Capital Planning Commission Regular Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 22nd, 2024 at 6:05 P.m.

1. **Call to Order**
The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. **Roll Call**
Members present included Mayor DiMartino, Alderwoman Widomski, Chair Ezzo of the Board of Apportionment and Taxation, Ms. Wabno of the Board of Apportionment and Taxation, and Mr. Gildea. Alderman Hyder and Alderman Kurtyka were excused. A quorum was declared present.

4. **Additions, Deletions, and Adoption of the Agenda**
No additions or deletions to the agenda were presented.

5. **Public Portion**
The Chair opened the public portion and invited members of the public to speak.

Mr. Marcucio, 38 Chatfield Street, Derby, addressed the Commission regarding a request from Derby Little League for funding assistance to install lights at Ulusky Field. He stated that the estimated cost for the lights was approximately $150,000 to $160,000. He reported that Derby Little League had received a $50,000 donation from Mrs. Paden and had contributed an additional $10,000 through fundraising, leaving approximately $100,000 still needed. Mr. Marcucio stated that Musco Lighting had provided an estimate and that, if sufficient funding could not be secured for the lights, the organization would need to consider other field improvements consistent with the donor's intent.

Commission members asked whether a formal request or written estimate had been submitted. Mr. Marcucio was asked to forward documentation to the Commission for review.

Karen Kemmesies, 25 John Street, Derby, stated that she was pleased the Capital Planning Commission was meeting and emphasized the importance of restoring long-term capital planning for the city. She referenced prior capital planning records and expressed concern that many identified needs had not been completed. She discussed road funding, the use of ARPA funds, the need to avoid stopgap measures, and the importance of planning for parks, recreation fields, fire apparatuses, police needs, and other municipal assets. Ms. Kemmesies urged the Commission to develop a strong plan to fund and prioritize City needs going forward.

Tom Linetti, 79 Sunset Drive, Derby, asked whether lighting was still planned for the Greenway walkway near BJ's. It was clarified that prior lighting work had been completed under Route 8 and that the walkway was not currently being lit as part of that work.

Brian Hall, Finance Director, stated for clarification that public parks improvements are eligible for LOCIP funding, and that lights supporting a public park may qualify if the City is comfortable that the project meets the eligibility requirements. Mr. Hall agreed with the importance of long-term planning but cautioned that the Commission should also prioritize funds currently budgeted and available for use so that available resources are not lost or delayed.

Marc Garofalo, Town Clerk, addressed the Commission regarding the need for comprehensive capital planning. He stated that the city previously had a plan for capital needs, including fire trucks and leased vehicles, and expressed concern that capital planning had not been maintained in recent years. He urged the Commission, administration, and department heads to compile a complete list of capital needs, distinguish needs from wants, and determine appropriate financing strategies. He also referenced City Hall building needs, including roofs, elevators, HVAC, and other infrastructure, and recommended professional evaluation where appropriate.

Gary Parker, Fire Commissioner, 38 North Coe Lane, Ansonia, asked whether a bond referendum for major capital items was still being considered for the fall. He explained that the Fire Department would need to obtain current pricing for fire apparatus and other equipment if a referendum remained a possibility. He also stated that he was working on updated cost estimates for the radio system and fire alarm tower.

There being no further public comment, the Chair closed the public portion.

6. **Review of Capital Requests and Capital Needs — Discussion Only**
The Commission discussed the process for reviewing available capital funds and longer-term capital needs. Members discussed treating the work as a two-step process: first, identifying recommendations for currently available funds, including approximately $146,709 in LOCIP funds and approximately $163,235 in general capital funds; and second, developing a broader capital needs list for future planning and potential financing.

Mr. Hall reviewed prior capital spending and stated that, for fiscal year 2023–2024, approximately $934,000 in LOCIP funds had been used, primarily for roads, with approximately $12,000 used for hazardous tree removal for the Board of Education. He also stated that approximately $1.3 million in road bond funds had been used, totaling approximately $2.2 million in road work completed during that period. He noted that approximately $1.7 million in road bond work remained to be planned.

Mr. Hall further stated that the city had spent approximately $152,000 of the prior year's capital budget, largely on two police vehicles and work related to maintaining and digitizing records. He reviewed available funding for 2024–2025 and stated that the Commission

should develop recommendations earlier in the fiscal year to avoid last-minute decisions and to account for purchasing lead times.

Members discussed the need for an updated capital request list to be circulated and reviewed. The Commission discussed whether the current list was complete and noted that the Little League lighting request should be added for consideration. Mr. Hall stated that the administration could prepare recommendations for the Commission's review.

Members also discussed the likelihood that preparing a referendum for the fall would be difficult due to the need to identify, verify, and prioritize capital needs. The Commission generally discussed focusing first on the approximately $310,000 currently available, while separately developing a larger long-term capital plan.

7. **Financing Options for Capital Needs**
The Commission discussed financing options for larger capital needs beyond the currently available funds. Mr. Hall stated that if the city wished to finance approximately $4 million in capital projects, a bond referendum would likely be required. He also noted that leasing options could potentially be explored for certain equipment purchases to spread costs over time.

Members discussed the usefulness of reviewing existing debt schedules, bond payments coming off the books, and estimated costs for bonding different amounts over time. Mr. Hall stated that he could provide information regarding the timing and financing structure associated with the road bond and similar future borrowing scenarios.

Mr. Garofalo raised an additional City Hall security need. He stated that the prior security system had been removed and that security needs should be evaluated for the safety of City Hall employees and the public. He also advised the Commission of a new State requirement related to absentee ballot drop box camera coverage, including the need for a system capable of retaining footage for the required period. He stated that he would gather additional information and submit it for consideration.

8. **Adjournment**
A motion was made by Jim to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Colleen. There being no discussion, the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Of a few, and again, and this is not anything other than, matter of fact statement. It's hard to have this discussion, without anything here, in front. And I know you sent something out last time and I should have printed it out, I guess, and brought it forth. It was operating the assumption there may have been changes in the last 60 days. It's difficult to have this discussion without anything in front of you because I, you know, we're going to assemble a list and talk about prioritizing and I mean, again, it'd be helpful to have it here. A few procedural questions. From a timing perspective, again, I was under the impression that there were really two things we needed to do. One was expend or recommend spending of the available funds that currently existed. And then to the second part, in my opinion,

there's four to probably 4 plus million that we have to decide, identify, as has been said today, and then spend. How much, so I'm just, without having the benefit of the spreadsheet, how much money exists? Do we expend all of the all of the twenty-three twenty-four money that's been exhausted?

General capital. That's what I was looking at. So you have 146 plus 163. So that 310,000, whatever it may be. Explain to me the timing of how that you envisioned that working. So, is that July 1st, 2024 to June 30th, 2025 money? And from a time frame, what were you thinking? Like we would recommend to you by what time? What's the time frame for you, that 310,000, a realistic time frame?

Well, I think probably six months is to get this to finish, let's say by, you know, end of the year or maybe early in January. I mean, I think it's probably the latest we should need. The sooner you do it, the more you can benefit from it from some of these purchases potentially, right? Because some of these things have longer lead times. So, it obviously behooves us all to do this sooner rather than later. And like I said, there's the drop-dead data that June 30th, we don't want to do what we had to do last year where we kind of miss out on things and get stuck. So, if we say, yeah, let's try to get this done in the next six months. I think that's very fair.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Desroches