns on the South Shore
 - 1. This is typically shared as part of regional mutual aid program. There is no explicit reimbursement schedule for dive truck
 - (iv) 10 members of the department are trained divers
 - (v) May be the best mobile service for diver support in the area
- (b) Replacement truck is a custom configuration from an existing truck chassis with the features needed to support divers are done as add on modifications.
 - (i) Also used during storms and for rehab when fire fighters are engaged in firefighting.

ii) **Replace Pumper Truck - \$750K**

(1) **Finding:**

- (a) Escalation expense per year is \$60,000 per year. Production lead cycles have been extended by 6-12 months.
- (b) There is no current secondary market for pumper trucks.
- (c) New pumper trucks are cycled into the fleet as the primary vehicle and older trucks are segregated to secondary use. The life as the primary vehicle is 5 years. The total useful life is expected to be 20-25 years.

VI. Old Business/Other Business

1) Open Discussion

- a) Police Radio Request Questions surrounding whether radio replacement request is operational, or a capital request are valid.
- b) Capital request benchmark for Scituate is \$25,000. Adding together a lot of smaller expenses to exceed the \$25,000 benchmark is not the intent of distinguishing operational and capital requests.
- c) Capital Planning Committee needs to confirm that appropriate School Committee members are receiving email requests for attendance.
- d) Motion to Elect Mike Gibson Vice Chair of Committee – 4 yea / 1 abstain / 0 nay
- e) Future Capital Planning Meetings and Processes
 - i) Capital planning may want to consider sitting together at Town Meetings
 - ii) More need to review of historical reports and inputs from various enterprises, particularly long duration, high value, high-cost capital items.
 - (1) Recognition that there is a need for more detailed discussion and vetting of capital expenses by various enterprises
 - (2) Structural part of capital budgeting makes it less feasible to have more meetings during the yearly capital approval cycle. Expectation that Capital Planning meeting will occur more frequently outside of capital planning cycle.
 - (3) More meetings could have the benefit of vetting more long-term capital projects, versus single one year expense.
- f) Review of harbor master truck request from Oct 26 meeting.
 - i) Advantage of purchasing the truck instead of leasing.
 - (1) The truck is exposed to harsher saltwater environment which would increase overall lease expense at the end of a lease term.
 - (2) Truck turnover is long term and not generally subject to short term replacement.

VII. Approval of minutes, Oct 26

- a) Motion to approve, 5 yea / 0 nay

VIII. Adjournment