



Town Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 14, 2021, at 7:00 PM, in the Matthew Thornton Room



Call to Order

Chairman Koenig called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present at the meeting were Chairman Koenig, Vice Chair Boyd, Councilor Harrington, Councilor Healey, Councilor Rothhaus, Councilor Albert, Councilor Woods, Town Manager Eileen Cabanel and Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Paul Micali.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Koenig led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements

Chairman Koenig made the following announcements:

- Upcoming budget meetings: Wednesday January 20th, and Thursday January 21st at 6:30 pm. Upcoming regular Town Council meeting schedule: Thursday January 28th and Thursday February 11th 7:00 pm.
- Councilor Harrington shared that Governor Sununu announced a change in eligibility criteria for COVID vaccination release 1B (Dec-March). The original criteria included ages 70 and older but the age was lowered to 65 and older. Residents that fit this criterion, can visit www.nh.gov/covid19 or call 211 on or after January 22, 2021 to schedule an appointment. The vaccines will begin being administered on January 26, 2021. Chairman Koenig added that individuals with two risk factors are also eligible to sign up on January 22.

Town Manager Eileen Cabanel made the following announcements:

- Thank you to the Rotary Club for their donation of 1,000 N95 masks to the town.
- Chief Duke and Merrimack Fire & Rescue is pleased to announce the promotion of Captain Shawn Brechtel to the position on Assistant Chief of EMS and Fire Operations. Captain Brechtel's promotion will take effect on Sunday January 24, 2021.

Comments from the Press and Public

None

Recognitions, Resignations and Retirements

1. Recognition of Full-time Years of Service of Town Employees

Submitted by Human Resources Coordinator Sharon Marunicz

The Town Council will present recognition awards to the following Town Employees:

- Police Department: Chief Brian Levesque - 20-year plaque (DOH: 7/9/2000).
- Police Captain Eric Marquis - 20-year plaque (DOH: 11/6/2000).
- SRO/Det 1st Thomas Prentice - 20-year plaque (DOH: 11/5/2000).
- Deputy Chief Matthew Tarleton - 25-year gift card in lieu of gold watch.
- Mtpl. John Dudash - 25-year gift card in lieu of gold watch (DOH: 12/31/1995).

Councilor Albert expressed his personal gratitude to the Police Officers that were recognized and added that they are all exceptional Police Officers and Merrimack is lucky to have them.

2. Rotary Club of Merrimack's 50th Anniversary Proclamation

Submitted by Rotary Club of Merrimack Member Brian Snow

The Town Council to issue a proclamation designating January 7, 2021 as the 50th anniversary of the Rotary Club of Merrimack.

MOTION made by Vice Chair Boyd and seconded by Councilor Healey to adopt the proclamation.

MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0.

Councilor Rothhaus expressed his gratitude to this organization and thanked them for all they do to support the town.

Appointments

1. Special Primary Election, Deliberative Session & Town Meeting Discussion

Submitted by Town Moderator Lynn Christensen

Town Moderator to update the Town Council and discuss the details of the upcoming Special Primary Election, Deliberative Session and Town Meeting.

Lynn Christensen started by explaining that applications are currently being accepted from individuals within each party that want to run to represent their specific political party. There is also the potential for an undeclared voter to submit their intention to run on the general ballot. If only one person from each party files by 5:00 PM on January 15th there will be no Primary on February 23rd. If this happens, the state Special Election will be moved to February 23rd. The exception to this is if an undeclared voter submits a Declaration of intent to file with the Secretary of State by the deadline, then the Special Election will stay in April. This is because the person that submits their intent to run, has until February 22nd to submit 150 nominations from registered voters to be added to the ballot. Moderator Christensen advised the Council that although she does not have any intention of actually running, she submitted a declaration so that the election will remain in April. Chairman Koenig clarified that we could still have a Primary if more than one person from each party submits their intentions to run by 5:00 PM on January 15th. The intentions to file have to be done in Concord, they cannot be taken by the Town Clerk's office.

