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BELMONT WARRANT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES JUN 18 PM 2:11
MAY 16, 2018, 7:30 P.M.
CHENERY COMMUNITY ROOM

Present: Chairman Epstein; Members Alcock, Crowley, Dionne, Doyle, Fallon, Helgen, Libenson, Lubien, Schreiber, Slap, Weis, School Committee representative Burgess-Cox.

Members Absent: Lisanke, McLaughlin, Selectman Dash.

Also attending: Town Administrator Garvin, Town Treasurer Carman, Capital Budget Committee Chair Mahoney

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m. by Chairman Epstein.

I. Discussion of Retirement Board Articles

Town Treasurer Carman discussed Article 24 as the Retirement Board representative. The Article increases the spousal death benefit from \$6,000 to \$12,000. Currently 3 spouses receive the benefit. There are 14 more who are potentially eligible. Mr. Carman estimated 7 of these 14 is a reasonable upper bound on the likely number of beneficiaries.

The WC discussed the increase in the unfunded pension liability implied by Article 24.

Town Treasurer Carman also discussed Article 25 as the Retirement Board representative. The Article increases the COLA base from \$12,000 to \$13,000. Mr. Carman presented this as a fairness issue because the COLA base for Belmont teachers is \$13,000.

Chairman Epstein referred to the actuarial estimates prepared for the similar proposal last year and calculated a roughly \$850,000 increase in the unfunded pension liability from Article 25.

Member Doyle asked whether the town had a policy of equating town benefits to school benefits. Mr. Carman was not sure.

Member Libenson stated it was reasonable to achieve parity with school system.

Chairman Epstein pointed out that the WC voted against a similar proposal last year that raised the COLA base to \$14,000. He observed that some of the communities staying at the \$12,000 base are Concord, Winchester, and Lexington.

A vote on the articles was deferred pending additional actuarial information from Mr. Carman.

II. Discussion of DPW/BPD Project

Chairman Epstein briefly described the proposal for the DPW and police station that will be presented to the June Town Meeting and showed some of the renderings prepared by the architect. He also serves on the DPW/BPD Building Committee.

The plan delivers on the commitment made at the November 2017 Town Meeting to address gender equity, locker facilities, and an improved break room for DPW. The plan goes further and includes additional office space and a flexible rest and training space.

The plan for the police station goes beyond what was discussed at the November 2017 meeting. In addition to an elevator, women's locker facilities, and a sally port, it includes a significant increase in office and storage space and an upgrade to systems such as HVAC and includes sprinklers and a second means of egress from the second floor. It expands the police station from approximately 14,000 sq. feet to approximately 24,000 square feet. The police station will be brought up to the applicable codes.

The upper bound estimate on total project cost for the DPW and police station is \$8.9 million. This will be handled with \$7.4 million in debt financing and \$1.5 million from other one-time sources. There will not be a need for a debt exclusion.

Town Treasurer Carman explained how the debt service can be handled without a debt exclusion. There are various sources, such as MSBA turnbacks, rolloff of existing debt, and use of the Kendall insurance fund.

Chairman Epstein observed that the police station plan provides the functional equivalent of a new station at a small fraction of the cost previously considered. Earlier feasibility studies estimated that a new police station would cost at least \$20 million.

III. Discussion of Projects Recommended by Capital Budget Committee

Ms. Mahoney reviewed the projects recommended by the Capital Budget Committee. Most of the items were relatively small. There is a need to devote \$600K of the capital budget to further repairs to the two fire stations. In addition, the CBC will request \$600K from free cash to complete these repairs.

The CBC identified about \$2 million in additional desirable capital spending that unfortunately cannot be funded in FY19 given other financial constraints.

IV. Update from Liaisons

Ms. Garvin reported that the BOS is meeting Monday re the high school traffic plan. The BOS is having a public meeting on 6/18 to discuss possible uses of the incinerator site

Member Fallon gave a brief update on the Library. The Building Committee is selecting an OPM and she expects a debt exclusion for a new library after 2020.

Motion to adjourn at 8:48 PM.

Submitted by Roy J. Epstein.