

TOWN OF AMHERST
CIP Committee

September 17, 2019

DRAFT

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

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

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6 Michele Croteau had submitted Project Request Forms and other documents for the schools and
7 took the Committee members through the process she used to create the 17 project requests that
8 had been presented.

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10 Michele Croteau distributed the school district's long term plan from which she had gleaned the
11 17 projects for the 2021 - 2026 CIP Plan. She noted that the spreadsheet was organized by
12 building and the projects had come from a report that was done on all the schools listing the
13 work required to be done to keep the buildings functioning. She noted that the dates of the
14 projects had been modified in some instances by Adam Steel, Superintendent, as he was also
15 trying to keep the tax rate from spiking and may have moved projects from year to year to even
16 out the expenditures.

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18 There was a question on a spreadsheet indicating a \$32m amount for Souhegan High School.
19 Michelle Croteau and Steve Coughlan explained that was the number that came from the
20 architect's design. This plan has never been presented to the school boards and it is not included
21 in the list of projects that guided this year's CIP submissions. Steve Coughlan explained that the
22 lengthy spreadsheet indicated the architects and consultants' list of all the structural components
23 and every system needed to keep the buildings running along with timelines and cycles for
24 replacements. He noted that the projects were prioritized within the table and timelines adjusted
25 from the typical life expectancies to more realistic numbers as the facilities and items were
26 examined. He pointed out that on the spreadsheet that had started this question "Souhegan" was
27 the existing school and included projects needed to keep the current school operating, and "S2.0"
28 was a new high school and was not included in the list or the dollar amounts. Michele Croteau
29 explained further that the large spreadsheet included many items that did not meet the CIP
30 threshold for inclusion so she had pulled the projects that met that requirement.

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32 Rich Hart asked if there was any money requested with the purpose of making changes to handle
33 increased capacity or if it was all for repairs of the existing buildings. Brian Coogan said it
34 appeared to be what was required to keep the doors open.

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36 Michelle Croteau pointed out a spreadsheet that showed the funding plan, noting that there were
37 CRF requests. She noted that the basis for the numbers was the report from the architects which
38 she used to provide the basis for her figures which she increased by a percentage over time. She
39 pointed out that in column six there was a shortfall of funds in the CRF so as part of the project
40 she would be requesting a separate warrant article for the difference to be raised from taxes. It
41 was noted that there was one CRF that the funds would go into for all schools. Michelle Croteau
42 said that she would propose an Expendable Trust Fund versus a CRF for the flexibility it offered
43 in utilizing the money because the school board could be agents to expend and there were
44 different logistics involved. She noted that if there was already a CRF in place, which some CIP

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Committee members thought there was, she would leave it as is, but if she was creating a new account she would prefer an Expendable Trust Fund.

CIP Project Request Forms #1 through #6 were to fund the CRF: \$650K in 2021; \$663K in 2022; \$676,260 in 2023; \$689,785 in 2024; \$703,581 in 2025; and, \$717,653 in 2026.

CIP Project Request Form #7 & #8 were both for \$125K; 7 was for Amherst Middle School Architectural and Engineering Plans and 8 was for Wilkins School Architectural and Engineering Plans. These plans would be to determine future building needs. They were the only two requests related to studies. Michelle Croteau noted that the \$125K requests for these studies would be taken from the \$650K requested to be added to the CRF. Discussion took place about combining the requests but that created a risk that if someone did not want to vote for the studies they could vote down the entire article and no money would go into the CRF. Having three separate warrant articles ran the risk of losing one or all of them.

CIP Project Request Form #9 in 2022 was for the Smoke/Fire Detection System Upgrades at Souhegan High School. Project cost was \$99,985 to come from the CRF. Michelle Croteau again explained that the base number came from the original architect's report and was incrementally increased with a compounding 3% until the year requested.

CIP Project Request Form #10 in 2024 was for Rooftop Air Handling Units at Amherst Middle School. Project cost was \$123,463 to come from the CRF. Michelle Croteau noted there were four projects slated for 2024.

CIP Project Request Form #11 in 2024 was for HVAC Distribution System at Amherst Middle School. Project cost was \$579,637. Michelle Croteau stated that the CRF would not have enough money to fund all three projects in 2024 and this form was the one she was showing an additional \$209,816 to be requested from taxes.

CIP Project Request Form #12 in 2024 was for Lighting Upgrade at Amherst Middle School. Project cost was \$579,637 to come from the CRF. The fact that this was the exact same amount as #11 was pointed out. It was explained that the base cost for both these projects was \$500K which explained the same cost with interest added in the same year.

CIP Project Request Form #13 in 2024 was for a Roof Replacement for the Amherst Middle School. Project cost was \$580,310 from the CRF. Rich Hart pointed out that if solar panels were going to be a consideration, now would be a good time to do it, when the whole roof was being replaced. Michelle Croteau pointed out that the form indicated one project to replace roof tar and gravel. She noted that the long list of items from the architect included them as two separate projects but she had combined them into one.

CIP Project Request Form #14 in 2026 was for School Lighting Upgrade at Clark School. Project cost was \$307,468 to come from the CRF.

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CIP Project Request Form #15 in 2026 was for replacing Exterior Vinyl Walls with cement fiberboard at Clark school. Project cost was \$92,333 and would come from the CRF.

CIP Project Request Form #16 in 2026 was for HVAC at Wilkins School. Project cost was \$614,937. The CRF had a shortfall at this time so an additional \$250K would be needed from taxes.

CIP Project Request Form #17 in 2026 was for Lighting Upgrade at Wilkins School. Project cost was \$614,937 to come from the CRF. It was noted that the numbers were the same as Project #16 because the base number was the same at \$500K.

Rich Hart asked if the lighting upgrades would be to use LED bulbs and reduce the amount of electricity used. Michelle Croteau stated that was correct. Steve Coughlan stated that there would be ambient light sensors and zones within rooms and controls so the lights were off when the room was vacant and so on. There is a possibility of grants or discounts from Eversource but they would not be known until the date the project was done.

Brian Coogan asked about the portable classrooms currently in use and whether they would be sustainable for the next six years because he didn't see any replacements in the CIP proposals. John D'Angelo thought there was a shortage of portable classrooms throughout the state.

The Committee thanked Michelle Croteau for her presentation of the school items.

The Committee asked which departments were still to come. It was noted that DPW had a couple of projects - the roof over the transfer station and a \$200K CRF for bridge repair and replacement. The Committee determined that they did not need to meet with the DPW Director. The Heritage Commission had submitted a request for a stone wall maintenance, repair and education initiative. The CIP Committee determined that they did not need to meet with the Heritage Commission but would do so if the Chairman so desired. Recreation had submitted three requests, for field upgrades, tennis court repair and a community center. The Committee asked to have the Recreation Director come to a meeting.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, October 1, 2019, at 4:00 p.m. at Town Hall. It was noted that the spreadsheet showing the CIP items for the six year plan would need to be updated.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Nic Strong
Community Development Director