Moderator Christensen expressed her concerns about having to hold a separate election due to the cost and work associated with an election. If we can successfully manage to keep the Special Election in April, we can hold it along with the town election and just add an additional ballot. She shared some of the specifics around the election itself (number of polling places, machines required, etc.) and added that masks will be required for everyone regardless if they have been vaccinated or not.

Town Manager Cabanel stated that she recently read an article in the Manchester Union Leader that some of the big box stores and restaurant owners expressed concerns about their employees enforcing the mask mandate and the Attorney General recommended that they call the local Police when issues arise with individuals refusing to wear a mask. The Police will try to deescalate the situation but ultimately the individual will need to wear a mask as it is a state mandate.

Moderator Christensen explained that we held two elections with masks required and had minimal issues. If the voter does not want to wear a mask, we offer an alternative to vote outside with an election official present. Councilor Albert added that he worked at the Presidential election and part of his duties was

ensuring that the voters were wearing masks and he too had only a handful of issues. Most individuals were compliant or agreed to the alternate method. Other stories were shared about mask issues at recent elections.

Councilor Rothhaus asked about accommodations for individuals that want to attend the Deliberative Session but do not want to wear a mask. Moderator Christensen indicated that it is a voter's right to attend so she will figure out a way for them to be able to participate but if they refuse to wear a mask, they cannot attend with the rest of the general public that is wearing masks. Town Manager Cabanel asked if the law requires us to make accommodations for individuals that refuse to wear a mask. Moderator Christensen responded that she is uncertain of what the law requires but as the Town Moderator, she will not forbid a registered voter from participating in the Deliberative Session.

Chairman Koenig asked if the plans for the Deliberative Session have been made yet. Moderator Christensen shared the attendance from the last several years which has been well below 100 people and explained that she sees no reason that the APR at The Upper Elementary school cannot be used. Her plan is to setup the chairs six feet apart and she will have single chairs as well as sets of two for couples. She will also add an additional table to the stage so that the town Councilors can also be spaced out six feet apart. The Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager and Tax Clerk will be placed at a table in front of the stage, also six feet apart. Plexi glass screens will be used for the check in process, similar to voting. The plan for the non-mask wearing participants has not been determined at this time but is considering putting them in a classroom with a monitor.

Chairman Koenig asked about the School Deliberative Session and Moderator Christensen that she advised the schoolboard that she wants to hold the two sessions back-to-back to avoid having to setup multiple times. She added that there does not appear to be anything controversial on their ballot this year so does not see a problem with the need to add additional chairs. If something changes as it gets closer, it can always be moved to the Smith gym where there is more room.

Moderator Christensen circled back to the potential of a Primary and indicated that if we need to have one, she recommends one polling location. We can cut down on the cost significantly by reducing it to one location, which should be plenty due to the number of voters that typically vote in this type of election.

Public Hearing

None

Legislative Updates from State Representatives

Chairman Koenig read an update from Representative Mooney with input from Representative Healey.

- At the January 6th historic drive-in House session, Deputy Speaker Sherman Packard (R-Londonderry) was elected Speaker of the New Hampshire House of Representatives.
- On January 7, 2021, Governor Christopher T. Sununu was sworn-in for this third term.
- The following House Committee appointments were recently made:
 - Rep. Mooney - Election Law Committee
 - Rep. Blasek - Public Works Committee
 - Rep. Notter - Science, Energy, Technology Committee
 - Rep. Tausch - Judiciary Committee

- Reps. Mayville, Rung, Healey - Resources, Recreation, Development Committee
- The newly sworn-in Executive Council met today and took up the Merrimack Town Council's letter requesting a Special Election for State Representative. The request was unanimously approved - filing period January 11-15, 2021; Primary Election on Feb. 23, 2021; Special Election on April 13, 2021. If there is no primary, then the Special Election is on Feb. 23, 2021. Further clarification on the Executive Council's action on this matter should be consulted in the meeting's minutes or by listening to the recordings.

