

Community Preservation Committee- May 12, 2025, Washington Room, Town Hall and via Zoom

Attendance: Ronald Lum, Tom Fisher, Bruce Fleischman, Alexandra Alexopoulos were in Person; no members were on via Zoom. Mary West, Marcell Robateau and Town Council Rep, Kevin O'Connell were absent. Also in person were Town Finance Director Janine Smith, Town Planner Michelle Tyler, Town Historian Henry Cooke, Resident Joseph Burke and Secretary Kristin McDonald.

No quorum was reach, but Chairman Lum began the meeting around 6:10 pm. Meeting began with a financial update from the Financial Director Janine Smith

Financial Update- The Director has not come in person to go over the financial status in a little while and she wanted to come in person and go over things this year. As required, the Town Council will be presented with an order to vote and accept the estimated revenues, the expected debt obligations for FY'26 and annual amounts distributed into the Administrative, Historic, Housing and Open Space funds. The Town Manager presents this to the Council and has to be done by July 1st. The Finance Director will look back at the past two years to see the gross surcharge that was collected when determining her estimates for the upcoming fiscal year; traditionally Randolph has been conservative in their estimations. The Finance Director also reaches out to the Town Assessor to see how many exemptions and abatements have come been down. Lastly, the Director will add in a 2% tax increase; all these factors determine the numbers for the upcoming fiscal year. The Director has been hearing that the State match this year is expected to be lower than normal, so she is factoring in only a 15% match. The estimated revenue this year is \$1,399,399. The CPC is required to set aside no more than, 5% of the revenues for the Administrative Budget; Ms. Smith will be using 5% again this year for \$69,970. Whatever is not used from this account gets turned back into the main CPA Fund; it stays in the CPC, it does not go back to the Town general fund. By law, we are also required to set aside 10% into the CPA categories of Housing, Historical, and Open Space and Recreation. The debt obligations this year will be for the Grove Street Trail and Powers Farm Project in the amount of \$35,106. The Grove Street Project is bonded through Sept. 2030 and the Powers Farm Project payment will be complete in 2038. The plan is to have the Order ready for the Council with all the estimated revenue information, for their next meeting of May 19th. If members have any questions, please feel free to reach out to the Finance Director soon, so the item can be added to the Council Agenda. The Director went through the available funding sources including where the account stood at the end of FY'24, what estimates were approved in FY'25 along with the approved project amounts and what the Director estimates for this year the available amount will be for the CPC to use for FY'26 projects. The revenues that are remaining after the set asides for the required amounts, will be placed in the Budgeted Reserves Account and may be used by the Committee at any time during the year for any type of project. This money gets turned back over into the main CPA Fund if it is not used. The Undesignated Fund Balance is like your personal savings account. At the end of the fiscal year whatever is left over, gets deposited into this Fund and can be used for any CPA approved project. Ms. Smith also has a chart in her update that shows all the same information as presented, but in a pie chart format to make it easier to see and understand. Lastly, the financial update includes a list of open projects. Some of these have been open for a while with a remaining balance and no activity. If the CPC votes to close out a project, the appropriated money, goes back to the original CPA Fund that it came from (Historic, Housing, Open Space and Rec). The Finance Director encouraged the Committee to really look at the open projects and consider closing some of them and turning the money back. Chairman Lum asked about the Norroway Pond Restoration Project for instance, this is still open because there is the anticipation that something else will need to be done going forward; many of these projects fall into this same situation. The Director indicated that the project funding can only be used for what the original application requested, the purpose cannot change. If something else comes up, there should be a new request put in. She cautioned the Committee to make sure the projects fit the CPA guidelines when approving them. Several bills have come across her desk for payment, that work has

