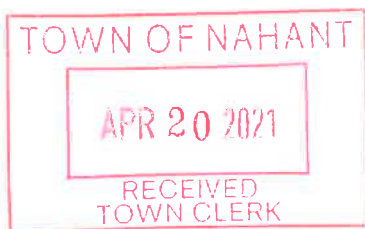


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TOWN OF NAHANT Advisory and Finance Committee



Nahant Advisory and Finance Committee Minutes, April 1, 2021

Beatty, Brown, Fulghum, Lewis, Sheehan, Vanderslice, and Zahora present, Tarmy absent

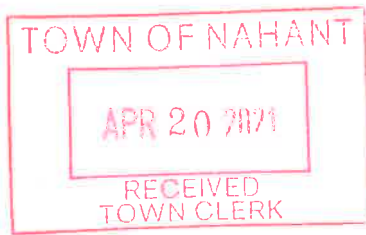
We were joined by Community Preservation Committee Chair Lynne Spencer, Ellen Goldberg, Paul Spirn, and other members of the CPC, Finance Director/Town Accountant Alison Nieto, and others

Vanderslice called the meeting to order at 7:05pm and turned it over to Spencer to present the CPC's recommendations.

Aided by Goldberg, Spencer shared a detailed report on the screen of the CPC's grant recommendations for 2022 (see attached). She explained that because the warrant had been foreshortened for our 2020 Town Meeting, her report combined recommendations for 2021 and 2022. Funds for 2021 were not expended, which along with state matches and surcharges, meant that the CPC has a total of \$976,000 available to work with, and \$71,000 in reserve. The CPC received eight new applications, one of which was withdrawn by the Town Administrator and one, on the Lowlands and Bear Pond, needs collaboration with the Planning Board. Spencer presented FY2022 Grant Recommendations first, followed by 2021 Recommendations. Each recommendation in the report included Supporting Statements.

FY2022 Recommendations

- A. \$10,000 from CPC estimated revenues for administration and operating expenses, includes help with printing the Warrant and assisting applicants with professional help.
- B. \$32,375 for improvements to two Nahant Little League baseball fields on Flash Road. Antrim explained that the fencing and backstop needs to be replaced. Spencer added there will be a \$15,000 match from Little League. Vanderslice was told that there would still be space for outdoor Town Meetings.
- C. \$4,000 for purchase and installation of a sign for Nahant American Legion Post 215. Legal counsel confirmed that funds could not be spent on other completed work for which the Legion had requested support last year. The sign will recognize the Life Saving Station as the Legion's meeting place and its collaboration with the CPC in preserving the structure.
- D. \$120,000 for improving the basketball and tennis courts on Flash Road, to augment the \$160,000 approved in 2019, combined for a total of \$280,000, because the final bid was more



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- significant than anticipated. Antrim explained that the courts are in disrepair. Complete resurfacing will make them usable again. When Sheehan asked how CPC felt about the cost and Lewis asked about the process, Antrim and Spencer explained the required public procurement process and said that the builder had held the bid so that the project could proceed.
- E. \$500,000 for a ten-year bond at 3% interest for three deferred maintenance projects: \$300,000 for the outside of the Public Library; \$100,000 for handicap entry improvements to Town Hall; \$100,000 for restoration of the entry archway to Greenlawn Cemetery. Spencer explained that these historic buildings are past the century mark and the masonry is old. Repairing the cemetery wall, not requested now, would be much more expensive. When Fulghum asked if the amounts were capped separately for each project, Spencer explained that the bidding might be complicated and that there might be value in aggregating. When asked by Lewis about whether debt service would impact other projects, such as Eminent Domain, Spencer said yes. Lewis asked about the desirability of a long-term plan about overall CPC debts. Spencer provided a chart of current debt later in the meeting, to which Nieto added more detail in subsequent emails.
 - F. \$58,000 from the CPC reserve for principal and interest debt service on the \$400,000 bond authorized at the 2019 Town Meeting for the Public Library Project that entailed reconstruction of the terrace, which was expensive and complicated.