Town Manager's Report

Town Manager Cabanel reported the following:

- Final stamped bid documents for the Waste Water Phase II project were submitted to the NH Department of Environmental Services for final review. The project is scheduled to advertise for bids beginning on January 21, 2021 and bids will be accepted beginning on February 23, 2021. Construction on this 22.6-million-dollar project will begin this summer.
- Favorable temperatures allowed the Watson park skating rink to open on Monday January 11th however with fluctuating temperatures forecasted later this week, the rink may have to temporarily close until colder weather settles back in. When open, the rink is lit until 9:00 every night and status updates can be found on the Merrimack Parks and Rec home website.
- Merrimack TV continues their live MHS sports coverage this week with the Merrimack girl's varsity basketball team Friday night (1/15) at 6:00 PM and wrestling Saturday (1/16) at 10:00 AM. You can watch live on Merrimack TV channel 21, the Merrimack TV website or Roku. More information and schedules can be found on the Merrimack TV website.

Consent Agenda

Old Business

1. Recommended Zoning Ordinance Amendments [Final Reading]

Submitted by Community Development Director Tim Thompson

The Town Council to consider recommended amendments to the Zoning Ordinance (Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 11 and 17), developed by staff and the Planning Board, to address repeated ordinance administration and/or enforcement tasks (Definitions, ordinance references, home occupations, dimensional requirement clarifications, travel trailers, references and modifications to ensure compliance with the State Building Code, signs), pursuant to RSA 675:2 and Charter Article 5.

Chairman Koenig reminded the council that the Community Development Director (Tim Thompson) presented the changes approximately two months ago and a public hearing was held a month later. It is now up to the Council to decide if it wants to adopt the changes that were discussed.

MOTION made by Vice Chair Boyd and Councilor Albert to adopt the changes as written. **MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0.**

Vice Chair Boyd expressed his gratitude to the Community Development team and the Planning Board for all of the hard work put into the Zoning Ordinance. Chairman Koenig echoed the Vice Chair remarks.

New Business

1. Eagle Scout Project Presentation

Submitted by Life Scout Joy Morris

The Town Council to be presented with Life Scout Joy Morris' proposed Eagle Scout project to construct a Gaga pit near the waterfront area at Wasserman Park.

Joy Morris began her presentation by providing a background on herself and her Scout career. She explained that she is trying to receive her Eagle Scout rank but in order to do that, she needs to organize and complete a community project to serve the community in which she lives, and she has chosen a second Gaga pit for Wasserman park. She then provided an explanation of what Gaga ball is that it requires a level playing area. The location she has chosen is not level so the first thing she will need to do it construct a retaining wall and fill it with sand to level off the area. She then shared a sketch of the pit itself as well as a picture of the proposed location and discussed the dimensions and construction details. She continued by explaining the project will cost \$1,843.92, which covers the cost of the pit itself and the retaining wall will be free because the materials were donated. She plans on raising the funds by selling comic books that she has drawn herself and also plans on having a GoFundMe page. Life Scout Morris then shared her timeline with the Council and shared that construction is slated to begin in the Spring when the ground is thawed.

Chairman Koenig asked if the project needs to be completed by her 18th birthday and Joy confirmed that is accurate and added that her birthday is in August. Councilor Healey asked if the Director of Parks and Rec (Matt Casparius) has been consulted because there is a beachfront project at the park this year so she would hate to have her do all of the work just to have it torn up. Joy stated that she has been in contact with Parks and Rec and was not told they had any concerns. Town Manager Cabanel interjected and stated that the Town Engineer (Dawn Tuomala) is present at the meeting and can confirm if there will be any issues. Dawn stated that she should be all set.

Councilor Harrington commented that this project is a great opportunity to learn leadership skills. She also complimented her on being very charismatic and seemed at ease presenting the material. What she did to practice for this presentation should be carried forward in future endeavors because she did an excellent job.

