

REPORT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE CAPITAL BUDGET COMMITTEE
2024 Town Meeting
May/June 2024

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INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee (CCBC) is presenting Town Meeting with a ten-year, five-year capital plan and a one-year capital plan for FY25 of \$11.2 million (including all sources). We are presenting the seeds of a 30-year plan. The one-year budget covers projects supported by a range of funding sources.

The CCBC has two “headlines” for Town Meeting in this report:

1. Critically, the CCBC recommends that the Town make a deposit of \$578,842 into the Capital Stabilization Fund in lieu of funding some lower ranked or less ripe projects. This deposit is in recognition of the significant capital projects that are forth coming in FY26 and FY27, especially the Chenery Rooftop HVAC project. The CCBC will strive to continue a practice of identifying funds to save for the Town’s multi-year capital needs through the tool of the Capital Stabilization Fund.
2. The capital needs of the Town for FY26 and FY27 are significantly more than presently identified and saved funds, with a projected gap of about \$5-6 million. The Town will likely need to explore the use of certain reserves to meet these needs (e.g. Kendall Fund and others) as well as inlevy debt. The CCBC urges Town Meeting to keep this rapidly approaching funding gap in mind as it evaluates the full array of decisions coming before it in 2024.

Town Meeting Votes – Spring 2024

The CCBC seeks to incorporate the full range of the Town’s capital needs and funds in its scrutiny and review. However, the CCBC is advisory to Town Meeting and the Select Board. In addition, the CCBC notes that the spring 2024 Town Meeting will only vote on the following:

1. FY25 projects funded with “discretionary” funds. These 12 projects are in a motion in Article 21. (DPW, Facilities, Fire, Police, IT, Assessors and Bid Reserve)
2. FY25 projects funded with funds that are dedicated to specific purposes. (These are sometimes known as “nondiscretionary.”) These two projects are also in a motion in Article 21. (roads and sidewalks)
3. FY25 projects for Enterprise Funds (water and sewer) are voted in Article 13
4. FY25 contribution to the Capital Stabilization Fund is part of Article 17, along with deposits to other funds.

Town Meeting is not voting on any projects presented in the CCBC Report that are beyond FY25. Rather information on projects in years FY26 and later is provided to Town Meeting as background and contextual information to help inform its deliberations.

See the table below for a cross walk to the Articles on which Town Meeting will vote in spring 2024.

CROSS WALK TO ARTICLES FOR VOTES		
		FY25
Article 13	Enterprise Funds (water/ sewer)	\$2,516,313
Article 21	Discretionary Funded Projects	\$1,573,308
Article 21	Dedicated aka Nondiscretionary Funded Projects	\$2,451,591
Article 22	Chenery Boilers	\$1,600,000
	Free Cash	\$1,500,000
	Discretionary	\$100,000
	Total Town Meeting Project Votes FY25	\$8,141,212
Article 17	Capital Stabilization Fund Deposit	\$578,842
	Grand Total FY25 Votes	\$8,720,054

Genesis and Progress of the CCBC

The CCBC was formed in 2022 to provide a comprehensive and long-term perspective on the capital asset needs of Belmont. The CCBC builds and expands on the long, successful role that the former Capital Budget Committee played in Belmont town government. The Appendix to this Report summarizes the related history of this evolution. The spring 2024 CCBC report evidences some progress toward the Committee’s goal a long-term capital plan for the Town, but the Committee has considerable distance to travel before we have a true long term capital plan for the Town.

CCBC

The CCBC consists of the following appointees (see table): five members appointed by the Moderator (Brusch/Burgess-Cox/Doyle/Link/Pikcilingis) and one each from the Select Board, School Committee, Warrant Committee, and Energy Committee.

Name	Appointing Authority	Term Expiration
Claus Becker	Select Board (Energy Committee Designee)	6/30/2024
Patricia Bursch	Town Moderator	6/30/2024
Susan Burgess-Cox (Vice Chair)	Town Moderator	6/30/2024
Christine Doyle (Chair)	Town Moderator	6/30/2024
Deepak Garg	Select Board (Warrant Committee Designee)	6/30/2024
Lawrence Link	Town Moderator	6/30/2025
Aaron Pikcilingis	Town Moderator	6/30/2026
Matt Taylor	Select Board (Select Board Designee)	6/30/2025
Jung Yueh	Select Board (School Committee Designee)	
David Blazon (non-voting)	Select Board (Superintendent of Schools Designee)	
Jennifer Hewitt (non-voting)	Select Board (Town Administrator Designee)	

CCBC Priorities

During its second year of operations, the CCBC worked on several priorities it set forth last year. The Committee made progress on some priorities, but we still have progress yet to be made on other priorities.

1. Develop a capital plan for years 6 – 30. *The CCBC has made progress, but the Committee has considerable work remaining. The forthcoming building assessment will be a key element to meeting this important milestone.*
2. Integrate project ranking criteria into department heads' preparation of capital project requests. *The CCBC's ranking criteria have been incorporated into the Town's capital budget request materials.*
3. Incorporate results of Building Inventory and Assessment, as well as CPC asset inventories, into capital plan. *The CCBC will move forward on this when the building assessment is completed.*
4. Integrate review of potential regional and private roles for capital needs into Town staff project requests and into CCBC review of projects. *The CCBC has started this effort, but more work is needed.*
5. Establish early communication with CPC and improved integration of CPC projects into the capital plan. *The CCBC had improved communication with the CPC partly as one of our committee members is also a member of the CPC and was able to keep the CCBC updated.*
6. Expand and improve review of Enterprise Fund capital requests and capital funding capacity, including understanding of recent outside report on Enterprise funds. *The CCBC needs to address this effort in the upcoming year.*
7. Monitor activity of the Structural Change Implementation Group and consider incorporation of recommendations. *The CCBC has one member assigned to the SCIG.*
8. Understand the Town's maintenance processes and investments. *The CCBC needs to address this effort in the upcoming year.*

Funding Sources for Capital Projects

The FY25 capital budget recommendation includes funding from about six sources. See the table below. The funding sources for FY25 are presented to Town Meeting for final approval. In contrast, the funding sources for FY26-34 are estimates based on current information. These funding sources and the amounts available in years 2-10 will certainly change. Please note that throughout this report projects are shaded by funding source based on this legend.