FY2021 Recommendations

- G. \$50,000 for interior repairs due to water damage to Ellingwood Chapel, an architectural treasure listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In response to Sheehan, Spencer said that due to significant progress on other repairs, supported in part by a Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund grant, she does not expect anything else "big" for the chapel.
- H. \$17,000 for 20% of the cost for the Nahant Dory Club to construct a new gangway and davit apparatus for the Town wharf and two new floating docks. The majority of the total cost for the project, \$83,830, will be paid by the Dory Club. Antrim and Brown explained that the gangway and floats are disintegrating and can hit against and damage the wharf during storms. The davit arrangement will allow them to be pulled up. The Dory Club has already done some of the work. Zahora said that we need to know how much has been done before we can move forward with new funding.
- I. \$45,000, consisting of \$33,240 FY 2021 funding and estimated revenues of \$11,760 from the CPC Community Housing Reserve, for windows and other external repairs at Nahant Housing Authority buildings on 41-53 and 75-77 Spring Road and 7-9 Emerald Road. When Brown asked how this related to the current Coast Guard housing project proposal, Spencer said that these were different plots.
- J. \$155,000 from CPC Housing Reserve to preserve exteriors of NHA buildings on Spring and Greystone Roads. More exact information from the Town Administrator and approval by the



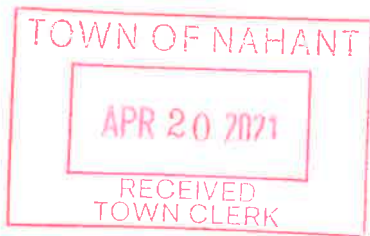
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- CPC are needed to proceed. Spencer said that she is “pleased” that the Housing Authority has been “very proactive” on these projects.
- K. \$41,000, from FY2021 CPC estimated revenues for Bailey’s Hill Park-Fort Ruckman East Slope Restoration to restore the trail system and park and remove invasive plants to create more open space, as recommended by the Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee.
 - L. \$27,000 from FY2021 for improvements to the Lowlands Softball Fields. The unsafe, unsightly, deteriorating backstop, benches, and outfield fencing will be replaced on the Men’s Softball Field, along with benches on the Women’s field, on which repairs have been completed. A sign demarcating the fields is included.
 - M. \$165,000, consisting of \$128,165 from FY21 and \$36,835 from CPC General Reserves to improve the deteriorating ramp for handicap access to Town Hall, which does not meet code. Spencer noted that handicap access to the lower level will still be a problem.
 - N. \$24,000 from CPC General Reserves for improvement of the Little Nahant Playground, the remaining town playground in need of upgrading. Zahora noted that the lack of a crosswalk is a problem. Spencer said she understands.
 - O. \$12,000 from CPC General Reserves to restore the basketball court on Spring Road, which has fallen into disrepair. The project will include resurfacing, new hoops, fencing, and removal of invasive plants, including poison ivy. Vanderslice added that this would involve planting some trees to hide the composting area.
 - P. \$60,400 from CPC General Reserves for debt service including principal and interest on the town-approved ten-year \$400,000 Public Library Bonding for repairs.
 - Q. \$1,500,000 in borrowing for a portion of the costs by gift, negotiated purpose, or eminent domain taking of specified property at East Point. In response to Sheehan about whether an additional application and request might be made in the future, Spencer said no, the request was limited to this amount. Lewis asked about the existence of spread sheets on CPC debt going forward, and whether CPC was part of debt exclusion. Nieto said no, only water, sewer, and school. When Brown asked about the impact of the bonds on the CPC in future, Spencer said they would have an impact. Goldberg put up a detailed spreadsheet chart on CPC debt, with annual amounts going forward and pointed out that debt service on bonds started low and increased over time. Sheehan asked if the CPC was comfortable that more than half of its debt would be going to past projects. Spencer said that the CPC was comfortable with this and that she was presenting the CPC’s recommendation. Spirn noted that there would still be a reserve, a “cushion.” Vanderslice said that funding recommendations were always a balancing act between what would be spent and what would be held in reserve. When Lewis asked if there were a backlog of projects, Spencer said that she felt good about the amount of work the CPC has funded, and that the vast majority has gone to town-owned properties and stewardship.

Brown commented on the increasing CPC debt service and said that this wasn’t a good trend. Spencer said that the East Point project was to protect important ecological and historical



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resources and that at 3% interest there would still be a \$240,000 reserve (a figure she adjusted in a later email). Sheehan calculated that about \$800,000 in debt service would come due to the CPC over 30 years. Spencer said that that was a fact. Lewis asked where the \$1,500,000 borrowing would show up? As a BAN (Bond Anticipation Note)? Would it go into Town debt? Nieto said that the Town did use BANs and that she would provide more information on CPC borrowing and town debt, which she did in a series of later emails and spreadsheets.