Councilor Rothhaus mentioned that there may need to be a maintenance plan for the retaining wall in case the sand recedes over time. Life Scout Morris stated that she would make a note of that.

MOTION made by Vice Chair Boyd and seconded by Councilor Woods to grant permission to Joy Woods to construct a Gaga Pit at the waterfront at Wasserman Park. MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0.

Vice Chair Boyd commented on how wonderful the Eagle Scout projects in general are and what a fantastic job Life Scout Morris did with hers.

2. Committee Appointment – Merrimack Conservation Commission

Submitted by Town Council Chair Tom Koenig and Vice Chair Bill Boyd

The Town Council to consider appointing the following recommended individual to fill the vacant position on the Merrimack Conservation Commission, pursuant to Charter Article 4-8:

- Eric Starr – Conservation Commission (*Alternate to Full*)

MOTION made by Vice Chair Boyd and seconded by Councilor Albert to appoint Eric Starr a Full-Time member of the Conservation Commission. MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0.

Vice Chair Boyd thanked Mr. Starr for the work that he has done and for stepping up to a full-time position.

3. Committee Appointment – Zoning Board of Adjustment

Submitted by Town Council Chair Tom Koenig and Vice Chair Bill Boyd

The Town Council to consider appointing the following recommended individual to fill the vacant position on the Zoning Board of Adjustment, pursuant to Charter Article 4-8:

- Ben Niles – Zoning Board of Adjustment (*Alternate to Full*)

MOTION made by Vice Chair Boyd and seconded by Councilor Healey to appoint Bill Niles a Full-Time member of the Zoning Board of Adjustment. MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0.

Vice Chair Boyd thanked Mr. Niles for the work that he has done and for stepping up to a full-time position

Chairman Koenig mentioned that both Ben and Eric will need to make an appointment with the Town Clerk to get sworn in and sign the necessary documents.

4. Dog Leash Discussion

Submitted by Resident Deborah Hayman

Town resident Deborah Hayman would like to propose and discuss requiring owners to leash their dogs on Town-owned trails and Conservation areas.

Ms. Hayman began her presentation by stating she moved to Merrimack in 2014 when her company moved to the area. She went on to explain that even though her company has since moved again to Hudson, she decided to stay in Merrimack because she loves the town and the people. She continued by explaining that she lives near Greater Woods and hikes there frequently with her dogs. When she brings her dogs with her on the trails, she always makes sure they are leashed but has run into many instances in which other dog owners have not done the same. The problem has gotten so bad that she has stopped walking the trails on weekends because there are too many people without dogs on leashes. She feels that this is a public safety issue as people should feel safe walking in the trails without having to worry about strange dogs, many people are afraid of dogs. She started a discussion on the Merrimack Forum and many people agreed with her and gave examples of personal instances that they encountered. She saved the thread and emailed it to Rebecca Thompson at the Town Hall.

Councilor Harrington stated that they have received quite a few emails from residents that do not want to leash their dogs so she asked the Assistant Town Manager if there have been any complaints about unleashed dogs. Since 2018, there have only been two Police reports regarding unleashed dogs. Councilor Harrington stated that her personal concern with modifying the ordinance is that with only two reports within the last two years, there does not seem to be a problem to justify making the modification. She understands that people do not like it but feels as if there is not enough proof to substantiate the change.

Councilor Albert referenced the current law and it states that the dog owner should be in sight of their dogs at all times. He suggested that issues with owners not being in sight of their dogs should be reported to the Police or Animal Control Officer so that they can be dealt with. He also questioned how the ordinance could be enforced if it were modified.

Vice Chair Boyd referenced material supplied by Ms. Hayman regarding Manchester Waterworks and their dog policy. He indicated that he trains his sled dogs there and never sees dogs on leashes. Ms. Hayman explained that she included the information as reference and the sign that they have indicating that leashes are required at least gives her something to point back to when she sees dogs without leashes. Since it is not a law in our town, she cannot say anything.