LEGEND FOR TABLE COLORS	
Enterprise Funds	Green
Dedicated (Nondiscretionary)	Light Red
State Funds	Light Pink
CPA	Light Blue
Reserves of any type	Turquoise

FUNDING FY25-FY34	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031	FY2032	FY2033	FY2034	Total	
1 Available Discretionary Funding (w/ CEC)	2,005,954	2,149,470	2,300,457	2,363,718	2,731,611	2,731,611	2,731,611	2,731,611	2,731,611	2,731,611	25,209,265	
1A Allocation from Cap Endowment Fund	91,316	91,316	91,316	91,316	91,316	91,316	91,316	91,316	91,316	91,316	913,160	
2 Reserves (Free Cash/CSF/Landfill Fund)	1,500,000	1,341,342									2,841,342	
3 Landfill Fund/Kendall Fund		3,710,450									3,710,450	
4 Total Turnbacks	246,196	212,613	212,613	212,613	212,613	212,613	212,613	212,613	212,613	212,613	2,159,709	
5 Streets/Sidewalks - Dedicated	2,451,591	2,512,881	2,575,702	2,640,094	2,706,096	2,759,957	2,815,164	2,871,751	2,929,753	2,989,205	27,252,194	
6 Enterprise	2,516,313	2,926,322	2,972,630	3,063,745	3,381,600	2,972,122	3,063,284	3,090,676	3,114,285	3,124,393	30,225,371	
7 Roadways - Ch. 90 State Grant	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	5,400,000	
8 Roadways - Complete St+FairShare	678,333	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	2,895,249	
9 CPA Property Tax Funds	1,300,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	10,300,000	
10 Within Levy Bond Proceeds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Funding Available	11,238,387	14,639,402	9,847,726	10,066,494	10,818,244	10,462,626	10,608,995	10,692,975	10,774,586	10,844,146	-	109,993,579

Discretionary Funds from Operating Budget

Each year the Town allocates from the operating budget for so-called “discretionary capital spending.” The “floor” amount is increased each year by 2.5%. In FY25 the discretionary capital spending from the operating budget is proposed as \$1,910,068 (which includes \$91,316 from the Capital Endowment Fund), \$112,331 from an OPEB recalculation, \$1.5 million from free cash, and \$246,196 from turnbacks.

Capital Endowment Fund

The Capital Endowment Fund (CEF) was created by a special legislative act in 1995 and seeded with the proceeds of the sale of the Town’s community antenna television system and miscellaneous other contributions. The funds are invested and managed by the Town Treasurer, with the advice of the Capital Endowment Committee. The investment earnings of the Fund each year are available to fund the Town’s capital needs. These earnings may be appropriated for any lawful purpose consistent with the special act. In addition, principal of the fund may be appropriated with a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting. For FY25, \$91,316 is available to fund projects. The CEF has a balance of about \$5.2 million.

Turnbacks

The funds from the annual operating budget for capital are supplemented by “turnbacks” from the prior year’s completed capital projects. Turnbacks vary widely by year. For FY25, turnbacks are estimated at \$246,196. In years 2 -10 turnbacks are estimated at the average of FY24 and FY25.

Dedicated Funds (a.k.a. “Nondiscretionary” Funds)

In addition to the discretionary capital funds, the town has funds committed by state statute or local authorization to specifically defined capital projects. The limitations on these dedicated funds are based on Town policy, state laws and prior override votes, primarily utilized for: road and sidewalk repair and community preservation. Without these additional funding sources, Belmont would not be able to preserve valuable public assets.

Funding for Road and Sidewalk Repair (Prior Overrides and Chapter 90)

Funding for roads and sidewalks (transportation capital) comes from state, federal, and local override sources. In 2001, 2015, and 2024, voters approved overrides in the amounts of \$3 million and \$4.5 million and \$8.4 million, respectively. These overrides included capital dedications to roads and sidewalks. Each year, operating override funds increase by 2 ½ %. The road funding related to overrides of 2001 and 2015 is about \$2 million per year, increasing annually by 2.5%.

The Town has significantly expanded its sidewalk funding over the past year. In FY25 \$499,770 is available for sidewalks and these funds derive from operating overrides. In the 2015 override, \$200,000 was dedicated exclusively to sidewalk needs. In the 2024 operating override, \$250,000 was also dedicated to sidewalk needs. (The CCBC notes that capital funds generated by an operating override are not technically required to be committed to a certain capital purpose beyond the first year of the override. However, it has been Belmont's practice to honor the capital commitments made at the time an operating override is passed.)

Belmont, like all municipalities, is apportioned funds through Chapter 90 Program funding (MGL c.90 & 6C) **for the purpose of improvements and investments in local transportation networks**. The amount of funding a municipality receives is based on local road mileage (58.33%), population (20.83%), and employment (20.83%) Chapter 90 funds have averaged \$540,000 for the past 10 years. Most of the transportation network projects are planned over more than one fiscal year, to allow optimal construction during warm weather months. Small sidewalk repairs and road work are performed by the Department of Public Works (DPW). Additional funds are available periodically through unique federal programs and through MassDOT grant programs – Belmont joined the Complete Streets Program in 2019. The CCBC notes that while Belmont has traditionally used most of its Chapter 90 funding for roads, these funds are also permitted to be used for sidewalks.

For FY25 Belmont was awarded its first funds from the “Mass Fair Share” tax amendment. The Town received \$246,324 and the Select Board elected to use it for road repairs. Belmont joined the Complete Streets Program in 2019 and in February 2024 we received an award of \$432,009.27 for Concord Ave. crosswalks.

Note regarding 2024 Operating Override

The CCBC notes that in its discussions with the Select Board leading up to the operating override election in April 2024, the CCBC recommended that any capital portion of an operating override be dedicated to capital needs related to the town's building envelopes and systems. The CCBC recommendation was based on the Committee's knowledge of the very substantial needs forthcoming for the Town's buildings (likely more than \$20 million over the coming ten years). The CCBC voted on its recommendation at two meetings and reported out to the Select Board and the Warrant Committee. The Select Board set aside the CCBC's recommendation and instead moved forward a \$250,000 capital piece of the 2024 operating override dedicated solely to sidewalks.

Debt Within Levy

Debt can be issued by the Town either in connection with a voted debt exclusion or within the regular operating budget. Debt that is issued for projects that have not been approved via a debt exclusion is considered “within levy debt” and the associated debt service is paid from the regular operating budget. Recent capital projects that have been funded through “within levy debt” include a new pumper truck for the Fire Department (approved in spring 2023) and the recent improvements to the Police Station and the DPW building.

Enterprise Funds for Water and Sewer Services

The Town's Water and Sewer Enterprise Funds can only be spent on items and projects related to water and sewer work. Enterprise funds provide a separate accounting and financial reporting mechanism for municipal services for which a fee is charged. Under enterprise accounting, the revenues and expenditures of the service are segregated into a separate fund with its own financial statements, rather than commingled with revenues and expenditures of all other government activities. Enterprise accounting allows a community to demonstrate to the public the total cost of providing a service. All costs (direct, indirect and debt service) are covered by rate revenues received from water and sewer usage. The Director of Public Works is responsible for the management of the water and sewer enterprises. Water and sewer user rates are set by the Select Board acting as the Enterprise Funds' Boards. Town policy states that water and sewer capital projects shall be financed from enterprise revenues and grants.

The Town Enterprise Funds also access loan funds through the wholesale MWRA. These are typically 0% loans, but they must be repaid with Enterprise Funds rate revenues.

ARPA

Belmont received more than \$7.8 million in funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The federal parameters for ARPA funds require them to be fully expended by December 31, 2026. In spring 2023 the CCBC recommended, and the Select Board voted to allocate \$892,214 to building envelope work at the Butler School, and \$245,000 for enhancing security cameras at the Schools. Apart from consultations with the CCBC, the Select Board deployed ARPA funds for several capital projects.

These additional investments include \$1.29 million for solar panels at the High School, \$350,000 for Rink design work, \$490,533 to replace the DPW Salt Shed, \$346,554 to demolish the White Field House, \$466,187 to replace the DPW Yard fuel tanks, and \$70,000 to cover higher bid results for the Grove Street project. Overall, more than \$4 million of the total received by the Town was used for capital needs, which will benefit residents for many years to come.

About \$142,000 of ARPA funds remain. The Town is actively engaged in considering their use as they must be "committed" prior to December 31, 2024.

