

HARWICH — Capital plan requests for next year run nearly \$39 millions, driven by implementation of wastewater infrastructure, addressing the need for the East Harwich Fire Station improvements and the resurfacing of Lower County Road.

Town Administrator Christopher Clark presented the plan to selectmen Monday night, emphasizing this is the “first crack at what's been submitted.” He said the numbers in the plan are an exercise in getting all the information in one place.

Capital Outlay Committee Chairman Richard Larios said the numbers represent requests made by town departments. His committee has heard presentations on about half of the requests, but has taken no notes on what to include in the plan. They will meet each week throughout the month of November and issue their recommendations on the seven-year capital plan by Dec. 14, he said.

The seven-year plan contains more than \$86 million in requests, with the upcoming year, FY19, seeking the largest number, \$38,774,021. A couple of additional years have requests are in the \$14 million and \$13 million range.

Clark told selectmen Monday night that while the plan covers FY19 to FY25, he would be avoiding any reference to out years and focus on just FY19. He also said while the community preservation committee has jurisdiction over the applications submitted for Community Preservation Act funding, those projects are included in the capital plan. Requests for CPA funds this year are close to \$3.5 million, \$1.25 million more than the \$2.2 million the committee says is available. Clark said the CPC chairman has asked him to prioritize the town's needs.

“We feel we can work closer with the community preservation committee, strengthening recommendations and showing our support,” Larios said of decisions on the use of CPA funds for certain capital projects. The beginning of wastewater infrastructure projects is driving FY19 requests. The projected costs for wastewater management are \$22,450,000, which Clark said represents the shift to design and construction projects. Included are \$20,280,000 for the Pleasant Bay south watershed collection system and \$2,150,000 for of the pipes and pumping station to deliver wastewater to the Chatham treatment facility. Another \$20,000 is required for plan implementation services.

There are several fire department requests proposed for FY19, including the construction upgrade of Station Two in East Harwich. Clark has that number at \$4 million, an early estimate for the improvements, but the architectural firm hired to do the design and bids, Kaestle Boos Associates, recommended last week a brand new station be constructed at the same site instead at \$6.2 million. The firm is expected to make a presentation to selectmen in the next week or two with professional estimates on construction costs.

The fire department requests also include \$340,000 for an ambulance replacement; \$285,000 for an air pack replacement program; and \$100,000 for a phase two town-wide radio replacement system. Clark said there is a potential for a \$285,000 grant to cover the air pack replacement.

The major project facing the department of public works in FY19 is the maintenance and resurfacing of Lower County Road at \$4.5 million. It is not anticipated to be covered under the federal Transportation Improvement Program.

Clark pointed out the water department will also be expanding the size of water mains leading into West Harwich along that stretch of roadway. The cost has yet to be determined, but Clark pointed out it would be covered under the water department's enterprise fund, monies that come from water use charges. Given the need for water department work to be conducted first, and his concerns for capital plan costs next year, Clark said he is leaning toward putting the road maintenance and resurfacing project off for a year.

But the DPW also has its annual five-year road maintenance plan request, which seeks \$1.4 million. The town usually takes \$700,000 from Chapter 90 funds and seeks another \$700,000 through a debt exclusion ballot question. The \$5.6 million Route 28 West Harwich road improvement project is slated for FY22, with the federal TIP program as the funding source.

Under the administration budget, Clark said he identified \$100,000 in FY19 to extend the sidewalk from Harwich Port to Saquatucket Harbor. The DPW has identified \$250,000 as a much more realistic number. However, Clark said they have a commitment from Massachusetts Department of Transportation to provide the sidewalk, but added the timing is uncertain, with the state only promising it “sometime in the future.” Clark said MassDOT will be doing work in West Chatham soon and hopefully they can do the sidewalk project at the same time.

The planned improvement to the landside of Saquatucket Harbor is still undergoing “value engineering” to help reduce the cost, Clark said. The project includes the new harbormaster office, a boardwalk, artist shacks, septic system, a workshop and potentially a snack shack. The town appropriated \$3 million for the

projects, but bids were well over that amount. Discussions with the low bidder continue on adjustments, and there is the potential for a \$250,000 Americans with Disability Act grant and another \$1 million grant from the Seaport Economic Council, expected to be acted upon in January.

Clark asked selectmen if they could support a proposal to fund the snack shack through an outside operator by seeking requests for proposals. He said they'd like to see if there is any interest. The harbor department has a \$900,000 placeholder in FY19 to supplement the cost of the landside project.

Clark also cited a couple of open space projects under consideration for FY19, including \$369,000 for the town to take by eminent domain the 24.5-acre Judah Eldredge property in East Harwich and \$200,000 to purchase the conservation restriction in conjunction with the purchase by Harwich Conservation Trust of the 15-acre Cornelius Pond parcel. Those acquisitions identify the use of CPA funds.

CPA funds will also be sought for mitigation of Hinckley's Pond, where, Clark said, there was another fish kill there this past summer. He said \$500,000 is being requested for an alum treatment to the pond and another \$75,000 to provide a pavilion and access to the pond.

The plan also calls for a \$300,000 supplemental appropriation for the preservation of the exterior of Brooks Free Library. There are also requests for \$486,000 for a pet crematory and \$91,950 for the animal cremation device. Clark said the idea here is to develop a revenue resource that will offset taxpayer costs. "Some of these are concepts for the board of selectmen to think about," Clark said. "I will come up with a funding plan I think the community can afford."

Larios said his committee has asked for particulars relating to debt service so they know what costs are going on and coming off the plan. He said they want to keep the debt service borrowing line level.

-
-
-