

PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

The Public Works Commission met at 7:15 p.m. on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, at 141 Keyes Road, Concord, Massachusetts. Pursuant to Chapter 303 of the Acts of 1975, notice of the above meeting was duly filed with the Town Clerk, Town House, Monument Square, Concord, Massachusetts.

PRESENT:

Commissioners:

Steven Ng
Andrew Boardman
James Terry
Peter W. Wallis

Absent:

K.C. Winslow

Staff:

Alan H. Cathcart, Acting Director - Water/Sewer Superintendent
Aaron I. Miklosko, MSFM, Highway and Grounds Superintendent
Steve Dookran, Town Engineer
Bob Hill, Management Analyst
Anna R. Trout, Administrative & Special Projects Coordinator

Other:

Terri Ackerman (Select Board Observer)
Robert Hilsinger (League of Women Voters Observer)

A: ACTION ITEMS

A-1 through A-4 - The meeting was convened at 7:15 p.m. by Commissioner Ng.

The regular meeting minutes from February 12, 2020 were approved as amended. The Executive Session minutes from February 12, 2020 were also approved, not to be released at this time.
The next two PWC meetings were scheduled for Wednesday, April 15 and May 13, 2020 at 7:15 P.M. at 141 Keyes Road.

D: DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

D-1: Review PWC Calendar Draft

The Enterprise Fund Hearings for Solid Waste, and Water and Sewer is coming up on March 23 at 7 P.M.

D-2: Roads Program Briefing

Acting Director Cathcart introduced Steve Dookran, Town Engineer, who provided a briefing of the upcoming FY21 Roads Program. This program addresses the condition, maintenance and improvement needs of the 108 mile network of the Town's roads. It is based on a pavement condition survey, which was completed in 2018 by StreetScan. A Pavement Condition Index (PCI) is calculated for each road segment. The range of PCI values is from 1 – 100 with "0" assigned to the worst condition and "100" assigned to a newly paved road. In 2018 the average PCI for the Town's network of roads was calculated at "73". The goal is to increase the average PCI for all roads to "80" and to target rehabilitation and replacement investments to maintain that level. The annual budget proposed to reach and maintain this condition of road is a minimum of \$1.5 million dollars.

When a road is first paved, its PCI is "100". There is generally a slow decline in condition over the first three to five years, then the deterioration accelerates as the pavement ages. There is no need to perform any maintenance when the PCI is between 90 and 100. When the PCI falls between 70 and 90, preservation such as crack-sealing is required. More intensive milling (grinding the pavement) and applying a pavement overlay is required when the condition is between 50 and 70. If the pavement condition is under 50 PCI a full reclamation or rebuilding of the road is required. The more intensive the rehabilitation, the more costly the process. Roads programs are developed to maintain the roads while they are at a higher PCI when it is not as expensive to maintain. The \$1.5 million dollar minimum per year encompasses a wide range of treatments over the range of PCI's for the various segments of roadways.

The Five Year Roads Program covers FY 2020 – FY 2024. Last year portions of Monument St., Old Marlboro Rd., Walden St. and Sudbury Rd. were reclaimed and paved. A comprehensive approach is used for the program, which involves looking at utilities, drainage and sidewalks.

From the list of streets shown under the FY2021 Plan, the following streets have been selected for construction in 2020 based on projected available funding:

- Peter Spring Road
- Prescott Road
- Arrowhead Road
- Cranefield Road
- Minuteman Drive
- Park Lane
- Hubbard Street

In addition to roadwork activities noted above, a water main replacement project is planned for Prescott Road. Some mill and filling of arterial roads is also being planned. Design is being completed both in-house and with the use of a consultant. Other work including the Butternut Circle neighborhood will be addressed as funding becomes available.

Projected Roads Program funding includes FY 2021 Debt Authorization (Article 11, item 6A at this year's Town Meeting) at \$1.73 million; Chapter 90, State Aid - \$744,862 and a Complete Streets Grant of \$270,000 (portion for Hubbard St.). The Chapter 90 funding appears to be slightly higher than what has been received lately. As a result of staffing limitations in the Engineering Division, a third party consultant has been retained to assist in design.

Commissioner Wallis commended CPW for obtaining the Complete Streets Grant. Mr. Dookran confirmed that the five year plan is designed to bring the PCI up to "80". Acting Director Cathcart also explained that the factor of other CPW projects and endeavors plays a role in determining what funding is available. Commissioner Wallis also suggested indicating the real average dollar amount that will be required, in place of \$1.5 million dollars, in order to manage expectations.

Acting Director Cathcart also mentioned that working with the Town Manager, all budgets are being looked at to make sure they are transparent and accurate.

When asked about the drainage and miscellaneous items cost on the spreadsheet provided, Mr. Dookran explained that those costs are funded from other sources, they are not included in the program.

Neighborhood meetings will be held prior to work being done in the Peter Spring Road neighborhood, especially in light of the water main replacements included in the construction.

