

MINUTES
City of Alpena Planning Commission
Joint CIP Meeting (Council Chambers and Virtual)
February 13, 2023
Alpena, Michigan

CALL TO ORDER:

The special meeting of the Planning Commission, conducted as a joint meeting with City Council, was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Randy Boboltz, Planning Commission Chairman.

ROLL CALL: PLANNING COMMISSION

PRESENT: Wojda, Peterson, Boboltz, VanWagoner (appeared at 5:03 pm), Gilmore, Moses, Sundin, Kostelic

ABSENT: None.

STAFF: Rachel Smolinski (City Manager), Steve Shultz (City Engineer), Shannon Smolinski (Engineering Assistant/Harbormaster), Anna Soik (City Clerk), Rob Edmonds (Fire Chief), Eric Hamp (Police Chief), Montiel Birmingham (Planning, Development, Zoning and Building Safety Director), Cassie Stone (Engineering Clerk), Kathleen Sauve (Planning, Development, Zoning and Building Safety Clerk), Anne Gentry (Executive Director of the Downtown Development Authority)

COUNCIL: Waligora, Johnson, Mitchell, Nowak, Walchak

ABSENT: None.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

BUSINESS: 2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) - Birmingham explained the order of business and that they would only be explaining the new items; any and all questions were encouraged, and at the end they would vote.

Gentry began by explaining one of the new projects, corridor improvements, which could be used toward banner replacements, lighting upgrades, trees, and any other general streetscaping needs, especially with the possible boundary expansion or the existing district. The next topic was a change from last years' Historic Preservation Activities entry, in which Birmingham would discuss later. Other priorities for next year, in addition to the economic development fund and façade grant program, is a grant for a Fresh Waves mural project, with a number higher than it usually is for the Public Art entry. She stated that alleyway improvements are also a top priority and trying to get a more year-round closure of an alleyway along with a

contribution to the Culligan Plaza update. The last ongoing project, planters and bicycle racks, will continue moving forward. Sundin asked why Culligan Plaza was only listed under DDA fund and not parks. Schultz explained that the total project is already being funded by ARPA and the [First Federal] Foundation; it is in the fund right now, as opposed to being planned for in the CIP later. Waligora asked about the alleyway [between River and Chisholm, Second Avenue and Third Avenue] and the plan for that. Gentry said that although they had not developed anything formal at the last meeting on this topic, the idea is that the business owners love it and it is safer to keep it closed, as long as they can get Council's support and work out kinks such as snow removal and bollards instead of concrete blocks. She stated that the intent is to request to have it closed year-round but it has not been prepared to present yet.

Birmingham stated that the Zoning Ordinance update was carried over from the previous year as they continue to make progress on the update. With some of the funds allocated for this year likely not being used, dollars will be pushed into next year. A new item on the list is a disability assessment throughout the City. It will be focused on public buildings, election locations, potentially the website, streets and intersections and is still in the development stages. Birmingham explained the National Register of Historic Places Listing was added because it is required for a grant from the State Historic Preservation office; part of the grant dollars can go to the registration and they are working to limit the expense as much as possible by utilizing the help of the Historic District Study Committee. The Recreation Plan Update was discussed and would be updated in a few years; however we are considering updating ours in partnership with a County wide update, as it makes sense to have a joint review of both recreation plans. EV infrastructure came next, with Birmingham explaining that it is a place holder, to add it in to the Zoning Ordinance and looking at language for that. She said that with all the grants out there, there may not be any cost to [the City], but if there are some minimal expenses, they wanted to add funds to cover them. Sundin inquired why the River Center was listed in Planning, but also in Parks and Long Term. Birmingham explained that the Planning side has allocated \$5,000 per year for several years, which will continue. The additional \$150,000 in parks next year is for a grant that the City received for the pavilion and bathrooms. The long-range dollars are for the future if the full River Center were to be built. S. Smolinski explained that the two million dollars in the Parks category was there for if they were awarded the Spark grant; she explained that Spark is ARPA funding at the state level.