been done or is being completed and she has had to question whether the payments meet the requirements. She consulted Mr. Cooke regarding what is historic vs historical when it comes to Town documents. Discussion arose as to what makes a document historic, is it age, timeline, significance. Mr. Cooke explained that he has spoken to the State Archivist and the CPC Advisory Committee and they said that documents have the same threshold as he would an historic building. The guidelines for a building are 50-100 years old depending on the Town. Randolph has 100 years for buildings, but does not have a threshold for documents. Ms. Smith gave an example of the Accounting office. They have many records that are considered permanent by the State and have to be kept forever. The Accounting staff use regular office time to scan these documents themselves. They do not use CPA funding because the records are everyday records and are required to be kept; they do not have an historic value to the Town. Chairperson Lum asked Director Smith if she recommends the CPC to return the money appropriated last year for the scanning and digitizing of documents and she responded yes. Chairperson Lum asked if a CPA funded project breaks (Girl Scout House, the Boardwalk at Powers Farm, Imagination Station, etc.) and we need to make repairs, is there a way to make repairs without using CPA funds; does the Town have funding that can be used. Mr. Cooke asked about if maintenance is included in the application, can it be paid for with CPC funds. The Director noted that if CPA funds are used for a land acquisition or creation of a playground, etc., we can use money to maintain the property, but other projects, no, they should be considered routine maintenance if requested by the Town or covered by the outside group that applied. Chairperson Lum asked for future Town projects, such as a ropes course type project, that naturally has things that are going to break or need repair, will there be a funding source to make repairs or is the project going to sit there for another a year until money can be appropriated to make the repair. He noted that as a member, he will be less inclined to support this type of project knowing there isn't a way to repair or maintain. Finance Director Smith noted that the CPA Fund is not meant to subsidize the Town budget and there are departments that would need to use their budget to fund these projects.

Ms. Alexopoulos asked about projects like the DJ Symmonds Playground and the Young School Tennis Courts. Could the applicant have put in the application that the maintenance would be provided for, say for 5 years and would this be ok. The DJ Symmonds Playground, yes, since it was a new playground built with CPA Funds. The Young School Tennis Courts would be a no, since they were already there and the CPA was just resurfacing. There is information on the State CPA Coalition website that details what is allowed to have maintenance, the Committee has this information. The Ropes Course was mentioned as another project that requires annual inspection and possible repairs to be completed. It was pointed out by the Town Planner Ms. Tyler, that the Rope Course was not primarily built with CPA Funds, but received a Grant. Ms. Smith recommended that it be explained to the Town Manager and the Town Council when they receive the report for approval, that these projects will need to be maintained by a certain department going forward and how much that might cost. That department would then need to add more money into their budget to provide support down the road. It needs to be clear up front that the Town will need to take over the project funding going forward. The applications could also include a period of maintenance in the application. Maintenance through CPC only applies to purchases and creations of open space and recreation.

Members can reach out to Director Smith with any questions and all can work together to make sure there are no bumps in the road going forward when looking for payment. The Committee does need to review open projects and pull things back that are complete or are no longer moving forward.

A new roll call was done, but no quorum was reached by this time in the meeting. Members decided since the applicants were here tonight to allow them to present their applications, but the projects will be voted on at a future meeting.

Henry Cooke was present on behalf of the Stetson Trustees for work at Stetson Hall.

Stetson Hall Indoor Painting- The Trustees are looking for \$40,000. The indoor painting was last done in 2008. Some repair painting has taken place; however, the upstairs hall is in need of repainting. The 10-12 years following the repainting, the Hall saw a lot of use and got beat up, but since COVID, it has not been used for much. The Mass Historical Commission approved the paint color. The Great Hall, the balcony and all the trim work below the cornices will all need to be painted. Wood trim around the windows, hallways and doorways and kitchen area, all need to be stripped and repainted. There is no lead paint is on site, the lead and asbestos were taken care of a while ago. The color scheme is derived from the original paint scheme of the building. The first-floor hallway has not been done since the first repainting. The front and back foyer, not near the elevator which was done 4 years ago, but also the main hall itself and the stairways would be redone. Mr. Cooke did get 1 quote, it is a company used before, their quote fell into the middle range of quotes in the past. Chairperson Lum suggested having a not to exceed number to allow for the possibility of higher bids. Mr. Cooke could get 2 additional quotes as a backup. The \$40,000 covers both the upstairs and downstairs painting. Mr. Fisher asked what kind of usage is the Hall getting at this time. Mr. Cooke responded that there is very little since the Town has asked to not have private functions at this time, only Town functions at this time. The Town Manager, the Assistant Town Manager and the Town Attorney are looking into having a plan to rent the first-floor office space and to use the hall for functions again. There is one licensed tenant, which allows them to not have to bid, they are tenants at will. They are working into two other groups who are looking to rent space. The Town is focusing on free programs open to all for the upstairs, like the Senior Olympics Award Ceremony and the Haitian Flag Day Luncheon and events for the Police Department. Hopefully there can be some private functions mixed in here and there. Members tried to decide on a date for the next meeting to vote on the applications presented, but with members missing, they decided to wait and have the secretary reach out to everyone with possible dates.