D-3: Town Meeting Coordination

Acting Director Cathcart noted that for the most part there were no unusual Articles directly relating to CPW core needs or interests that would require presentation at the annual Town Meeting. He did note that Article 11 includes funding for some routine capital programs that fall within the purvey of Concord Public Works. These items were already reviewed with the Commission back in October. The most significant item in this list includes the requested borrowing of \$1.73 million dollars for the FY21 Roads Program. Two million dollars was originally requested, however, the Town Managers office reduced it based upon competing needs within the Town. The award of the Complete Streets grant has allowed us to supplement the shortfall.

Acting Director Cathcart reminded the Commission that while much of the funding articles relating to CPW are likely to be included in the Consent Agenda, it is always possible that something can be pulled and voted separately. In such a case, a member of the PWC would be required to present the Article. In preparation for such a situation, articles would be assigned to designated Commissioners, whom will be given background information along with a short Power Point slide show for presentation at the Town Meeting.

Article 12 was also highlighted as it identifies \$120,000 for Road Repair Revolving Fund Expenditures as part of a larger revolving fund expenditure authorization. These are for minor repairs that are done, with revenue collected through life cycle maintenance fees by CPW's Engineering Division.

Other articles noted included the routine Enterprise Fund related Articles which include Article 18 (Solid Waste Disposal Fund Expenditures) Article 19 (Sewer System Expenditures), Article 20 (Sewer Improvement Fund Expenditures) and Article 21 (Water System Expenditures).

When asked about any unusual aspects of the proposed budget process under the new Town Manager, Acting Director Cathcart explained that it was his understanding that the Department should no longer plan on relying on encumbrance funds to be carried over from past authorizations. Superintendent Miklosko explained that CPW has over 100 pieces of rolling equipment. Going into the budget process for FY21, the five year capital plan associated with this line item was revised, updating it based upon actual present day cost with an allowance for future inflation when establishing replacement values for vehicles four years out. He had determined that money that had been budgeted for vehicles in years past was insufficient to cover the true expense, when actually realized. Historically, the Department used encumbered funds from years past to supplement the purchase of some vehicles needed.

The Highway and Grounds Division had also recently back-filled three positions that had been vacant for many months, with the understanding that, if not filled, funding for these positions would have been lost. A fourth position is in the process of being filled. There was some discussion about looking at interfund transfers with Enterprise Funds to assist with budgeting as needed. As the rolling fleet is sometimes shared between divisions, Water/Sewer and Highway & Grounds often coordinate on vehicle needs.

In addition to the articles that directly relate to CPW interests, Acting Director Cathcart noted that the Commission would likely want to be made aware of some other articles that may have indirect impact on CPW operations. These include:

Article 28 – Concord-Carlisle Regional High School Capital Projects – This item is for the design and construction of the parking lot. Last year CPW's

Engineering Division helped with the design on the access road. Staff recently met with representatives from the school to offer concept assistance and in-house expertise where it makes sense, including offering the school to include their plan of work into a larger roads program contract. Earlier communications suggest they may be temporarily forgoing work on the access road improvements while focusing efforts on their parking lot. Public Works has an interest in tracking this project because it will have potential implications with respect to groundwater conservancy district issues and may alter groundwater and stormwater conditions on the site and, more importantly, Hugh Cargill Well.

Article 30 – Healthy School Buses for Students – This is to supplement the cost of two electric school buses and fueling infrastructure. Procurement of these busses will likely necessitate improvements to the bus site in West Concord. There might possibly be some implications to CPW as we had provided project management in the design and construction of this facility.

Article 31 – Municipal Fleet Electrification Report Article – CPW is open to any opportunities in regard to CPW’s fleet of vehicles. Superintendent Miklosko explained that CPW already has a number of hybrid vehicles in its fleet. In addition, we have four trucks that are awaiting after-market conversion to hybrid vehicles. The technology is not quite there for heavy duty vehicles yet, but it’s coming. It is important that we are very involved with this process to assure that all of our concerns are addressed.

Article 32 – Zoning Bylaw Amendment – Additional Dwelling Unit –
Article 33 – Zoning Bylaw Amendment – Two Family Dwelling Unit –
These two articles relate to infill that we have discussed with residential housing. The implications are impact on utilities such as water and wastewater. Should these amendments pass it is likely that both rules and regulations, as well as service design standards for each respective utility, will need to be revisited and potentially updated. Impact on wastewater capacity will need to be contemplated and managed accordingly.

D-4: PWC Reorganization

Commissioner Ng explained he has been a Concord resident for more than twenty years, with many of those years spent participating in public service to the Town. He will be moving to Cambridge so will no longer be able to serve on the Public Works Commission, effective immediately following this meeting.

Acting Director Cathcart expressed his deep appreciation to Commissioner Ng for all his service and assistance. He noted that in addition to his work on the PWC, Commissioner Ng had been a strong advocate for wastewater capacity management going back to his early days in Concord.

Commissioner Wallis **MOVED** and Commissioner Boardman **SECONDED** and it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED** to elect James Terry as Chair of the Public Works Commission effective immediately following this meeting.

Commissioner Wallis **MOVED** and Commissioner Terry **SECONDED** and it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED** to elect Andrew Boardman as Vice-Chair of the Public Works Commission effective immediately following this meeting.