Community Preservation Act

In 2011, the Town of Belmont adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA). This allows the town to dedicate revenue from a surcharge on property taxes and matching contributions from the state Community Preservation Trust Fund to a local community preservation fund. The State match varies by year but has typically been in the 15% - 25% range. CPA funds can only be spent on projects that fall into the three categories: open space and recreation, affordable housing, and historic preservation. The town's adoption of the CPA diverts several capital expenses from discretionary capital funds. CPA revenue from fiscal year 2024 was \$1,940,072. For more detail on CPA revenue, expenditures, and past, current, and proposed projects, please see the Community Preservation Committee webpage on the Belmont town site and the annual CPA report.

Earmarks and Other Miscellaneous State Funding

Occasionally the Town receives State funding that is either earmarked for specific projects or is tied to a more general project category. In recent years, the Town has received more than \$2.68 million in state and federal grants for the following capital-related projects –

- \$1,000,000 in federal funding for design of the second phase of the Community Path
- \$432,009 in Complete Streets funding for the crosswalks on Concord Avenue
- \$350,000 for the Library project
- \$350,000 for the Rink project
- \$300,000 for the study and design of safety improvements near Grove Street and Huron Avenue
- \$150,000 for tree maintenance
- \$ 50,000 for sidewalk repair and maintenance
- \$ 50,000 for culvert repairs

(Several earmarks in connection with the Belmont Housing Authority and the Town operating budget are not referenced here. In addition we have not included “state bond authorizations” as such authorizations can often take decades to come to fruition.)

Regarding the above referenced earmark for \$300,000 for planning and design work on Grove Street including the intersection with Huron Avenue, a public forum was held earlier in 2024, and the Town Engineer continues to work on this plan with outside consultants. Funding for the reconstruction of roadway, bike lanes, crosswalk and signaling is estimated at \$3,000,000 and Commonwealth TIP or bond authorizations are the most likely source of funds.

Beyond earmarks, the Town utilizes funds from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to help fund school projects such as the Belmont Middle and High School as well as the Wellington School.

Occasionally the Town receives proceeds from the sale of property and assets. Generally these funds have been dedicated to the Town’s capital needs. Under the proposal to the 2023 Town Meeting for the repurposing of the Capital Stabilization Fund, proceeds of these assets would be required to be deposited in the Capital Stabilization Fund, an important codification of the typical Town practice.

Town Reserves – Kendall Fund

The Town’s “Kendall Fund” has a balance of \$2.1 million from approximately \$4.9 million in insurance proceeds from the demise of the Kendall School in about 1999. The Town has had a long-time practice of using these funds for preliminary design plans on projects. The CCBC is supportive of this long-time practice and recommends that the Town formalize this practice as a policy to preserve these funds in support of the Town’s capital needs. In the current capital plan, the Kendall Fund is proposed as the source for \$300,000 in FY26 for the preliminary design of a replacement public works facility.

FY25 Capital Budget Recommendations

Capital Budget Process

The capital budget process begins with the Town’s finance office asking Department leaders to submit capital requests during the summer. The Town finance office reviews the requests and obtains clarifications from department leaders. The CCBC then receives the capital requests and meets with Department Heads. During this past year many aspects of the operating and capital budget process were strongly impacted by the

considerable extra work required of Town staff to prepare extensive budget alternatives related to the evaluation and preparation for a potential operating override. This meant that several aspects of capital budget timing were somewhat altered and delayed. This year the CCBC received the Department capital requests in January 2024. The Committee is expecting to receive them earlier next year. The content of the capital request form is an important starting point for the capital process and the CCBC needs to continue to work with the finance office to incorporate some CCBC recommendations that will facilitate easier assessment of certain aspects of the more effective delivery of the Town's capital needs.

Capital Project Evaluation

The CCBC once again used the project ranking methodology it developed ahead of FY24 to evaluate proposed capital projects for FY25. This methodology is informed by a set of project evaluation criteria and relative criteria weightings.

Each proposed project was evaluated on five criteria: 1) Impact to health, safety and security of citizens, employees, or property; 2) maintenance and preservation of capital assets such as major repairs of buildings, replacement of vehicles and equipment, park and play area renovations; 3) urgency, work deemed by departments that must be done within a certain time frame; 4) improvement of productivity, or relief of an overburdened asset; and 5) strategic alignment, e.g., environment concerns, disciplined budgeting/spending policies.

The evaluation process, in which each committee member ranked each project request on these five measures, produced a relative ranking of projects. This relative ranking was one component of the project screening process and served as a guide to the CCBC's discussions and ultimate recommendations for project funding.

Projects mandated by the requirements of an outside funding source do not need to go through the same ranking evaluation process, as these projects will need to be completed regardless of project ranking result.

Capital Stabilization Fund

The CCBC is very supportive of the Town building reserves for larger capital projects that require multi-year planning and whose cost exceeds the discretionary capital funds available in any one year. The CCBC regards this as part of our mission upon the passage of the bylaw that created the Committee. A capital reserve allows the Town to spread the burden of funding larger capital projects over several years and permits reinvestment in capital assets in a more timely manner. To this end, the CCBC recommends the deposit for \$578,842 of FY25 resources into the Capital Stabilization Fund. This will mark the first deposit into the fund through the annual budget process. The CSF was created in spring 2023 and has a balance of \$765,735 and that would rise to \$1,344,577 if Town Meeting approves this recommended deposit. See the chart below for the current composition of the Fund.

As a reminder, funds from the following sources are required to be deposited in the Capital Stabilization Fund: sale of surplus property, refunds, rebates and reimbursements from energy efficiency projects, solar installations, and other capital investments. This list of required deposit sources does not preclude the Town from depositing additional funds from other sources into the Fund.

Also of note is a recent state law change that requires a majority vote of Town Meeting if the stabilization funding is used for the intended purpose of the fund(i.e. capital projects). This is a lower threshold than the prior two-thirds majority vote, which remains in place for general purpose stabilization funds.

Capital Stabilization Fund	
Funding Source	Amount
Transfer at Fall 2023 Special town Meeting	727,500
Library surplus item sale in January 2024	2,960
Sale of Chenery Modulars in August 2023	35,000
Interest earnings TYD	276
Subtotal fund balance	765,735
Addition to CSF in FY25	578,842
Total Capital Stabilization Fund	1,344,577

FY25 Capital Budget

The FY25 capital budget presented by the CCBC contains town projects totaling about \$11.2 million, including all funding sources. Of this total, Town Meeting is asked to vote on projects totaling about \$8.7 million through the capital warrant articles. (During Segment B Town Meeting will vote on CPC articles, one of which funds a central Town asset (Chenery park and fields) totaling \$1.3 million.) See table on page 13 for a list of all FY25 projects arrayed with their funding sources.

Certain capital projects recommended for FY25 are highlighted briefly below.

Chenery Upper Elementary School Boiler Replacement Project estimated \$1.6 million

This is a major capital investment to replace the aging heating system at the Chenery School. The existing system consists of 30 gas-fired boilers, all of which are approaching their expected life span.

The CCBC spent significant time evaluating options for this replacement effort before reaching the decision to recommend the replacement of the heating system with new high efficiency gas-fired boilers in FY25.