Edmonds started with Fire Engine Replacement of Engine 123. He explained he moved that up in the CIP because they are starting to have some aging problems and need to look at replacing it. It would be a 24-36 month build time on a new truck. If not replaced in the near future, it will require a \$35,000 pump rebuild on a 27-year-old fire truck. Next, Edmonds explained the need for new Turnout Gear in the amount of \$112,000. He stated the reason for moving both the Turnout Gear and the Ward Diesel Exhaust System up on the request is because MIOSHA Part 74 was revised last October putting some unfunded mandates towards the Fire Service. Currently, he said, their gear has a ten-year shelf life. Some of their gear is currently 17 or 18 years old, and so it is a MIOSHA requirement to put in funding for that. MIOSHA also requires a Ward diesel exhaust capture system on all of their trucks and they have two ambulances that currently do not have them. The capture system is designed to reduce the carcinogens that are

given off from diesel fuel. He concluded that those were the three major changes they are looking for in the new CIP request.

Hamp started on the Police end with Active Shooter Vests/Kits. They are requesting them because they do not have enough for every officer. He explained that an Active Shooter Vest provides a much higher level of protection than the vests the officers wear currently; the kit would contain a carrier vest, armor inserts and a ballistic helmet. Each officer would have a gear bag they would take with them each shift and load into their car and be ready to respond without concern of not having the extra protection. He stated that there is a shelf life on them of five years. They would be purchasing one for each of their 15 officers, although that number constantly fluctuates. Next, he requested funds to purchase eCitation ticket printers, to reduce legibility concerns, improve accuracy, and improve the Officer's safety and efficiency. He said it is a small printer that goes inside the patrol car, information is entered in the tablet and then it prints out the ticket that is handed to the driver and it also will send the ticket to district court. He said it is a huge advantage because often times, people will get a ticket and go straight to the court to pay it, but they cannot accept payment yet because typically the Officer is unable to get them there until the next day. Third, Hamp talked about the need for new physical fitness equipment to renew their current out of date facility. He explained that there are fitness programs implemented in their union contracts and without the proper equipment, it falls back on the officers to pay for a membership to a gym. He said that Police and Fire would share the cost.

S. Smolinski moved on to Marina and Building Maintenance. She said that she has two new projects at the marina with one being supply line upgrades that run from the shoreline out to the end of the docks. Currently, the lines are not bad, but the material is known to have issues and it was recommended by the contractor to replace it. Second, the parking lot resurfacing at the Marina, done in small sections.

In the Building Maintenance section, Smolinski said that there is not anything new for City Hall. She stated that about half of the City Hall windows replacement will be funded by ARPA. For Fire/Police, she said that the Squad Room switch will happen this year, giving them the ability to put a female locker room into the building. Another item at the top of the list for Fire/Police is replacement of the paging system.

Shultz discussed the IT category, stating that number one is new budgeting and transparency software which will work with the existing BS&A software to help generate the budget without having to combine a bunch of other files; it will also provide some transparency for reporting that the City frequently receives requests for. Next, he discussed new website design and content management. Shultz explained that the current website design software does not have the tools that the City needs, and he would like something more robust. He explained that everything else on the list are systematic replacements. The BS&A Cloud Conversion will start with the Building department, allowing them to use a tablet in the field to look up information they need [on specific properties]. Nowak asked if the new Website design would allow for people to sign up for messages or texts. Schultz replied that it is his intention to find something that would improve the ability to do those things.

Moving on to equipment, Shultz stated that the current trucks and loaders that are old are breaking, and it is getting harder and harder to find replacement parts for them so when they break, it turns into a long-term break. Sundin asked what the Equipment fund looked like. Shultz said it is looking good and they need to start purchasing some of the big-ticket items on the list. Waligora asked if the tractor that the City Council approved for lease is one of the items on the list. Shultz explained that it is not really replacing anything, but rather something that they have been doing every three years. He also said that they are looking into lease options on some of the other bigger equipment.

In Cemetery Fund, Shultz said that there are not a lot of new things there, but some things moving up on the scale. Evergreen Cemetery road resurfacing moved up to number one after being cut for the last several years. Shultz said they are going to start paving some roads in the cemetery this year. Cemetery Entrance and Roadside Improvements came next, with Shultz stating that discussions have been had with several folks, including the Historic District Study Committee and others that are interested in improvements with the fencing and such along the cemetery. He said he would like to keep it relatively maintenance free but keep the historic look.