D-5: Director's Report

- **Drop-Off Day** – We are planning the May 2 Drop-Off Day event. There is no Swap-Off planned for this spring due to construction at the Keyes Road Sewer Pumping Station. We will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation to make adjustments as necessary. Unwanted Medications and Sharps are not being collected at Drop-Off, we are asking residents to utilize the kiosks located in the lobby of the Police Dept. which is available 24/7
- **Curbside Collection Disposal Fee Update** – Invoices were mailed to curbside subscribers on March 6 for the six month period April 1 – Sept. 30. The price of disposal tags has changed from \$1.50 (green) to \$1.80 (orange). Residents with leftover green tags will be able to exchange these for an equal value of new orange tags.
- **Cambridge Turnpike Reconstruction Project (CTIP)** – The mild winter has allowed the contractor to return to Concord and advance the project. Some of the recent work completed includes the following:
 - The section of road between 571 Cambridge Turnpike and Crosby's corner has been reclaimed.
 - A water by-pass system has been installed for three residences.
 - Existing water main and electric duct bank have been removed.
 - Water diversion culverts were installed to remove the two existing culverts.
 - Cofferdams at the bridge were removed and the bridge decking and steel work at Millbrook Farm are in progress.
 - Verizon utility pole removal is important to allow progress to continue.

Traffic has increased on Hawthorne Lane due to the closure of the bridge. A meeting was held with the neighborhood who were grateful for a project update and the installation of temporary pavement at this location.

We are on target to have Cambridge Turnpike open to traffic by the end of the year. With regard to the budget for the project, the contingency should cover any anticipated change orders.

- **Roadway Maintenance** – There were four winter weather events early in February, but the weather conditions improved during the remainder of the month, which allowed Highway & Grounds staff to work on spring maintenance activities including patching and the adjustment of a number of catch basins on Hawthorne Lane in preparation for paving.

- **Public Shade Tree Maintenance** – Nineteen hazardous public shade trees were removed as part of the forestry maintenance program. Uplifting and pruning of trees along the length of Lowell Road has also been completed, along with tree work at the cemetery. CMLP has sent a notification that Marquis Tree is performing trimming of overhead utilities. A bid advertisement for tree planting is underway for a \$150,000 contract for the spring and fall. This is being funded through a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Grant from the State. This is a two part grant, \$100,000 for tree planting, reforestation and resiliency and \$50,000 for an Emerald Ash Borer management plan and a tree nursery feasibility study.
- **Right of Way Maintenance** – Damage from winter operations has been tracked and work will commence after danger of further winter weather is complete.
- **Wastewater Treatment Plant Tour** – Students from Concord Academy’s Science class toured the WWTP on February 11.
- **Concord Country Club** – The Concord Country Club has filed for a Special Permit from the ZBA for earth removal in excess of 1,000 cubic yards for construction of an irrigation pond. This property is adjacent to the Deaconess Water Facility and is within the Groundwater Conservancy District. Water/Sewer staff is in the process of reviewing this to determine what impact there may be.
- **Chlorine System Process Control Optimization** – Our operators revamped the chemical feed system at the Deaconess Water Treatment Plant allowing pre and post filter sample water to be conveyed from two filter trains to an existing analyzer board.
- **Robinson Well Meter Pilot** – A “clamp-on” style Flexim flow meter was installed on the Robinson Well discharge main for demonstration purposes. If this proves reliable over a longer period of trial, it is possible they will be used to replace the more conventional units when they fail, as these are easier to maintain, calibrate and change out than the current “bolt on” meters.
- **GIS** – We have a GIS Analyst working at CPW who has been on board for six months, reporting to Town Engineer Steve Dookran and Acting Director Alan Cathcart. Detailed utility information is not made available to the public through GIS, but is available to staff for planning purposes. One area where the GIS system is quite helpful is in the Stormwater MS4 Permit Tracking where we can easily document what is being done to maintain and inspect catch basins.
- **Security** – CPW is working with CMLP on security efforts for Town assets.

D-6: Commissioner’s Comments

None.

D-7: Public Comments

Terri Ackerman (Select Board Observer), expressed her gratitude to Commissioner Ng for his years of service to the Town. She is in agreement with Commissioner Wallis that security relative to the Town's water assets is important. With regard to Article 28 (High School Parking Lot Construction), CPW will be reviewing the design. She suggested that more parking spaces could be made available as well as charging stations if the opportunity arises for suggestions. When asked about the conversion kits for three hybrid and one fully electric vehicle at CPW, Superintendent Miklosko responded that grant funding through the Town's Sustainability Department has been acquired for that purpose.

Robert Hilsinger (League of Women Voters Observer), also expressed his thanks to Commissioner Ng and commented about his ability to find humor when it was desperately needed.

ADJOURNED: 9:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna R. Trout
Anna R. Trout
Administrative & Special Projects Coordinator
Concord Public Works

Approved,

James Terry
James Terry
Public Works Commission

Minutes approved at June 10, 2020 Mtg.