The CCBC determined that this solution is the best option available when balancing factors of cost, schedule, and environmental impact, even though the new system does not make meaningful progress in support of the Town’s adopted decarbonization goals. This result was reached after consultation with the School Committee, the Energy Committee, an engineering consulting company engaged by the Town (Guardian) and the Town’s Facilities Dept.

The Facilities Dept. asked the consulting engineers (Guardian) to consider electrification in addition to gas-only replacement. Guardian presented several options ranging from simple replacement with gas-fired boilers, to electric boilers, to full geothermal heat pumps. Capital investment costs increase significantly with the addition of more design complexity and carbon-reduction benefits. The more expensive systems were less expensive to run, depending on the assumptions related to the cost of gas and electricity. Despite the higher investment in a fully electrical system, Guardian projected significantly higher incremental commodity costs based on its assumptions for gas and electric rates.

The CCBC examined the possibility of a partial boiler replacement since it is very likely that the failure of some boilers does not assure the failure of all boilers. But the engineers indicated that a prolonged very cold period could lead to cascading boiler failure.

Cost differences of at least \$600,000 would be incurred for electing even the lowest level of electric boiler capacity to couple with gas boilers, plus the commensurate expenses for major electrical, software and conduit piping upgrades, versus opting for a simple replacement of gas boilers. All these costs and the complexity of a hybrid system concerned the CCBC given the Town's large capital requests already documented for the next five

years. Key unknown costs are Belmont Light's assessment of electrical sub-station requirements and the cost of reserving the electric capacity for Chenery needs.

In addition, the CCBC examined delaying the boiler replacement, but we were advised that the heating system must be replaced before the HVAC system on the roof is replaced, and that the roof cannot wait due to serious leaks that threaten to cause costly repairs if not address in the near term. The leaks have impinged on school operations in the past and have the potential to raise safety concerns.

These two major sequencing and timing factors add risk in that there is very little cushion, timewise, to execute the boiler project and bring the school on-line for the 2025-2026 school year, as well as any additional delays in completing the planning and replacement of the critical roof, HVAC and heat pump project by the 2026-2027 school year.

In summary, after much consideration, the committee has concluded that the cost of adapting the older building envelope to modern heating technology is cost-prohibitive, in addition to jeopardizing the roof replacement timeline. The Committee also notes that the high efficiency gas boilers that will be installed are far more efficient in terms of gas consumption than the current system that will be taken off-line.

CCBC recognizes that the Town has an opportunity to advance its climate goals in the context of the anticipated Chenery Roof & HVAC project, which immediately follows the boiler replacement. The committee has requested that the design of the Chenery roof include options that it will support heat pumps, solar PV and/or solar hot water. Those options would help offset the school's energy consumption and partially balance the impact of the replacement gas boilers.

The committee notes that a timely inventory and assessment of town building needs will allow for less constrained decision-making in the future, which in turn facilitates planning time to consider the design and cost-effectiveness of efficient carbon-reduction systems. An example of this could be the future replacement of the heating system at Town Hall.

The committee would like to note the cooperation and assistance of Jennifer Hewitt and Dave Blazon as the Committee sought to optimize the heating solution, given the various constraints.

Roads and Sidewalks

Belmont has about 97 miles of sidewalks and in the last several years maintenance of the sidewalks has increased after several decades of significant underinvestment. DPW's backlog comprises over 1,000 sidewalk repair requests. As mentioned above in the Funding section of this report, the pace of sidewalk repairs should improve given the additional funding. The "Sidewalk Assessment" funded by Town Meeting as part of the FY24 capital budget is providing updated conditions and costs to support the DPW's work. The Sidewalk Assessment and the continued investment in sidewalks supports the Transportation Advisory Committee's goal to establish "safe transit corridors" around Town, which in turn should help reduce school-related traffic congestion. The Sidewalk Assessment draft report has been received by the Town, and DPW is in the process of reviewing it and working with the consultant.

With the passage of the 2024 operating override, the funds available to repairs on the Town's sidewalks is doubled to about \$500,000 annually, increased 2.5% each year going forward. Over the next five years allocations will total approximately \$2.6 million.

Department of Public Works (DPW) oversees a complex, three-year planning and execution cycle for resurfacing streets. This involves full design/engineering and regulation and safety compliance as well as coordination with all utilities, private companies, neighborhoods and town entities. The bidding process cannot commence prior to completion of those tasks. The DPW has produced “Road Condition” reports over the past 20 years, based on periodic evaluations of all roads in town and their respective needs. DPW is now working on creating a new Road Condition Index which will be a part of the FY25 Pavement Management Program.

The prior road overrides of 2001 and 2015 yield an approximately \$2 million annual allocation increasing 2.5% each year. DPS will now use a GIS-based budgeting and scheduling system which will be incorporated with the sidewalk work of the department.

Enterprise Fund Projects (as a group)

The water and sewer enterprise funds maintain the “retail” portion of the Town’s water and sewer service. The projects proposed for FY24 include replacement of 5,000 feet of water pipe, purchase of a Vactor truck for sewer breaks, inventory of water assets, and hydraulic model development. The Town staff engaged a leading utility consultant, Raftelis, to review the financial and capital needs of the enterprise funds. The final presentation is here.

<https://www.belmont-ma.gov/town-administration/files/2023-04-10-fy2024-water-and-sewer-rate-study>

This important study demonstrates that the health of our retail water and sewer systems requires additional capital investment over several years, and additional rate revenue to support that investment. The CCBC will be using this study as a guide for future enterprise fund capital investment.

The table below presents the capital projects funded in FY25 and arrays them by the funding sources summarized earlier on page 5. The projects are color-coded based on the same legend provided on page 4 above.