Lighting was discussed next, with Shultz explaining that a lot of the projects listed are here [in the CIP] every year, with the newest one being the Downtown Wiring Replacement. He said he has received many phone calls about lights being out and lights flashing. He explained that over time, a lot of it has happened due to the age of the wiring and concrete replacement downtown. It will be replaced a few blocks at a time, over the course of the next four years. Waligora asked why there are different colored lights all over town. Shultz said it is simply about availability, different lots and batches when ordering, and it is being considered to purchase in bulk in the future; some of the money from the City wide efficiency improvements would go toward lighting and some of those purchases.

Parks came next, with Shultz stating that the new item on the list was the Riverside Skate park, with \$1,000,000 requested out two years, in hopes of getting a Spark Grant. Staff were notified that they were not awarded the grant, but there are two more rounds and they plan to resubmit. In working with a skate park group and the Rec Board, they all support having a new concrete park by the water tower, and moving the existing wooden park to Mich-E-Ke-Wis. Currently, they have material to replace some boards at the existing park in the spring and, at that time, they will review what it might take to move those ramps to another paved area at Mich-E-Ke-Wis. Shultz stated the local skate park group is very excited about it and they felt that they could do some fundraising as well. Shultz said that a concrete skate park was the original intent when the park was built so that all different kinds of equipment could be used on it, and that is the direction they are going in now.

Shultz went on to discuss the needs of the Public Works department. One new item is the Public Works cold storage door replacement but that is projected for 2027-2028. Next, he discussed the need for the City Hall parking lot resurfacing in 2024-2025.

In major and local streets, Shultz said it is mostly preventative maintenance and overlays, nothing that they haven't seen before. He said that now that they have Charlie [Kendziorski] on

board, he is very bridge focused, that is what his background is, they are now able to add CIP items for the Second Avenue bridge that are not just major projects but focus more on electrical work and routine bridge inspections. He said there are not a lot of new projects, just some others moving up the list each year. Waligora stated that the Second Avenue Biennial Routine Bridge Inspection should be repeated every other year on the CIP but it is not. Shultz acknowledged the mistake and said he would add it every other year.

City Sewer does not have anything new on the CIP, but Shultz said there are a lot of projects nonetheless. A lot of projects will get kicked back a year or two, but they have it on the CIP so it demonstrates the need. The Water Recycling Plant had two new projects added – Methane Gas Lifter Enclosure and Water Recycling Plant Security Gate. A lot of the other plant related items are due to S. Smolinski working with the managers at the plants and having done a good job of planning some of the projects on the list and getting them honed down to a need versus want. Water Distribution is also much of the same, where a few of them will get kicked back if they cannot afford them in the budget. In Water Production, Shultz said there are a few new projects there, with the first being to Replace the Plant Supply Line from High Service Pump. Walchak asked Shultz if the water distribution line items were rotational. Shultz explained that the Water Valve Replacement is an item that they put money into every year because there are so many of them that need to be replaced. S. Smolinski said that that will replace four to five each year. Sundin asked if they have applied for a grant for the \$6,048,000 Water Production Plant Clear Well Replacement. Shultz said that they just got the grant agreement, and they should be receiving half of the money soon, but will be getting \$6,000,000 in total. R. Smolinski clarified that it was a direct appropriation. Shultz said that in the coming week, they will be advertising for the design. Shultz said that Hueber Street, Prentiss St/Harbor Drive, Second Avenue Bridge Epoxy Overlay and Eleventh Avenue concrete repairs are new in the long range CIP for Major Street Fund. In the Local Street Fund, the Long Lake Avenue Bypass is one that always sits out there, uncertain if it will happen.

With no further questions, Mayor Waligora expressed his appreciation to the staff for the hard work they put into the CIP. He also stated that Lenny Avery has been hired as the Target person who will be facilitating the City's grant writing.

Planning Commission: VanWagoner motioned to approve the 2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan, as drafted, and to correct the Second Avenue Routine Bridge Inspection project to reflect that it occurs biennially in the CIP document. Peterson seconded the motion. Motion approved by unanimous vote.

Council: Moved by Mayor Pro Tem Johnson, seconded by Councilmember Walchak, to approve the 2024 – 2029 Capital Improvement Plan, as drafted, and to correct the Second Avenue Biennial Routine Bridge Inspection project to reflect that it occurs biennially in the CIP document]. Motion carried 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT: On motion of Mayor Waligora, seconded by Councilmember Nowak, the Municipal Council adjourned at 5:54 p.m. Chairman Boboltz adjourned the Planning Commission at 5:54 p.m.

Clayton C. VanWagoner, Secretary