Zahora asked what had happened to approved funding for the town to regain right of ways in Little Nahant, town-owned properties on which citizens pay taxes but have been appropriated by private individuals and block access to the ocean. Spencer said that the project was still active, the money is there, probably over \$10,000. It was up to the Town Administrator to proceed, she said, and that the Planning Board has to enforce rights of way. Nieto said that she would talk to Barletta about doing the work.

Spencer referred us to five final recommendations about transferring unexpended CPC Community Preservation Funds appropriated to the Town, approved at Town Meetings in 2014, 2016, and 2018, back to the CPC. Completed projects included the Recreation Feasibility Study for the Flash Road recreation area, the Wharf Boat Ramp, the Town Hall, Library, Ellingwood Chapel, and the 10-year Wharf bond, claw backs, to the CPC General Reserve.

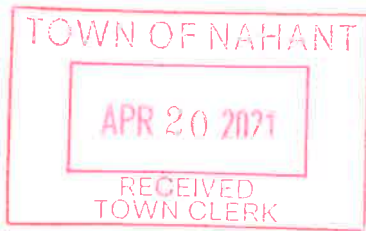
Spencer asked if she should continue to write up the history of CPC funding. Goldberg said that she loved the history and that it was important. Spencer agreed to continue doing it.

We thanked Spencer and the CPC for their hard work and information-filled presentation. They left the meeting.

We decided not to vote on CPC grant recommendations at this meeting.

We moved on to discussing and voting on other articles in the Warrant.

Nieto gave us two updates. Due to a higher bid, the police radios, which we had approved previously, would now require \$190,000 in borrowing. The Board of Selectmen were updating Article 20 on Coast Guard Housing to add, as we had requested, that profits go first to paying down the existing debt.



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Article 20, Coast Guard Housing. Zahora said that this was a Coast Guard Housing Committee article and commented that the general wording of the proposed project in the Article would not change, based on her attendance at Coast Guard Housing meetings. We said we needed to wait for the new wording from the Board of Selectmen about use of proceeds from the sales.

Article 36, on Parking Violations, rescinding MGL Chapter 90, 20A, replacing it with MGL Chapter 90

Section 20A and ½. Moved by Sheehan and seconded by another member, voted unanimously to Recommend.

Article 38, on Non-compostable Shopping Bags. The purpose of this By-Law is to prevent use by retail establishments in town of thin-film, single-use bags, which damage the environment and marine animals. The Article includes definitions and fines, to be enforced by the Board of Selectmen and designated persons. Fulghum told Beatty that the Health Officer would be mandated with reporting and enforcement. When Zahora asked, Beatty said that specific fines were laid out in the Article. Moved by Beatty and seconded by Lewis, we voted to recommend it, with Brown abstaining.

Article 39, Lowlands Drainage Project. We could not vote on the \$100,000 for the Lowlands Drainage project, because we need to wait for some changes by the Board of Selectmen to the wording .

Articles 40 and 41, Citizen Petitions to repeal the Wetlands Protection By-Law and on the Keeping Animals By-Law. We discussed whether we could vote on Citizen Petitions. Zahora said that we didn't vote on Citizen Petitions if they were "political," but did if they were financial. Beatty noted that we had voted "No Recommendation" on the Wetlands Petition in the 2021 Warrant. Vanderslice said that he had researched handbooks from other towns and not found specific language about voting on Citizen Petitions, but that citizens should work with us for guidance on framing petitions, which Fulghum reiterated. Beatty said that even if we were to put "No Recommendation" in the Warrant, we needed to vote to do so. Fulghum agreed. Zahora moved and Lewis seconded that we vote No Recommendation on Article 41, the Wetlands Petition, which we did, unanimously. Brown described existing laws on keeping animals, including limiting the number and locating pens away from neighbors. Brown moved



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and Sheehan seconded that we vote No Recommendation on Article 42 about Keeping Animals, which we did, unanimously.

Article 43, on Continuing Committees. We said we could not vote until Barletta gave us more information.

Article 26, Snow Removal from Sidewalks. We continued discussion of the pros and cons of requiring snow removal. Vanderslice said that he voluntarily shovels the sidewalks from his house up to the entrance to East Point, as a matter of public safety. Brown noted that it is difficult if not impossible for him to remove snow from his sidewalk, which he tries to do, because of requirements not to put it in the street. At our previous meeting, we had voted four to recommend and four against, a tie. Given this, Fulghum said that we needed to vote No Recommendation. Sheehan said that we needed to wait to vote when Tarmy, who had participated in the previous discussion and vote was in attendance.

Moved by Zahora and seconded by Brown, we voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:15pm.