Capital Project Summary Funding - FY2025			As of May 16, 2024						
Proj. ID	Project Description	FY2025	FUNDING SOURCES					CPA w/	Total
			(Operating Budget)	Enterprise	Dedicated	Reserves			
		TOTAL	Discretionary	Water/Sewer	Roads/Sidewalk	(Free Cash/ CSF)	State	Town Assets	
Public Works									
DPW-25-01	Sidewalk Maintenance	499,770			499,770				499,770
DPW-25-02	Street Tree Planting	50,000	50,000						50,000
DPW-25-03	DPW Highway Equipment	54,508	54,508						54,508
DPW-25-04	DPW Parks Equipment	106,800	106,800						106,800
DPW-25-05	DPW Cemetery Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DPW-25-07	Grove Street Cemetery Repaving	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Subtotal Department of Public Works	711,078	211,308	-	499,770	-	-	-	711,078
Public Works - Engineering									
ENG-25-01	Pavement Management Program	1,951,821			1,951,821				1,951,821
ENG-25-02	Incinerator Site Capping	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ENG-25-03	Various Intersection Interventions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ENG-25-XX	Roadways - Chapter 90	540,000					540,000		540,000
ENG-24-YY	Intersection Grove St. Huron Planning	-					-		-
ENG-25-ZZ	Mass Fair Share Roads	246,324					246,324		246,324
ENG-25-AA	Complete Streets Concord Crosswalks	432,009					432,009		432,009
	Subtotal Community Development	3,170,154	-	-	1,951,821	-	1,218,333	-	3,170,154
Facilities									
FAC-25-02	Chenery Boiler Replacement	1,600,000	100,000	-	-	1,500,000	-	-	1,600,000
FAC-25-03	Video Camera Improvements - Town	137,000	137,000	-	-	-	-	-	137,000
FAC-25-07	New Public Works Facility	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FAC-25-08	Chenery Roof & HVAC Replacement	200,000	200,000	-	-	-	-	-	200,000
FAC-25-09	Gym resurfacing	25,000	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	25,000
FAC-25-10	School Envelope Repairs	335,000	335,000	-	-	-	-	-	335,000
	Subtotal Facilities	2,297,000	797,000	-	-	1,500,000	-	-	2,297,000
Fire									
FD-24-01	Ambulance Replacement	110,000	110,000						110,000
FD-24-02	Cardiac Monitor Replacement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD-24-03	Replace Fire Staff Vehicles	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD-24-04	Replace Pumper Truck	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD-24-05	Replace Ladder Truck	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FD-25-06	Breathing Apparatus Fill Station	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Subtotal Fire	110,000	110,000	-	-	-	-	-	110,000
Police									
PD-24-02	Replace Police Portable Radios	155,000	155,000	-	-	-	-	-	155,000
PD-24-03	Replace Fiber Multiplexers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PD-24-04	Townwide Base Radio Replacement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PD-24-05	Replace CAD and RMS Server	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PD-24-06	Replace Police Domain Controllers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PD-24-07	Replace Call Logging Recorder	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PD-24-09	Replacement of Network Switches	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Subtotal Police	155,000	155,000	-	-	-	-	-	155,000
Information Technology									
IT-25-01	SAN Capacity Increase	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IT-25-02	Network Redundancy Restoration	50,000	50,000						50,000
IT-XX	Hybrid ATM - Chenery Auditorium	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IT-YY	Enhance Town Network - Police Addition	175,000	175,000						175,000
	Subtotal Information Technology	225,000	225,000	-	-	-	-	-	225,000
General Government									
GG-25-01	Replace CAMA Database	125,000	125,000	-	-	-	-	-	125,000
GG-25-02	Update MUNIS General Ledger	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GG-25-03	Turf for Rink	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GG-25-04	Belmont Comprehensive Plan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GG-25-05	Recreation Master Plan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Subtotal General Gov't	125,000	125,000	-	-	-	-	-	125,000
Water & Sewer Enterprise Funds									
ENT-25-01	Water Main Replacement	1,080,000		1,080,000					1,080,000
ENT-25-02	Sewer and Drain Rehabilitation	800,000		800,000					800,000
ENT-25-03	Water Enterprise Equipment	120,803		120,803					120,803
ENT-25-04	Sewer Enterprise Equipment	265,510		265,510					265,510
ENT-25-05	Stormwater Repairs	250,000		250,000					250,000
	Subtotal Enterprise Funds	2,516,313	-	2,516,313	-	-	-	-	2,516,313
CCBC-XX	Project Bid Reserve Contribution	50,000	50,000						50,000
CCBC-YY	Capital Stabilization Fund Contribution	578,842	578,842						578,842
	Subtotal Reserve Deposits	628,842	628,842	-	-	-	-	-	628,842
Community Preservation Act Projects on Direct Town Assets									
CPA-Town	Chenery Fields	1,300,000						1,300,000	1,300,000
	Subtotal CPA Direct Town Assets	1,300,000	-	-	-	-	-	1,300,000	1,300,000
	Capital Funds Total All Department	11,238,387	2,252,150	2,516,313	2,451,591	1,500,000	1,218,333	1,300,000	11,238,387

Capital Budget Years 2 - 5 (FY26 – FY29)

The CCBC is presenting a draft capital plan for years 2- 5 (i.e. FY26 – FY29). This draft plan includes about 33 projects and spending of about \$65 million. However, the draft capital plan for FY26 – FY29 is **NOT COMPLETE**. The projects and funding sources for FY26 – FY29 will continue to evolve. It will also be informed by the Building Assessment that was approved at the last Town Meeting. The table on page 16 summarizes projects for FY26 – FY29.

The CCBC has highlighted certain potential projects below that will likely arise in years FY26 - FY29.

Chenery School Rooftop HVAC – likely FY26 estimated \$5.4 million

This is an extensive capital investment to replace the 28-year-old flat roof and the HVAC systems. After several years of major repairs, and continued leaks and interior damage, a professional assessment indicates both have reached the end of their useful lives. Further delays will only result, at best, in more expensive repairs, but not necessarily preclude failure or safety issues. This is a critical investment in support of Belmont’s transition plan to create an “Upper Elementary School” facility and the further improvement in serious space issues in our schools. Consideration during the planning should be given to structural support necessary if solar panel arrays are determined an appropriate investment for energy efficiencies. The CCBC has included an estimated additional \$1.65 million in FY28 for a potential solar project on the Chenery roof.

Former Incinerator Site – perhaps FY27 estimated \$5 million

In 2010, the Commonwealth confirmed a regulatory capping of the Town’s former incinerator site, and mandated this project be completed by 2025. Approximately \$5 million was recently estimated to properly design and execute an environmentally sound cap on this former industrial site. In addition, an estimated \$31,500 will eventually be needed in the operating budget for annual post-closure monitoring and maintenance inspections, again as required by the Commonwealth. The Town has set aside approximately \$3.7 million in a landfill closure fund and existing project authorizations, but that leaves a funding gap of about \$1.3 million. The Town may bring an update regarding the site to the fall Town Meeting.

Town-wide Radio Replacement - likely FY27-28 estimated \$800,000

Split between FY27 and FY28, the Town’s emergency and other departments anticipate complete replacement of the radio transmitters and receivers for all Town-based radios. This includes the main antenna site as well as the remote locations. The rough estimate for this technology approximates \$800,000 in today’s dollars which could easily reach \$1 million by the time of installation. For budgeting purposes, the cost would be split over two fiscal years.

Ladder Truck – perhaps FY28 estimated \$1.65 million

Belmont Fire Dept rotates its primary ladder truck to reserve status after 15 years of service, which next occurs in 2028. That 2014 vehicle will then allow for approximately 15 more years of “backup” coverage during maintenance of the front-line apparatus or during major incidents. The full life therefore spans approximately 30 years.

Various DPW, Cemetery, Parks Equipment

The long hours of operation eventually require replacement of heavily utilized equipment throughout the Town. While well-maintained and repaired, a critical point is reached for each piece — depended upon for daily and emergency use — whereby replacement makes the best and safest option in fulfilling Town functionality. The Town's practice is to "rotate" any usable equipment to less onerous duties, first, but to sell/turn in retiring equipment as a savings against the cost of the new item.

Town Hall Retaining Wall Replacement

The retaining wall adjacent to Town Hall is compromised and must be replaced in the next three years at a cost of perhaps \$1 million. (This project is likely eligible for CPA funding.)

