

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

May 11, 2009

7:00 p.m.

County Complex, Building A

A. Roll Call

Present

Mr. Chris Henderson, Chair

Mr. Rich Krapf

Ms. Deborah Kratter

Mr. Reese Peck

Mr. Jack Fraley

Others Present

Mr. John McDonald, Manager of FMS

Ms. Leanne Reidenbach, Senior Planner

Mr. Brian Elmore, Development Management Assistant

Mr. Chris Henderson called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

B. Minutes – April 15, 2009

Ms. Deborah Kratter stated on page one, 'prevent confusing connotation' would be a better term. She said on page two, replace Mr. Krapf's comment 'safety net' with 'residual standard.' In paragraph seven, where Mr. Purse discusses setbacks, add 'to separate setback standards.' In last paragraph on page two, include 'what criteria to include in CIP rankings.' At the bottom of page two, include "among the considerations for any project might be compliance with court-ordered and regulatory requirements, education, health and safety, risks to persons and property, environmental quality, and economic development." On page three, paragraph four, include "Committee should have agreed upon standards to review." On page three, paragraph ten, include 'even if the Committee operated using just subjective factors in the past, there was no reason not to bring greater objectivity into the process going forward.' On page four, paragraph five, change to 'Mr. Henderson asked members to rank the new police building using the Bryan, Texas method, as an exercise.' Delete the Committee's practice rankings and related discussion. On page four, paragraph 11, change to 'preponderance of extraordinarily high priorities should lead.'

In a unanimous voice vote, the minutes were approved as amended (5-0).

C. Old Business – Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

Ms. Kratter stated the ranking system being presented is the Bryan, Texas system with some wording changes to accommodate for James City County's interests. The Committee agreed to base the introductory sections off the previously written memorandum to the Board of Supervisors summarizing proposed CIP process changes and the Board's *Statement of Fiscal Goals*.

Mr. Henderson stated that he found the introductory summary beneficial because listing CIP goals and definitions there would last beyond the present Committee membership.

Mr. John McDonald stated the Committee was free to determine the CIP minimum funding amount.

Mr. Reese Peck stated progressively lower cost CIP proposals have a tendency to blend into maintenance costs.

Mr. McDonald stated any project below the minimum amount set by the Committee would still be included in CIP funding, but would not be ranked. The Board would evaluate those projects against other priorities.

Mr. Henderson stated he favored the \$50,000 minimum. He said the Committee could review projects less than the minimum if those projects affected public safety or could provide significant payback.

Mr. Peck stated the Committee should have a consent calendar with the option to review capital maintenance projects.

Ms. Kratter stated the current Bryan, Texas system does not define which items the Committee will rank. She said for items to be included in the ranking, they must have a minimal level.

Mr. Rich Krapf stated the Committee should have the opportunity to review items that would normally be excluded. He said that, for example, the Warhill crosswalk was a low-budget project with a high-CIP ranking.

The Committee discussed the language and wording of the CIP ranking system.

Mr. McDonald stated he could not guarantee staff could collect all items under \$50,000 and present them to the Committee.

Ms. Leanne Reidenbach stated that since staff rankings were similar to the Policy Committee's proposed rankings, she would prefer to include any previously staff-ranked items in the revised review.

Mr. Jack Fraley stated that since the staff rankings are numerical, they do not tend to provide any room for judgment.

Mr. Peck stated that while the CIP rankings are a subjective process, they need to attempt to have an objective structure to frame debate.

Mr. McDonald stated there was a certain amount of pay-go funds available every year. He said debt projects are considered individually and debt is assumed very conservatively.

Mr. Henderson stated the County's borrowing policy should be set as the Committee's maximum request amount. He said he was concerned about the CIP's impact on the County's credit rating.

Mr. McDonald stated the County's credit rating is helped by the pay-down of debt principle.

Ms. Kratter stated that she mixed the research of the Committee, staff, and Mr. Peck into the revised document.

Mr. Fraley stated that regulatory issues should not be a ranking criteria. He said the County has no choice in obeying new regulations.

Ms. Kratter stated the rankings could include conditions where possible fines or loss of funds create a first priority project.

Ms. Reidenbach stated Reno, Nevada's CIP included four criteria (one being regulatory) that could override all other rankings.

The Committee discussed the language, wording, and weighting of the Committee's CIP rankings.

Ms. Reidenbach noted that there was no criteria addressing consistency with the Comprehensive Plan/other master and strategic plans and that inclusion of such a category was critical.

The Committee discussed placement of Comprehensive Plan consistency and agreed to add that as the first question under each ranking criteria category.

Mr. Krapf stated it would be easier to correlate CIP proposals to a number of Comprehensive Plan sections rather than attempting to quantify all of the applicable Goals, Strategies, and Actions.

Mr. Peck stated the Committee would have to make judgment calls in situations where CIP proposals contradicted with the Comprehensive Plan, such as hypothetically extending the Primary Service Area (PSA) to build a school.

Mr. Henderson stated that Comprehensive Plan consistency should guide all CIP proposals. He said any rating system excluding growth would not be applicable, but that maybe the category should be renamed economic development.

Ms. Kratter stated the Bryan, Texas methodology gave higher ratings to projects with external funding sources.

Mr. Peck stated the Committee should account for any current and future obligations resulting from the acceptance of external funds.

Mr. Fraley stated that certain safety, regulatory, and external funding situations should receive special consideration outside of the ranking process. He said that including special considerations in the rankings only would not weight a proposal enough to prioritize it. He proposed having these three items as special criteria that would automatically move a project to the top of the list. He also noted that there should be stronger presence of projects linked to community character and historical/archaeological preservation.

Ms. Kratter stated regulatory compliance should be outside the rankings. She said external funding would be removed from the rankings as well.

Mr. Peck stated there are no Comprehensive Plan restrictions on sharing projects and funding with neighboring localities.

Ms. Reidenbach suggested including a question whether the project had received funding in previous year's CIPs. She also noted several additional questions to be added to the timing/location category.

Mr. McDonald stated that once agencies are aware of CIP requirements, they can begin working on their proposals.

Ms. Kratter noted that she would make the suggested revisions and send out a copy of the document shortly. She requested that everyone review it and respond with comments in advance of the next meeting.

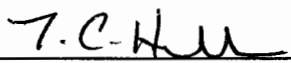
Ms. Reidenbach noted the Board of Supervisors' request to review any criteria developed by the Policy Committee for ranking CIP projects and suggested providing the draft document to them as a reading file item.

The next Policy Committee meeting was scheduled for June 10 at 6 p.m.

D. Adjournment

Mr. Henderson moved to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.


Chris Henderson, Chair of the Policy Committee