Chairman Koenig stated that they have received a lot of emails regarding this topic and many residents feel that dogs should be able to run. He encouraged any residents that have problems with people being in control of their dogs to contact the Police Department.

Public Comments:

Andrew Duane (10 Dwyer St) began by explaining that he is a 20-year resident and a member of the Wildcat Falls sub-committee. He shared his experience with walking his dogs in the public trails and asked if the law applies to non-public conservation areas as well. The Council informed him that the law applies throughout town.

Town Manager Cabanel thanked Ms. Hayman for bringing her concern to the Council and encouraged all residents to do the same. She also encouraged her to contact the Police Department if she runs into issues with dogs not being in control.

Councilor Harrington suggested that the letters that were received be attached to the minutes. Chairman Koenig stated that Becky Thompson has them and will attach them to the minutes.

Roland Roberge (180 Amherst Rd) stated that he is on the Horse Hill Nature Preserve Sub-Committee for 14 years and they have only had two issues that he can think of involving a dog a bike and a horse but they were able to handle each without incident. He stated that he would hate to see the change go through and impact all of the properties in Merrimack. Chairman Koenig clarified that if a change is made, it would impact all of the properties, however at this point, it is just a discussion.

4. 2022-2028 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Presentation

Submitted by Town Manager Eileen Cabanel and Finance Director Paul T. Micali

Town Council to be presented with the details of the 2022-2028 CIP.

Town Manager Cabanel prefaced the presentation by explaining that since she is retiring in a few months, the Assistant Town Manager is delivering the presentation as practice in case he is appointed the new Town Manager.

Assistant Town Manager, Paul Micali, began by explaining that a lot of the Capital Improvement Plan is the same and there are not a lot of new projects added. He also advised that the Town Engineer/ Deputy Director of Public Works, Dawn Tuomala is in attendance to answer any construction related questions. He provided a brief overview of the CIP objectives and then discussed how the projects are funded, sharing the Capital Reserve Fund figures from the last several years and the projected numbers through 2027. There are 28 active major projects in the General Fund that are in the current budget and run through fiscal year 2026-2027. He then turned his attention to provide information on the specific projects.

- Safety Complex & Renovations to the South Fire Station - These two projects that were supposed to be on the ballot for this coming year (2021/2022) that are going to be pushed out until 2022/2023.

- Stormwater Drainage Improvements – Mr. Micali explained that the town tries to conduct \$250,000 in stormwater improvements each year as they tie into MS4. He shared some of the projects that are in scope for the coming year. Dawn Tuomala explained that some of the projects for this year have already been designed and they have done some of the preliminary work on some of them. The \$250,000 will not cover all of the projects, but they will stretch the money as far as they can. Once spring comes, they will determine which ones need it the most and anything not done will be moved to next year. Chairman Koenig asked if we're depositing \$250,000 and then taking it out the same year, why is it not just part of the DOW budget? Mr. Micali explained that \$250,000 is just what is allocated to Stormwater, a lot more is being deposited for other projects. The Road Infrastructure Capital Reserve Fund has approximately 1 million dollars in it and we slowly make deposits so that we can pay for projects in cash and not have to bond for them. This fund allows us to save for larger projects. Councilor Rothhaus asked about a drainage issue on Gail Rd that was previously discussed. Mr. Micali advised that they are trying to get that done this spring and Ms. Tuomala added that she is finishing up the bid documents for that project now.
- Sidewalk Improvements Plan – The Town Council made a commitment to spend \$200,000 on sidewalks. The first project is being constructed this spring when 1,200 feet of sidewalk will be added to Woodbury Street. The next streets to be constructed are to be determined.
- Woodland Drive Drainage Improvements/Phase II – There are approximately 12 streets included in the project so the town is still considering bonding this project to get it done at once rather than stretching it out over several years. Vice Chair Boyd asked if the round-a-bout that was proposed for that area could be constructed at the same time to save on cost. Dawn Tuomala explained that the drainage does come out to Baboosic Lake Road but it would be East of where the round-a-bout is proposed.
- Paving/Infrastructure Improvements – Mr. Micali reviewed the list of roads that were paved in 2020 and indicated that the 2021 list has not been created yet because they have not gone out to bid yet. They are trying to see if they can get their current contractor to agree to the 2020 rates first. Councilor Healey asked for clarification that the list provided could mean a section of the road and Mr. Micali confirmed that is correct and cited Back River Road as an example as only a portion of this road was paved in 2020.
- Paving/Infrastructure Improvements/ Gravel Roads – There are currently 16 gravel roads throughout Merrimack that take a lot of man hours to maintain. Public Works has proposed an incremental approach to paving these roads starting with the longest road first. The first three roads on the list are Greens Pond, Lester and Fuller Mill. Councilor Albert questioned the priority of Lester and Fuller Mill as there are not a lot of houses on them. He feels that the priority should fall to the roads with more residents on them. Mr. Micali explained that there is still plenty of time to look at the priority as this project is not slated until 2024-2025.
- Wire Road Intersection – This project is slated for the 2022-2023 fiscal year and the town is trying to get development started because in conjunction with this the Bridge replacement for Baboosic Brook is the following year and we want to have plans in place because the bridge replacement is going to have federal funding. Vice Chair Boyd asked for clarification because he recalls that Director Fox indicated that a round-a-bout would not work in that area. Mr. Micali explained that all options are still on the table because it has not been designed yet but he does recall Director Fox indicating a round-a-bout would not work.