Capital Project Summary - FY2025 - 2034											AS OF MAY 17, 2024			
Proj. ID	Project Description	Estimated from Department Review					Forecast using averages & historical experience					TBD	Total	
		FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031	FY2032	FY2033	FY2034			
Public Works														
DPW-25-01	Sidewalk Maintenance	499,770	512,264	525,070	538,196	551,651	551,651	551,651	551,651	551,651	-	5,385,206		
DPW-25-02	Street Tree Planting	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	-	500,000		
DPW-25-03	DPW Highway Equipment	54,508	72,888	154,503	175,570	119,083	115,310	127,471	138,387	135,164	127,083	1,219,968		
DPW-25-04	DPW Parks Equipment	106,800	64,140	49,030	-	-	43,994	31,433	24,891	20,064	24,076	364,428		
DPW-25-05	DPW Cemetery Equipment	-	106,800	-	-	-	21,360	25,632	9,398	11,278	13,534	188,002		
DPW-25-07	Grove Street Cemetery Repaving	-	-	500,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	500,000		
Subtotal Department of Public Works		711,078	806,092	1,278,603	763,766	720,734	782,315	786,187	774,328	768,157	766,344	8,157,605		
Public Works - Engineering														
ENG-25-01	Pavement Management Program	1,951,821	2,000,617	2,050,632	2,101,898	2,154,445	2,208,306	2,263,513	2,320,100	2,378,102	2,437,554	21,866,988		
ENG-25-02	Incinerator Site Capping	-	5,021,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,021,000		
ENG-25-03	Various Intersection Interventions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,300,000		
ENG-25-XX	Roadways - Chapter 90	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	5,400,000		
ENG-24-YY	Intersection Grove St. Huron Planning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
ENG-25-ZZ	Mass Fair Share Roads	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	246,324	-		
ENG-25-AA	Complete Streets Concord Crosswalks	432,009	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Subtotal Community Development		3,170,154	7,807,941	2,836,956	2,888,222	2,940,769	2,994,630	3,049,837	3,106,424	3,164,426	3,223,878	33,000,000		
Facilities														
FAC-24-01		-	-	-	-	-	AWAITING BUILDING ASSESSMENT					-	-	
FAC-25-02	Chenery Boiler Replacement	1,600,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,600,000		
FAC-25-03	Video Camera Improvements - Town	137,000	146,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	283,000		
FAC-25-07	New Public Works Facility	-	300,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22,300,000		
FAC-25-08	Chenery Roof & HVAC Replacement & Solar	200,000	5,200,000	-	1,650,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,050,000		
FAC-25-09	Gym resurfacing	25,000	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50,000		
FAC-25-10	School Envelope Repairs	335,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	335,000		
Subtotal Facilities		2,297,000	5,671,000	1,650,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22,000,000		
Fire														
FD-24-01	Ambulance Replacement	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000	110,000	1,100,000		
FD-24-02	Cardiac Monitor Replacement	-	-	-	48,690	-	-	-	48,690	-	-	97,380		
FD-24-03	Replace Fire Staff Vehicles	-	175,000	85,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	260,000		
FD-24-04	Replace Pumper Truck	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,000,000		
FD-24-05	Replace Ladder Truck	-	-	-	-	1,650,000	-	-	-	-	-	1,650,000		
FD-25-06	Breathing Apparatus Fill Station	-	75,000	-	-	-	75,000	-	-	-	75,000	225,000		
Subtotal Fire		110,000	360,000	195,000	158,690	1,760,000	185,000	110,000	158,690	110,000	185,000	4,332,380		
Police														
PD-24-02	Replace Police Portable Radios	155,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	155,000		
PD-24-03	Replace Fiber Multiplexers	-	215,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	215,000		
PD-24-04	Townwide Base Radio Replacement	-	-	-	400,000	400,000	-	-	-	-	-	800,000		
PD-24-05	Replace CAD and RMS Server	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
PD-24-06	Replace Police Domain Controllers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
PD-24-07	Replace Call Logging Recorder	-	-	26,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26,000		
PD-24-09	Replacement of Network Switches	-	42,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	42,000		
Subtotal Police		155,000	257,000	26,000	400,000	400,000	247,600	266,120	267,944	316,333	299,599	2,635,596		
Information Technology														
IT-25-01	SAN Capacity Increase	-	-	60,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60,000		
IT-25-02	Network Redundancy Restoration	50,000	125,000	150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	325,000		
IT-25-xx	Hybrid ATM - Chenery Auditorium	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
IT-25-xx	Enhance Town Network - Police Addition	175,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	175,000		
Subtotal Information Technology		225,000	125,000	210,000	186,667	173,889	190,185	183,580	182,551	185,439	183,857	1,846,168		
General Government														
GG-25-01	Replace CAMA Database	125,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125,000		
GG-25-02	Update MUNIS General Ledger	-	-	50,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50,000		
GG-25-03	Turf for Rink	-	150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150,000		
GG-25-04	Belmont Comprehensive Plan	-	150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150,000		
GG-25-05	Recreation Master Plan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Subtotal General Gov't		125,000	300,000	50,000	-	-	95,000	95,000	95,000	95,000	95,000	950,000		
Water & Sewer Enterprise Funds														
ENT-25-01	Water Main Replacement	1,080,000	1,166,400	1,259,700	1,360,500	1,460,500	1,265,420	1,302,504	1,329,725	1,343,730	1,340,376	12,908,854		
ENT-25-02	Sewer and Drain Rehabilitation	800,000	900,000	1,000,000	1,100,000	1,200,000	1,000,000	1,040,000	1,068,000	1,081,600	1,077,920	10,287,520		
ENT-25-03	Water Enterprise Equipment	120,803	314,662	106,105	72,145	165,000	155,747	162,736	132,347	137,595	150,685	1,517,844		
ENT-25-04	Sewer Enterprise Equipment	265,510	270,240	306,825	206,100	206,100	250,955	248,044	243,805	230,961	235,933	2,464,272		
ENT-25-05	Stormwater Repairs	250,000	275,000	300,000	325,000	350,000	300,000	310,000	317,000	320,400	319,480	3,066,880		
Subtotal Water & Sewer Enterprise Funds		2,516,313	2,926,322	2,972,630	3,063,745	3,381,600	2,972,122	3,063,284	3,090,676	3,114,285	3,124,393	30,225,371		
CCBC-XX	Project Bid Reserve Contribution	50,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50,000		
CCBC-YY	Capital Stabilization Fund Contribution	578,842	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	578,842		
Subtotal Reserve Deposits		628,842	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	628,842		
Community Preservation Act Projects on Direct Town Assets														
FAC-CPA-01	Town Hall Historic Study Implementation	-	1,000,000	1,500,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,500,000		
FAC-CPA-XX	Retaining Wall	-	1,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,000,000		
REC-CPA-01	Chenery Fields	1,300,000	2,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,300,000		
REC-CPA-02	PQ Field	-	200,000	2,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,200,000		
REC-CPA-03	Harris Field (eligible for partial CPA funding)	-	-	1,600,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,600,000		
REC-CPA-04	Underwood Hill	-	-	-	-	100,000	1,000,000	-	-	-	-	1,100,000		
REC-CPA-05	Grove St. lower field/playground	-	-	-	-	100,000	1,000,000	-	-	-	-	1,100,000		
REC-CPA-06	West of Harris Field	-	-	-	-	125,000	1,250,000	-	-	-	-	1,375,000		
REC-CPA-07	Town Field renewal	-	-	-	-	100,000	1,000,000	-	-	-	-	1,100,000		
REC-CPA-08	Winn Brook Fields	-	-	-	-	150,000	1,500,000	-	-	-	-	1,650,000		
REC-xxxx-XX	Wellington Turf (eligible for partial CPA funding)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Subtotal CPA Direct Town Assets		1,300,000	4,200,000	5,100,000	-	575,000	5,750,000	-	-	-	-	16,925,000		
Capital Projects Total All Department		11,238,387	22,453,355	12,669,189	9,111,090	9,951,992	13,216,852	7,554,008	7,675,614	7,753,640	7,878,072	26,300,000		
											132,906,950			

Potential Capital Needs in Years 6-10

The CCBC will expand its work in the coming year to include projected capital needs for years 6-30. In advance of that work, several potential projects expected to fall within that timeframe are listed below. This is NOT a complete list, and the anticipated completion of a town-wide building assessment will result in additional projects and changes to the projects listed below.

