Capital Planning Committee

Minutes January 5, 2021

In addition to the committee members, guests present were **Nick Jorge, IT Director for the school and town, Fire Chief Dearborn and Lyn Simmons, Town Manager**. Mary Beth Bergeron joined the meeting about a half-hour in.

- Last meeting's minutes were approved after we resolved an objection to the number of **radios** being requested by the fire and police. Committee agreed to leave out the number of radios that was indicated in the minutes, and just list "radios." Peter asked about the cost for the radio replacement and what is included in **the $10,000 line item for the radios. Chief Dearborn explained** that each radio will have two batteries, one as a backup, and that it is cheaper to order the extra antennas at the same time rather than going to the aftermarket later. The antennas are necessary because they get broken with use. He also mentioned that that the licensing keys enable talk groups to be on the same frequency and that these radio upgrades give the town the capability of talking to many people simultaneously to and from the emergency frequency. These upgraded radios can be remotely programmed and controlled, and they each have IDs embedded into their software to enable GPS tracking. These are very robust devices that can handle heavy use and climate patterns.

- The committee asked questions to Nick Jorge what is included in the **$175,000 request for improvements to the data room** at its current location. The location is quite vulnerable as it is underground and susceptible to flooding and extreme temperature swings. The current cooling system for the room is not capable of cooling when the air conditioning is not running in the building. In the winter months the server's need to run 24/7 and the room gets hot. The amount requested has been revised to a low of $111,000 to a high of $130,000. This was revised per Lyn Simmons on December 31st. At the current time, it is cost prohibitive for the town to build a new facility there for a data room. Improvements to the current facility are needed for security of data and equipment. The location is not ideal but with the improvements, Nick believes that the modifications will sustain for about 10 years until a new middle school is built. He advised that at that time the data room move to the new school building. This ultimately will be less expensive while under new construction, rather than retrofitting the current location.

- **The other request for IT is for $25,000.** The proposed Capital expense is for sufficient and more **secure data backup and system recovery** in the event of an incident. This is comprised of a one-time hardware purchase for backup equipment of $11,000 which would enable the town to do on-site storage and backup. In addition, there will be an annual cost of $8,800 for a cloud backup subscription to have redundancy for security. Over 5 years this would total around $55,000 and would be a considerable savings compared to the current set up and expenses which is approximately $89,000 over 5 years ($17k/year). The new equipment will be more modern and offer quicker and broader capabilities for the IT staff access data with less operational overhead. It would also enable the IT department to restore data much quicker, and because of the increase speed, would be able to do weekly backup and restore tests of the financial system. Not only would the data be backed up in two locations, but we would have assurances that the backups are occurring correctly. Under the new proposal, the hardware can be purchased from a different vendor then the vendor the town can use for cloud backup subscription. This would enable the town to shop for the best pricing on the annual cloud backup. There was some discussion about contracting for the service for multiple years for a discount. Nick states that the discount is negligible, but due to their relationship with the vendor, there is a good chance they can get the 3-year pricing with a one-year contract. The estimated savings is around $300 a year. A member of the committee suggested that the annual subscription for cloud backup of $8,800 is not a capital Improvement but should be an IT department expense item. The current line-item request for improvements to the backup system is $25,000. This is approximately $5,000 more than the amount Nick explained for the hardware and annual subscription. The committee needs to find out what the **discrepancy is and whether, if under $25,000, the entire amount should be an expense** item for the IT department, and not a capital request.

- **The library requested $25,000** for improvements to the children's room. However, library funding does not fall within the jurisdiction of the CPC. Stephen mentioned that the Preservation Committee provides funding to the library and the library routinely makes funding requests to the CPC.

- Clarification on these items will be pursued before our next meeting which is January 19th.

Respectfully submitted:

Adam Metsch