Town Planner Michelle Tyler present to discuss a Housing Coordinator

Housing Coordinator- There are requirements by the Commonwealth regarding affordable housing. 10% of year-round housing stock, rentals, houses, accessory dwelling, apartments. If the Town has not met the 10%, the State allows developers to come in anywhere. 40B can be a Habitat for Humanity single- family home, or a 100-unit complex. Qualifications for State must be met, we can't just say something is affordable. There have been units the Town has been involved with, like Prynne Hills and Avalon, where the Town has to annually review the rates and income levels. This information has to be recorded with the State and reviewed annually. The Veteran's and Working Families project from 2006, this home needs to be monitored in perpetuity to make sure the next home buyer qualifies for affordable housing. The Town currently has no one to conduct any reviews. This does not fall under the Housing Authority, so they are not involved. No Town department currently oversees this, not Housing, not Building, not Planning, not Assessor. Places like Rosemont, want to raise rents, they have to get the Town's approval. The house at 391 South Street, which was purchased with CPA funds, was never taken to the State Registry, so these units are not on our list. We need someone to maintain the list and do annual work to make sure we are at 10%. The person will also be available to assist those looking for affordable housing.

This application is the salary for the coordinator for 1-year to start; but there could be additional years going forward. The Housing Account of CPA can cover this salary for many years If we needed it to.

Mr. Fisher asked where are we now in regard to 40B. Ms. Tyler indicated we are just a hare below 10%. The penalty would be that a developer could come in to propose a multi-unit complex, the Town would have limited ability to restrict the project. The project at Fencourt could qualify towards our 10% number, but the Town needs someone to make sure this report gets to the State. The units at 391 South Street, can count as well, but does not at this time since there is no one to make sure it happens.

Ms. Alexopoulos asked how quickly would a person be in place. Town Planner Tyler has a job posting ready to go as soon as this application is approved and funding is for certain. In other words, as quickly as possible.

Chairman Lum asked if any other Towns have been successful. Ms. Tyler spoke of communities that have a housing coordinator, create a housing production plan and those communities were then able reach the 10% goal. Some Towns have a Planning and Community Development Department, Affordable Housing Trust and some collaborated with the Housing Authority, but usually not through the Town Planners in order to help them get the work of monitoring the list done yearly. Does not need to be a contractor, this would be a Town employee based on the Town rate scales, with their pay coming from the CPA Housing Fund. The Coordinator will need to have experience with State and Federal Affordable Housing Laws. Ms. Tyler explained that this can be a full-time position; there is plenty of work to do on a daily basis. This is a specialized job, but Planner Tyler knows there are other communities out there with this type of position and there should be a good pool of applicants. Previously, the CPC had approved a Shared Housing agreement, but the arrangement was not working and was not meeting our needs, so Ms. Tyler ended the agreement.

Mr. Burke asked what would happen if the CPA went away, how would this position be funded. Members and Ms. Tyler felt that would take a long time and require votes of the CPC, the Town Council and the Residents. Finance Director Smith assured everyone there is funding available to cover this in case, based on the fact that the CPA monies already in the undesignated or Budgeted Reserves funds, would be turned over to the Town General Fund and she would recommend that some of these funds be used to permanently fund the position through the Town Budget.