- Merrimack River Boat Ramp Access Improvements – This project is scheduled for 2022-2023 and will be a 50/50 match with NH Fish & Game up to \$200,000. He also added that Nashua was constructing a ramp as well and our hope is that the larger boats can utilize that ramp.
- Sidewalk Improvement Plan – The town is going to apply for a TAP grant to assist with some of the sidewalk improvements. When and if that grant is awarded, the Town Center Committee will present a proposal to the Town Council on which projects they would recommend for completion.
- Sewer Extension Project Master Plan – This project includes adding approximately 83 homes to town sewer at a cost of 1.8 million dollars. The project is scheduled for 2022-2023 and will possibly be bonded. Councilor Albert asked how the neighborhoods are determined and Mr. Micali explained that they are part of the master plan and were chosen by a number of factors including on-site sewage treatment and access to existing sewer collections. The neighborhoods that were chosen are priorities 2 and 3, Priority one was skipped over due to the cost. Councilor Albert asked if the residents of these neighborhoods know that they are slated to be included because if they replace their septic and then have to switch, they are going to be upset. Mr. Micali stated that there is a clause included that excludes the requirement for people that have newer systems. Mr. Albert suggested that we focus on letting these residents know sooner rather than later because if the majority of the neighborhood has newer systems then we can concentrate on another area. Dawn Tuomala interjected to add that she believes the law states that if the septic is new within 20 years, they can get a waiver but the waiver only excluded them for five years, after that time they must tie into the town sewer. Town Manager Cabanel shared her thoughts on surveying the neighborhoods up for conversion to see if they are in favor of switching over to town sewer. Chairman Koenig expressed his concerns with surveying the neighborhoods because if one or two people object to the project, where do you draw the line. The Council and Town Manager continued to discuss their opinions on the topic and Mr. Micali thanked everyone for their feedback.
- US Route 3 Bridge over Baboosic Brook – This project is scheduled for 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 and the early estimate is approximately 3 million dollars, however the town does anticipate it to be much more because of the location. This project will require a two-lane temporary bridge on DW Highway which is why it is scheduled over two years. One year to construct the temporary bridge and one to repair the existing bridge. Chairman Koenig asked if the estimate can be updated if we know already that it is wrong. Dawn Tuomala stated they can have it updated prior to the DPW budget discussions.
- Bridge Rehabilitation Project at Chamberlain – This project was previously discussed as part of the Souhegan River Trail project and is slated for 2025-2026.
- Library Updates – Mr. Micali explained that the Library is working with an architect now on several different ideas for a new location.
- Misc. Projects - Mr. Micali touched briefly upon the Pedestrian walkway project, The Community Development Master Plan and Athletic Fields.
- Sewer Fund Projects - Mr. Micali provided a brief overview of all of the projects that fall under the Sewer Fund.

