

TOWN OF AMHERST  
CIP Committee

August 22, 2019

**DRAFT**

1 In attendance: Danielle Pray, Tom Gauthier, John D'Angelo, Selectman Ex-Officio, Steve  
2 Coughlan, Rich Hart, Brian Coogan, Michelle Croteau.

3  
4 The meeting came to order at 6:00 p.m. The group introduced themselves.

5  
6 **Brian Coogan MOVED to nominate Danielle Pray as Chair. John D'Angelo**  
7 **seconded the motion and it PASSED unanimously.**

8  
9 **John D'Angelo MOVED to nominate Steve Coughlan as Vice-Chair. Brian Coogan**  
10 **seconded the motion and it PASSED unanimously.**

11  
12 Those present discussed the number of CIP meetings to expect and thought that there would  
13 probably be two meetings with Department Heads and one meeting with the schools.

14  
15 Tom Gauthier noted that the school board had met the previous evening and discussed strategic  
16 plans, and the long and short term plans for the various buildings. John D'Angelo stated that a  
17 finished plan was not required for the CIP process but an estimate for a placeholder would be  
18 suitable. Tom Gauthier explained that it was difficult to come up with numbers because they  
19 don't know yet what is needed. Depending on whether refurbishments or a new school is  
20 required the amount could range from \$3m - \$50m. John D'Angelo pointed out that the CIP was  
21 designed to level the load on the taxpayers and not ask for multiple large projects at once. He  
22 noted that projects could be submitted with a request for a year but that could be moved around  
23 by the CIP Committee. He went on to say that last year the school reps had said a new school  
24 was needed at \$20m but there were still many questions to be answered, including whether or not  
25 to buy or build outside the village, whether the existing buildings could be repurposed for other  
26 town uses, combine the schools into one.

27  
28 Rich Hart noted that he was interested in energy use by town buildings and noted that discussion  
29 should take place regarding solar energy. Putting panels on roofs during construction would  
30 make sense. Potentially the town could convert to electric vehicles.

31  
32 Tom Gauthier noted there was a plan to hold a joint facilities meeting for all the schools but that  
33 had not yet been scheduled. John D'Angelo stated that something needed to make it to the CIP  
34 Plan because it was known that the issue was pending but it wasn't in the plan yet. He noted that  
35 developments were planned that would likely increase the school population. Lack of affordable  
36 housing was discussed, as well as empty nesters moving out of larger homes but younger  
37 families not being able to afford them. John D'Angelo stated his understanding was that space  
38 was tight at the elementary schools, snug at the middle school, and okay at the high school.

39  
40 In terms of procedure, the committee noted that getting information emailed prior to the meeting  
41 and then having paper copies available at the meeting was good practice.

42  
43 Brian Coogan asked if the CIP Committee looked back at past plans. It was noted that the CIP  
44 Committee looked forward and that within the six year plan timeframe the first three years could

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be considered pretty solid but the last three were certainly subject to change as new numbers were received and projects moved around.

The CIP Committee decided to hear from three departments at each meeting and save the schools for last at their own meeting. It was noted that the final plan would go to the Planning Board for approval and then as an advisory document to the Board of Selectmen and Ways and Means Committees.

The next meetings were scheduled for Wednesday, August 28, 2019, at 4:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 3, 2019, at 4:00 p.m. for the departments, and Tuesday, September 17, 2019, at 4:00 p.m. for the schools.

It was noted that DPW, Recreation, Heritage Commission and the Schools still needed to submit project request forms. The rail trail project might still be proposed but needed someone to advocate for it and push it forward - this may be bumped out a year while the logistics were figured out.

**The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Nic Strong  
Community Development Director