

2022 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Committee

The Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Committee wrapped up its work on October 28th, 2021 with a total project cost for 2022 of \$560,000, a \$5,000 increase over the 2021 schedule. New Boston's CIP Committee works to develop a six-year schedule of capital projects and purchases that reflect the town and school needs as well as the taxpayers' ability to afford. Through the use of Capital Reserve Funds (CRFs), taxpayers have supported yearly allotments for the future purchase of fire and highway vehicles and equipment as well as bridges, preventing huge spikes in the tax rate for the year these expensive items need to be funded.

The CIP schedule represents projects and purchases that cost \$20,000 or more. Unless there is an unforeseen emergency, any new project comes onto the schedule six years out. It is expected that the Selectmen will bring forward to the March 2022 ballot the CIP items scheduled for that year. Voters are encouraged to consider these requests carefully.

Fire Department Vehicles CRF

This yearly CRF includes both replacement and mid-life refurbishment of all Fire Department vehicles except the ambulances, which are purchased through a separate ambulance fund that derives its revenues from user fees not taxes.

The vehicle roster includes two front-line pumpers and a preowned pumper at the Hilltop Station, a tank truck, a forestry truck, a light rescue vehicle and a command vehicle which was added by the Fire Wards three years ago and is expected to be placed on the Town Warrant for 2024.

All of these vehicles are extremely expensive, with pumpers costing over \$600,000. With a midlife refurbishment, these pumpers generally have a 25-year life cycle. The other vehicles also have 15 to 30-year cycles. While this is good on one hand, it makes projecting future costs problematic.

The CIP Committee carefully reviews this vehicle schedule annually, attempting to account for any known increases in vehicle costs and has recommended a deposit into the CRF of \$130,000 each year for the next six years. This is a reduction of \$20,000 over the amount requested in previous years primarily due to dropping the Hose-reel truck from the vehicle roster.

Emergency Management CRF

In 2020 the town voted to establish an Emergency Management CRF for the collection of funds to maintain the Emergency Services communications and related systems. Beginning in 2022 the CIP Committee is requesting a \$20,000 annual deposit into this fund to meet the needs of the radio tower maintenance scheduled in 2027.

Highway Dump Truck CRF

This CRF now covers three full-sized 6-wheel dump trucks (\$260,000 new replacement cost), one smaller 6-wheel truck with plows (\$125,000 new replacement cost), four 10-wheel trucks (\$295,000 new replacement cost). 2 6-wheel trucks are due to be replaced in 2022 but the road agent has found a package deal for two new 10-wheel trucks, which are expected to last longer than the 6-wheel trucks, at \$210,000 each.

There are also two 4x4 pickup trucks (one with plows and one without plows) at the Highway Department. At least one of these was purchased in the past with Highway Block Grant funds. These vehicles (\$65,000 new replacement cost) are not currently part of the CRF but is anticipated that the Selectmen will propose a warrant article when it is time to replace them.

The CIP Committee recommends a \$120,000 CRF deposit in 2022 and future years in order to maintain balances in the fund needed to purchase these vehicles.

Highway Heavy Equipment CRF

The CRF previously covered the replacement cost of the grader, loader and backhoe. However, the CIP committee discovered this year that two additional pieces of heavy equipment, a vibratory roller and an excavator, had been acquired by the highway department through lease to own arrangements. Adding these pieces to the repurchase schedule does not change the recommended on-going deposit of \$45,000 into the CRF since these pieces both have working lives in excess of 20 years.

Road Improvements

This yearly funding of roadwork is one of the things that have prevented New Boston from needing multi-million dollar bonds to repair severely deteriorated roads. The CIP committee once again included \$85,000 on the schedule for road improvement projects in each of the next 6 years.

Projects currently scheduled include Meetinghouse Hill Road in 2022, Christie Road in 2023, and Beard Road in 2025. As the Road Agent explained these projects often include extensive tree trimming and drainage work prior to any re-paving.

Bridge Repair/Replacement CRF

This yearly CRF will remain at its current funding of \$40,000. Upcoming projects to be funded by this CRF are repairs to Howe Bridge (2022) and Tucker Mill Road Bridge (2023).

Highway Dept. Garage Addition

Five years ago, the Road Agent introduced a project to construct an addition to the Highway Dept. building of approximately 1,200 square feet with an estimated cost of \$70,000. This addition would enable the department to keep more equipment indoors thereby extending the life of our expensive trucks. The CIP Committee determined that funding for this project should be raised over two years with \$35,000 to be collected in 2021 and 2022.

Property Update/Reval Funding

This CRF collects funds for both the revaluation update (last performed in 2016) and the full revaluation required by the State every 10 years (being conducted in 2020/21). Due to the disparity in funding these two revaluations (an update is approximately half the cost of the full revaluation) the CIP Committee recommends lowering the deposit to \$25,000 (a savings of \$5,000 over the prior year) for the next six years.

GIS Mapping System

Four years ago, Peter Flynn, Town Administrator, presented this item on behalf of the Selectmen. This project entails the implementation of a computerized Geographic Information System (GIS) to track all of the Town's tax maps to replace the existing paper maps which contain errors and inaccuracies. The project includes a complete review of existing parcels down to the deed descriptions in order to ensure the accuracy of the new maps generated. The CIP Committee placed this project on the schedule with a funding request of \$60,000 per year for 2022 through 2024. Since this work is expected to extend over three years the funding request should match the billing schedule of the vendor that will be chosen.

NBCS Addition Bond

New Boston School Board Member William Schmidt re-presented the 4-classroom addition project with an updated cost of \$2.5 million. They requested the bond amount for the project be pushed back again on the schedule until 2023 since the number of students at NBCS did not increase dramatically and the school, utilizing two portable classrooms, currently has room for all of its students. It is expected, given the amount of available housing lots in town, that this addition will be needed in the near future.

Transfer Station Food Waste Composting System

Transfer Station Manager Gerry Cornett expressed a desire to postpone the institution of a mechanical food waste composting system project that would cost approximately \$150,000 citing the Town's finances, as well as ongoing developments with these systems, as his reasons. The CIP Committee felt that the project should remain on the schedule as a placeholder and pushed back the collection of the first half of the funding until 2027.

Transfer Station Equipment Discussion

In discussions for the replacement of the Transfer Station waste trailer, added to the CIP Schedule last year, it was determined that there is a list of equipment at the transfer station, much of which costs greater than \$25,000 to replace. The Committee felt that this could be a perfect use of a Capital Reserve Fund and encouraged the Transfer Station Manager to approach the Selectmen about a warrant article on the 2022 ballot creating such a fund. Should a Warrant article be presented, and pass, the CIP committee would determine an adequate deposit schedule beginning in 2023.

CIP Committee

Fred Hayes, Chairman, At-Large
Ken Lombard, Finance Committee Representative
Ed Carroll Planning Board Representative
Karen Scott, Selectman Ex-Officio
Matt Beaulieu, At-Large
Jennifer Allocca, At-Large