White Field House, West of Harris Fields

The High School/Middle School Building Project originally included the White Field House and the “West of Harris Fields” projects; however, the projects were deferred for project planning, timeline, and budgetary reasons.

In conjunction with the Belmont Rink project, the White Field House has been razed and hazardous material was removed in spring of 2024 at a cost of about \$346,00, funded using ARPA funds.

The fields west of Harris Field require leveling, re-sodding and possible drainage work, and will require a thoughtful effort to properly scope their future uses, then complete design and construction work to realize those uses. There are no reliable cost estimates or timing for this work, especially as the scope for future uses of this space have not yet been defined.

Indoor Multi-Sport Surfaces at Rink

The New Rink’s Indoor Surface refers to the “multi-sport” aspect of the New Rink project that would facilitate the full potential of the new Rink facility for indoor activities during non-ice months. This was not part of the debt exclusion. No reliable cost estimates or timing for the multi-sport surface project at this time.

Harris Field Turf Replacement

The current surface was installed in 2014¹ at a cost of \$960,000. The expected useful life of artificial surfaces typically spans 8-12 years. Necessary repairs or replacement depend on the total amount and intensity of use, maintenance, and quality of the original surface, materials and installation. Thus, by 2025, Belmont should anticipate major expenses, at a minimum to refurbish, if not completely replace, this resource so critical to Belmont sports at our schools and in the broader community. Currently planning presumes replacement of the turf and not a return to grass.

Department of Public Works Facility

The successful addition and renovations of the existing DPW facilities in 2021-2022 provided, by design, a 10-year window to plan and fund a full replacement of the primary home in which the Town’s “all-hours” DPW team works, eats, and sometime sleeps and showers. The CCBC estimates that plans for designing and constructing a replacement facility should be incorporated into the Town’s capital budget by 2032, with the design phase starting earlier. During the intervening years, and with more details available in the anticipated building assessment report, the town should begin scoping out this project to enable better planning and cost estimation .

Artificial Turf, Wellington School

The playground and field area at Wellington is now nearly 12 years old and will also need replacement in the next 10-15 years. Originally installed in 2011, the useful life of artificial surfaces typically spans 8-12 years. The Activitas assessment completed in 2022 stated that Wellington’s turf field “...may require resurfacing,” noting

that its “carpet fibers are compacted” and, at the time, provided a cost estimate of \$75,000 - \$100,000. Their assessment suggested this be work be completed in the ensuing 1-5 years from 2022.

Recent Debt Exclusion Projects

Library

In November 2022, Belmont residents passed an exclusionary bond vote to underwrite the estimated \$39.5 million cost to construct a new Library. The voters approved an approximately \$34.5 million debt exclusion as a significant \$5 million in private fundraising, foundation grants and other funds offset the Town’s borrowing needs by nearly 15%. The Library Board spent over five years refining the project plans. That lengthy preparation periodic was rewarded recently when the Library Building Committee received construction bids below the proposed project budget. The project remains on a timetable that includes construction from 2024 until fall 2025 with occupancy of the new library in fall 2025.

Rink

The Town voted twice (November 2022 and April 2023) on a debt exclusion in connection with the replacement of the Town’s ice rink. The second debt exclusion passed in April 2023, at a reduced estimated cost of \$29.9 million. The Belmont Municipal Skating Rink Building Committee was given permission in spring of 2023 to go forward with full design and to award the construction of the Skating Rink on Concord Ave. The appropriation to the Committee was \$29.9 million with \$1.3 million from outside sources (\$350,000 from state earmarks (State funded earmarks should not be designated as “fundraising”), \$1 million from Belmont Savings Bank Foundation, and under \$100,000 from private donors). The remainder of \$28.6 million will be applied to the taxpayers under the debt exclusion voted for this project.

During FY 24 the Rink Committee worked with the designer, Construction Manager, and Owner's Project Manager to finalize the design and to bid the project. When the final estimate for construction was completed in the winter of 2024, that estimate showed that the project as planned was approximately \$34.5 million or \$4.5 million over the budget.

In April 2024 the Building Committee began engaging in a value engineering effort to reduce the cost of the project. As of May 16, 2024, the Committee has developed two options: 1) provide some of the building/program scope that had been presented in April of 2023 and find additional funding sources, or 2) reduce the building/scope of the programming to meet the voted budget. The Building Committee will be having meetings with the Select Board, the Warrant Committee, the Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee and the public at large with a goal of taking a proposal to a Special Town Meeting in June 2024.

Belmont Middle and High School

The new Belmont Middle and High School opened in two stages with the largest portion opening in Sept 2021, and the east section opening in September 2023 and three new playing fields in Sept 2023. The 2200 photovoltaic panels arrays covering the flat roof were completed in December 2023, and after commissioning, went "live" in March 2024. The building houses Grade seven through twelve, approximately 2100 students.

The project close-out process is well underway. This usually takes about six to twelve months after construction is completed, and once done the project will be submitted to the Mass. School Building Authority (MSBA). for a full audit and final reimbursement to the town. The MSBA process usually takes at least a year.

CCBC Policy and Process Work for Year Two (Preparation of FY26 Budget)

Over the course of FY24, the CCBC has committed to make additional policy and process progress on fulfilling its mission as outlined in its bylaw. The CCBC is committed to identifying and implementing approaches that will provide long-term financial stability and ensure we manage, maintain, and update our capital assets, and establishing more predictable cost cycles.

During its third year, CCBC will work on at least the following priorities:

1. Proceed with unfinished FY24 initiatives as listed at beginning of this Report.
2. Work with Town Staff on recommended policies to guide the use of various Town reserve funds that have traditionally been related to the Town's capital funding.
3. Build out a more coordinated calendar with the Town staff as the staff revises and evolves its budget processes
4. Build out the capital needs for years 6 – 30 more robustly using the forthcoming building assessment.
5. Reach out to the Belmont Light Department to understand more deeply its policy and business approach to the changing needs of the Town's building systems.
6. Work with the Department of Public Works to understand the adequacy of capital reserves in the Water and Sewer Enterprise Funds.

The Committee identified some policy changes to move Belmont toward its management, financial planning, and other Town policy goals. The Committee looks forward to working with the Select Board and town staff on these policy areas.

1. A portion of the Town's FY23 operating budget dedicated to the support of "in levy debt service" for funding the Town's capital needs each year in the future, either to fund capital projects directly or to support additional exempt debt that could be issued in the future.
2. Funds from the operating budget dedicated to capital needs each year have a "floor" with this base increasing by 2.5% in each subsequent year to make a new "floor."
3. A portion of Free Cash be dedicated to capital each year, starting with at least \$50,000 for the FY25 capital budget. \$1.5 million of free cash has been dedicated to the Chenery boiler project.
4. The CCBC recommends that all proceeds of the Town's sale of capital assets be committed to the funding of future capital needs. This would include the sale of used equipment, property assets, and other capital.
5. Proceeds of rebates and credits related to capital assets will be committed to future capital needs. This could include rebates related to lighting, solar, non-combustion engine vehicles and assets, and other such items.
6. Turnbacks from capital projects be returned directly to the capital budget, not the operating budget.
7. The Town will seek grant, state & federal funding to support capital improvements to key infrastructure like water, sewer, and schools. The Town's efforts in this regard should evaluate the comprehensive benefit of such external funds and not focus primarily on the short-term operating cost of securing these funds.