Review of projects-

Since there is still no quorum, Members will just review the projects and star them for voting at a future meeting.

The Bylaw Archiving project cannot go any further and will need to be pulled back. The Records Preservation project also cannot go any further and will need to be pulled back.

Historic Lighting is completed and the remaining \$3,400 can be pulled back.

The Ropes Course is complete, maintenance cannot not be performed since the project is only partially funded through CPA, therefore the remaining balance can be pulled back. The Community Programs Department would need to fund repairs, inspections and maintenance through their annual budget.

The Playground Repairs Project would need to be pulled back since some of the playgrounds were not built with CPA funding.

The War Memorial Lighting project is complete and the monies can be pulled back.

Glovers Brook Pond and Norrway Pond are complete and can be pulled back. Chairman Lum pointed out that if repairs or cleaning is found to be necessary, a new application will be submitted.

The original Pickleball Court next to the RICC has been completed and the monies can be pulled back.

Fin, Fur, Feather and the Forestry Plan never had much work done, do not appear to be moving forward and funds can be pulled back.

Open Space and Recreation Plan will be reviewed at the next meeting.

The new Fire Chief was made aware that the Memorial Park at the North Randolph Fire Station was approved. He was going to review this and get back to the secretary to let the CPC know how he would like to proceed.

Chairman Lum believes nothing is happening with the Reservoir Walk and this money should be pulled back.

The DJ Symmonds playground has \$3,900 remaining. Ms. Tyler noted this project is complete and this money can be pulled back.

Town Hall Rehab is still ongoing. There should be a new bid for the windows coming soon.

Young School Tennis Courts project has been completed by fund from the School Department and the \$140,000 can be pulled back.

Stetson Hall Back Entrance this was completed, but this is historic and can be used for maintenance so hold on this for now. Mr. Cooke will review this.

Dog Park Improvements has \$17,750 remaining and the Finance Director indicated that this was created with CPA funds and can be used to maintain the park.

Stetson Hall Insulation was done, but the spreadsheet is showing nothing was paid. Members and the audience feel that maybe this work came out of the Stetson Account or Town account in error. The Secretary will look into this.

Ms. Tyler asked to go back to the DJ Symmonds Playground. Since this project was created with CPA funds, the Town would be allowed to provide maintenance. This money should be maintained in order to fund any repair work the project may have going forward. Members also discussed the original pickleball courts next to the RICC. These were also created with CPA funds and the Town would be allowed to maintain them as well and members would like to see the money not pulled back.

Stetson Hall Gutters, HVAC, and Trim. Mr. Cooke stated that he expects some of this work to be bid out this summer and the projects are still moving forward. The Stetson Trustees are working with the Assistant Town Manager to do an energy audit. The Wood and Roof Repair has been completed and this money can be pulled back.

Belcher House ADA project is under review for bidding and deed restrictions. Does this need three bids since it is a private entity and not a public one. Director Smith stated that once the Town Council votes to approve the projects, the Committee/Town relinquishes the oversight of the project. During the application process would be the time to request the 3 quotes.

Check with Ms. LaRosee on Luddington Park Phase II and the Girl Scout House to see if these projects are 100% complete.

Signage will be reviewed to see if complete.

Open Space and Recreation Plan, Ms. Tyler would like this application to be keep open since she is looking to update the plan and will need this money to help hire a consultant to complete the work.

Shared Housing Coordinator funds can be pulled back since we are no longer a member of the group.

The new Pickleball Courts are to remain open and the project is being worked on.

Oakland Cemetery and Historic Property Survey are both in process. Grants have been applied for, but we have not received the funds at this time. We need to leave open until any grants are received.

Vital Records and Historic Documents cannot move forward and should be pulled back.

Mr. Fisher motioned to adjourn, second by Ms. Alexopoulos. Hearing no discussion, Chairman Lum called for a vote. Members voted 4-0 to adjourn at 7:38 pm.

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