

TOWN OF WENHAM

Community Preservation Committee
Meeting Minutes of March 12, 2015
Town Hall, 138 Main Street

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30 A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk delivered to all Committee members, a meeting of the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) was held on Thursday, MARCH 12, 2015 at 7 PM in the Selectmen Meeting Room.

With a quorum present, Chair of the Committee Ms. Davis called the meeting to order at 7 PM
Committee Present: At-Large Members Harriet Davis, Chair; Patrick Waddell, Clerk
Town Representatives: Arthur Burt, Wenham Housing Authority; Leo Maestranzi, Conservation Commission; Virginia Rogers, Planning Board
Not Present: Denis Curran, Joint Recreation Board; Barbara Locke, Historic District Commission Tom Starr; Kennon Anderson

Public Information
Audio Recorded with permission
Agenda
Finance Director Community Preservation Act (CPA) Report
Minutes – February 26, 2015

Approval of Minutes

The February 26, 2015 minutes were held for review.

Mr. Maestranzi moved to defer the minutes to the next meeting and it was unanimous to do so.

Review of the CPA Financial Report From Finance Director

Ms. Davis reported on the question raised at the last meeting regarding how ten percent of the overall CPA funding is allocated into the three mandatory categories, and confirmed these amounts are based on estimated revenues from the previous fiscal year. She noted however, that over estimating would create a deficient and require the difference to be added on the tax rate.

Ms. Davis reviewed that the unused funds in Administration Cost account are returned back to the General Fund, but because this was not shown/updated on the spread sheet, and the CPC believed there to be a balance in that account and recommended a lower amount to be allocated for Administration Costs for Fiscal Year 16; it was agreed to amend the amount allocated to administrative costs to \$8,000.

The Committee observed that the Finance Director had funds, if approved at Town Meeting, to come out of different accounts than voted by the CPC.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the use of CPA funds and how the allocations, if approved, affects the Town's ability to acquire open space, in the future, due to the high costs associated with the purchase of land.

Mr. Maestranzi opined that the money should be invested, and saved for the purchase of open space and that the Maple Street senior affordable housing project be bonded, with the annual allocations to affordable housing be used to pay this bond; this would be discussed later.

It was noted that the CPC voted to recommend to Town Meeting that the pool/ War Memorial funding be allocated from the General Account, and with no applications for open space that the Open Space Account remain untouched.

APPROVED 4.11.15

Some committee members observed that they have heard concern from some residents about the high tax rate and if the Town should continue to participate in CPA and how committing to long-term projects could be effected. It was also noted that the matching funds are less in previous years with more communities participating. It was noted that the bond for the Town Hall preservation is through June 30, 2027.

It was agreed that Ms. Davis as Chair would present the motions at town meeting and explain that the Committee was not unanimous in support of the pool project, and that the vote was only to put the question on the ballot.

7:52 PM - Town Counsel/ Moderator Paul Weaver arrived.

After reviewing and discussing the Finance Director's CPA balance sheet, the CPC agreed on the following amendments to the balance sheet to reflect the allocations as voted by the CPC on February 26, 2015:

The Finance Director will be asked to revise:

- (f) Allocation of \$25,000 for the War Memorial Landscaping be changed from Open Space to the CPA General Fund balance
- (h) Allocation of \$26,880 for the pool bid documents (Wenham's share) be changed from Open Space to the CPA General Fund balance
- (i) Allocation of \$672,000 (\$450,000 and \$ 222,000) for the pool construction (Wenham's share) be changed from Open Space to the CPA General Fund balance

Mr. Weaver will provide the Finance Director with the amendments.

Update on Pool - Town Counsel

Ms. Davis reviewed that the CPC voted 7 to 2 that the pool be brought to the Town Meeting for a vote and was not unanimously supported by the Committee. Ms. Davis will make this clear at Town Meeting.

Mr. Weaver reported that he is in contact with Hamilton's Town Counsel regarding a separate joint agreement for the proposed pool. There would be a separate agreement from the joint recreation program and would include such items as:

- The payment schedule be amortized over the period of the bonding
- What happens if one or both towns dissolve the joint recreation department?
- That the CPA funds are for the capital expense only; operational expenses are separate and must be detailed and finalized.
- The vote on the pool would be based on the approval of a joint agreement.

Warrant Article

Mr. Weaver gave an overview of the process of Town that he would follow to present the CPA articles at Town Meeting. Ms. Davis, as Chair will read the motions at town meeting.

Mr. Weaver will remind Town Meeting that they may vote to approve, deny, or amend to lower the amount as presented in the motion.

Mr. Weaver confirmed that individual CPC members could stand up at Town Meeting and give their opinion, regardless of their view to support or oppose.

Mr. Weaver confirmed that the buildings for the pool are considered part of the project as allowed by CPA.

Regarding the special act to pay for work done at the Cemetery to be paid by CPA funding. This money was previously approved, allocated, and encumbered. Because contractual mistakes were made, this article/ vote is necessary as part of the process to submit this to legislation to allow the town to pay the vendors for work done. The Moderator will answer questions regarding this article but due to the nature of the article no debate is allowed.

APPROVED 4.11.15

It was noted that Representative Hill is in favor of this special act. Mr. Weaver cautioned that this legislative process may take months or years.

It was the consensus of the CPC that the prior award money for the stone restoration at the Wenham Cemetery, Main Street, is encumbered for this purpose; if the Legislature authorizes the Town to pay the vendor, it was the intention of the present CPC to approve a new grant subject to a vote at the next (special / annual) town meeting.

Review of last year's recipient of CPA funds.

Future meetings - If necessary

The CPC agreed that at this time, no further meetings were necessary this fiscal year; a meeting would be scheduled if needed.

The recipients of this year's CPA funding would be asked to present an update to the committee on the projects being funded in the fall (2015).

New Business – There was no new business.

Adjournment

The Committee unanimously adjourned at 8:35 PM

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley
3.31.15