Structural Change Implementation Committee and the CCBC

To promote coordination among the Town’s key budgetary and financial committees, a member of CCBC sits on the Structural Change Implementation Committee (SCIC).

This past year, SCIC developed a prioritized list from the original and extensive work of the Structural Change Impact Group, however, nearly all of them addressed certain Town governance or operational activities and none directly impacted capital projects or investment in Town assets, with one exception: “Best Use of Town-owned Properties” (#36). This item was not addressed during the year, but it will be taken up again in FY25.

Adopted Town Policies

The CCBC is in the process of assessing the several Town policies that relate to the capital needs and capital funding. These include policies such as the Town’s Comprehensive Financial Management Policies (“Financial Policies”) and the Climate Action Plan-related policies.

The CCBC is aware that the Select Board and the town staff are reassessing several financial policies including those that relate to capital investment indicators. The CCBC looks forward to working with the Select Board and town staff as appropriate on revised financial policies.

Update on FY24 Capital Projects in Process

A chart below summarizes this status of the Town’s FY24 approved Capital Projects. The Town has completed several projects; other projects are in various stages of progress (under construction or evaluating bids). Most of the projects for which the Town is finalizing project specifications or has recently awarded contracts relate to improvements or repairs to school buildings. Some projects can only be done in the summer months to prevent disruption during the school year.

Building Assessment Project

One of the foundational responsibilities of the CCBC under its bylaw is to help to ensure that the Town builds and maintains a “comprehensive inventory of capital assets.” In FY24 the CCBC recommended, and Town Meeting supported, the funding of a building assessment by an outside party to assist with developing this inventory. This building assessment is just beginning. The CCBC will not be able to use the building assessment until the fall of 2025. The CCBC and the Town staff will use the results of this assessment to guide the selection and prioritization of future capital projects. The CCBC has indicated that it would like the building assessment to consider the Town’s strategic priorities, such as its Climate Plan, in the review. Finally, the CCBC notes that the building assessment is a key component of advancing the development of a 30-year capital plan for the town.

Bid Reserve Update

In FY23, the Capital Budget Committee (CBC) recommended the Town create a Bid Reserve Fund to address disruptions in the stability of construction pricing. This Bid Reserve Fund was intended to prevent potential disruption that might occur in connection with discrepancies with project cost estimates. While town officials diligently work to obtain accurate estimates, bids for projects might come in above estimates. The bid reserve mitigates the likelihood of needing to rebid projects that would require additional approval from Town Meeting. The Bid Reserve was used once during FY23 for a safety system project at Winn Brook School. The Town has

approximately \$93,738 in this bid reserve fund. For FY26, the CCBC is recommending appropriation of an additional \$50,000 toward the Bid Reserve

FY24 Project Status

The table below summarizes the status of various projects approved at the spring 2023 Town Meeting.

Dept	Description	Budget	Status
DPW	FY24 Art 20 (c) Sidewalk Repai	243,680	Fully expended
DPW	FY24 Art 20 Cemetery Equipment	78,270	Equipment has been ordered
DPW	FY24 Art 20 Street Tree Planting	50,000	More than 100 trees will be planted in April 2024.
DPW	FY24 Art 20 Parks Equip	244,625	Equipment has been ordered
DPW	FY24 Art 20 Sidewalk Assessment	50,000	Assessment underway; completion projected March 2024
Engineering	FY24 Pavement Management	1,904,216	
Facilities	FY24 Art 20 Butler Gym Floor	25,000	Confirmed to repurpose at 2024 ATM.
Facilities	FY24 Art 20 Electric Van	55,000	Waiting on Ford for inventory
Facilities	FY24 Art 20(a) Butler School	607,786	Going out to bid next month
Facilities	FY24 Art 20 Building Assessment	100,000	Staff working on identifying a vendor.
Facilities	FY24 STM Security Cameras	160,000	Half completed, should be done by July
Fire	FY24 ATM Fire Pumper Truck	910,000	Truck is on order; anticipated delivery end of 2024.
Fire	FY24 ATM Ambulance Replace	80,000	Next Ambulance targeted for purchase in FY28
Police	FY24 Art 20 Portable Radios	216,000	44 radios ordered March 2024

Conclusion

The Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee (CCBC) is presenting Town Meeting with a five-year capital plan of \$65 million and a one-year capital plan for FY25 of \$8.7 million. The one-year budget covers about 26 projects supported by a range of funding sources. Town Meeting is asked to vote for on the Articles detailed on page 3.

Acknowledgements

The Committee would like to thank all the Town employees and volunteers for their continued effort and dedication to the wellbeing of our town. Department leaders adapted to a new system and our new focus on longer time periods; they took time out of their schedules to meet with us and to address questions and in many cases to obtain further information. We thank them for their flexibility and support. Special thanks go out to the Town Administrator’s office and Jennifer Hewitt for tireless support of the Committee’s work. David Blazon, Director of Facilities Department has also been a critical resource in the CCBC’s work.

APPENDIX

Town Meeting created the CCBC through the adoption of General Bylaw amendment in the Town Meeting of June 2023. A distillation of the CCBC charge, as presented in the bylaw, is below:

. The Committee shall prepare ... a Long-Term Capital Improvement Plan.The Plan shall include one-year, five-year, and thirty-year components..... The Plan for one year and five years shall include recommendations for sources of funds the Town can utilize to pay for Capital Projects.....The Committee shall coordinate with the Town Administrator to implement the Plan in accordance with the Town's Comprehensive Financial Policies and other governing plans of the Town adopted by the Select Board, as they may be amended from time to time. The Committee shall create procedures to be used by the Town and the Committee to review and prioritize Capital Project requests and ensure that full life-cycle costs and potential funding sources are identified for each Capital Project, including the establishment and updating of a comprehensive inventory of capital assets, and including coordination with related Town committees.

The Bylaw was sponsored by the “Long Term Capital Planning Committee,” (LTCPC) a temporary committee that was created by the Select Board in 2019 and that concluded its work in 2022. (The COVID pandemic extended the work of the temporary committee longer than was initially planned.) The summary recommendations of the LTCPC are presented below:

- 1. The Town should have one capital committee rather than two capital committees.*
- 2. The Town’s capital planning process should incorporate all funding sources explicitly into the capital budgeting process.*
- 3. The Town’s capital planning process should include a long-term time frame.*
- 4. The Town’s capital planning process should incorporate project ranking and screening criteria for capital projects.*
- 5. The capital planning process should consider capital needs of \$25,000 and higher. Expenditures below that level should be incorporated into the operating budget.*
- 6. The Town needs an inventory of its capital assets that it updates periodically and that informs the capital budget.*
- 7. The Town needs as larger capital committee with a broader mandate and that includes the Energy Committee.*

The CCBC is working toward incorporating all the recommendations of the LTCPC into the CCBC’s work.