Mr. Micali provided some budget numbers and addressed a couple general questions but explained that he will be presenting the entire Capital Improvement Fund budget in the coming weeks and this meeting was just to discuss the plan itself. He also clarified that the major projects are being pushed out so some of the numbers they are seeing will be modified when they have the budget discussions on January 21, 2021.

Approved: February 11, 2021

Posted: February 17, 2021

Prior to wrapping up the CIP presentation, Assistant Town Manager Micali shared some of the minor projects that are scheduled 2021-2023. The projects include but are not limited to:

- A new dump truck for Buildings and Grounds, this is estimated at \$50,000. Chairman Koenig asked why a dump truck is needed and Mr. Micali explained that they use it for mulch, sand and salt, etc. They are looking at other options now like the potential of reusing a highway truck so this is still tentative.
- The Town Hall Sprinkler System – The system that is in place now is older and we are experiencing a lot of leaks throughout the building. The current contractor indicated that some of the piping needs to be replaced and the current estimate is \$175,000. The project is scheduled for 2022-2023. Chairman Koenig asked if the price is because the pipes are hard to get to and Mr. Micali confirmed that is correct. He also asked if there is a Capital Reserve Fund that can be used for this, and Mr. Micali confirmed there is not.
- Inflatable Boat for the Fire Department – Councilor Albert stated that he knows that grants are being offered through FEMA and suggested that the town look into the possibility of a grant.
- Simulcast Systems for Radios and Communications – The initial estimate came in at \$500,000 and although we have money in the CPR for this, we are having a study conducted first by Motorola to figure out exactly what we need so we do not keep throwing money at it. Chairman Koenig asked why this was considered minor of the cost is \$500,000 and Mr. Micali explained that because it is equipment, it does not fall under a major project. The Planning Board decided years ago that they did not want to offer recommendations on Town equipment.
- Ladder Truck – This was presented previously to the Council and more research is needed so this will continue to be discussed but the current truck is 20 years old and made by a company that is no longer in business so repairs are costly.

Mr. Micali briefly touched on a few smaller projects all of which will be discussed in detail during the department budget meetings in the coming weeks. Mr. Micali wrapped up his presentation by explaining that in previous years, the CIP has been reviewed by the Town Council first and then the Planning Board but the charter actually recommends going to the Planning Board first, so that is the order that was followed this year.

Minutes

Approve the minutes from the following Town Council meeting:

- December 21, 2020

MOTION made by Vice Chair Boyd and seconded by Councilor Albert to accept the minutes with corrections. MOTION CARRIES 6-0-1, Councilor Healey abstained.

Comments from the Press

None

Comments from the Public

None

Approved: February 11, 2021

Posted: February 17, 2021

Comments from the Council

Vice Chair Boyd expressed his delight in hearing about Captain Brechtel's promotion to Assistant Chief. Captain Brechtel has been a Subject Matter Expert for the town on COVID-19 topics and was recognized at the state level for his work as well. Councilor Harrington added that she likes the idea of a paramedic being in a leadership role at the Fire Department as the majority of the calls are EMS calls.

Chairman Koenig thanked Town Manager Cabanel for her efforts as Town Manager and her dedication to ensuring all departments have backups to the leadership positions. He made a plea to the public to continue safety measures because COVID is not gone even though there is a vaccine. Town Manager Cabanel added that we the country is still seeing 4,400 deaths a day so people need to stay diligent.

Adjourn

**MOTION made by Councilor Harrington and seconded by Councilor Woods to adjourn the meeting.
MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:13.

Respectfully submitted by: Rhonda Fleming