Capital Plan Commission Special Meeting Minutes

Special Meeting

Thursday May 30, 2024 at 6:07 pm

1. Call to Order

The special meeting of the Capital Plan Commission was called to order at 6:07 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

Roll call was taken. Present were Mayor Joseph DiMartino, Ms. Widomski, Mr. Kurtyka, Ms. Ezzo, Ms. Wabno, Mr. Gildea, and Mr. Hyder. A quorum was declared present.

4. Public Portion The public portion was opened.

Thomas Leonard, 173 Laughlin Avenue, Derby, addressed the Commission regarding capital needs for public safety departments. Speaking in several capacities, including as a Police Commissioner, Derby firefighter, and Chief of the Ambulance Corps, he emphasized the need for police patrol vehicles, aging fire apparatus, and a rescue truck for the Ambulance Corps. He stated that the rescue truck was approaching 30 years of age, had responded to approximately 500 calls in the prior year, and had been used for rope rescue and collapse rescue calls. He noted that emergency vehicle replacement can require a three- to four-year delivery period and that parts and chassis availability remain difficult. He submitted short-term and long-term needs and offered to provide copies to the Commission.

Gary Parker spoke on behalf of the Fire Department. He stated that fire apparatus replacement is a primary concern and explained that several vehicles were purchased in the late 1990s and early 2000s. He reported that the department had reduced its fleet from five engines and one aerial ladder to fewer available apparatus and identified two engines as short-term replacement needs. He also discussed a long-term request related to the Derby Fire Department radio system and the Cottage Street building at 74 Cottage Street, which houses primary radio services for police, public works, and fire departments. He stated that repairs, a new tower, and system replacement are necessary to maintain communications for first responders and public safety.

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

5. Review of Capital Plan Requests and Capital Needs Discussion

Brian Hall reviewed the draft five-year capital plan and explained that an approved five-year plan is needed to access Local Capital Improvement Program funds. He stated that the plan is expected to be reviewed and reapproved annually and that the immediate focus should be on Year One, corresponding to the 2023-2024 fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

He explained that Year One items must be realistic, eligible, and capable of being approved or committed within the remaining fiscal year.

The Commission discussed several capital requests, including a document scanning and records management startup cost of approximately $20,000; public works road repaving and vehicle/equipment needs; police patrol vehicle replacement; Board of Education tree removal, paving, HVAC, and other facilities-related needs; Ambulance Corps vehicle needs, including a rescue truck; and Fire Department apparatus, radio system, and Cottage Street building needs. Mr. Hall noted that some road work already completed may support reimbursement from prior LOCIP funds and that approximately $788,000 in past LOCIP funds had been submitted for recovery.

Members discussed the availability and use of approximately $150,000 in Year One LOCIP-related funding and whether any additional eligible life-safety or public safety items could be moved into Year One. Discussion included whether funds could be applied to the Cottage Street communications building, radios, roads, or other shovel-ready projects. The Commission ultimately discussed using available funding for eligible road-related purposes if another eligible project could not be committed within the fiscal year.

The Commission also discussed the possibility of a future citywide bond referendum to address larger infrastructure and public safety needs, including fire apparatus, ambulance equipment, communications infrastructure, and other long-term capital projects. Members noted that if a referendum were contemplated for the November election, planning and required approvals would need to be completed in advance of applicable deadlines.

Mr. Gildea made a motion to approve the five-year capital plan as submitted and recommend it to the Board of Alders. The motion was seconded by Sarah Wiodomski. There being no further discussion, the motion was put to a vote.

Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

6. Set Regular Meeting Schedule

The Commission discussed establishing a regular meeting schedule. After discussion, the fourth Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. was proposed as the regular meeting date and time.

Mr. Gildea made a motion to set the Commission's regular meeting schedule for the fourth Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by George. There being no further discussion, the motion was put to a vote.

Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

7. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made Jim Gildea and seconded by Rob Hyder. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Desroches