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By City Clerk at 10:16 am, Jan 29, 2026

April 10, 2025

Meeting of the Amesbury Community Preservation Committee
Amesbury High School Library
Called to order: 6:08 pm

Committee Members Present: Suzanne Egan, Mel Webster, Joe Fahey, Michelle Faucher, Joel Nice, Wayne Griffith, Andrew LeFleur, Bob Manseau, Jay Williamson

Suzanne Introduces -

Stuart Saginor, Executive Director of the Community Preservation Coalition, Boston

Stuart Saginor gave a power point presentation outlining the duties and responsibilities of the Amesbury C.P.C. (this being our second meetings since its inception). A copy of this presentation was promised to be emailed to each committee member on April 11th and should be included with the minutes of this meeting.

Key Points recognized:

1. Revenue that supports his work and the Community Preservation Coalition derives from dues communities draw out of our of their C.P.C funds account. Amesbury's membership is complimentary their first year. \$1,700 thereafter if we so choose to participate (not mandatory but expected) .

There is a Coalition Website with CPA Technical Assistance Resources online

57 % of MA towns involved totaling over 200 cities and towns participate. Largely made up of cities and less so towns:

We need to stay in the program for (5) years.

A Ballot Boo-Boo happened in Amesbury which needs to be addressed

Key Point exemptions:

1. No Commercial Properties pays (ineligible) if we do no they get first \$100,000
2. Split tax rate is the problem that my emerge in the future
3. May only have (3) exemptions we have (4)
4. Should be addressed in the event of a split tax rate.

Impact is 17,000 projects and 3.4 Billion dollars in 24 years

Revenue Sources

1. 1% property surcharge for Amesbury is anticipated to be \$400,000-\$500,000
2. Matching money

Key Point

3. Track Interest – do not miss – keep track of interest on monies deposited beginning in the summer

CPA Trust Fund

Monies are derived from fees on documents filed statewide at the registry of deeds. \$50 / \$25.

Match is distributed every November 15th where we receive interest on from that date.

State Budget surplus (harder to get now because of economic times)

Last year's base match was 18%. The more communities the smaller the match

This November (2025) is anticipated to be 16% of the \$400,000-\$500,000.

Fees collected are down due to fewer people refinancing their homes due to housing shortage and interest rates. Used to be 100% for the first few years

Key Point

What are our responsibilities as committee members?

1. Assess needs
2. Meet with other boards
3. Get Input through public hearing
4. Prepare Plan
5. Prepare application and guidelines

It has been found in other communities that a two-step application process is beneficial to weed out those applicants who won't qualify

Second step helps people fill out application properly

Ongoing Committee Activities

Update plan each year

One public hearing per year

Review account balances

Prepare CPA Budget

Key Point

It is recommended that we start the process at the same time as the municipal budget (usually in the spring– so that it is early enough before October

How to budget FY 2026 budget

1. Estimate how much 1% will generate
2. 16 % estimate to match. Match at end of fiscal year

Pick a budget that is conservative.

What is our timing for our FY 2026 budget? - Before tax rate is set (November)

Needs to be done before tax rate is set: Get on councils agenda.

Recommended first reading in October -

Talk about doing this sooner. Perhaps in June

Where are funds to be dedicated?

65% Flexible

5% Admin

10% Open Space

10% Housing

10% Historic

Key Point

If 10% is not used it can be rolled over to another year.

What does spending mean? – What is recommended from CPC and approved by Council

Note

School recreational facilities can qualify – requirement everyone has to be able to have access

Can be used to improve current recreational facilities -

Suggestions

Figure estimate for FY 2026. 10% each plus 5% -transfer to a budgeted reserve account

This reserves access to the money – Amesbury is looking at \$580,000 plus / minus

\$50,000 each bucket or \$25,000 admin and \$325,000 budgeted reserve.

Key Point

What to do about FY 2025 where we have collected money. The money is there waiting for us to get organized. This summer when they close the books on FY25 they can transfer the money into each of the three buckets as well as the remainder that goes into CPA fund account balance. We need to remind City Hall.

When we start we will have FY25, FY26 and appropriate FY27.

Every bit of unspent money get put into an account which we will have access to in future years.

Spending on Projects

Two categories - 5% Admin for running the committee and 95% for project

May hire someone part time where its not someone's job.

People want to know where their money is going to go. Accept how the funds will be used and it will be used for a project.

How does a project ultimately happen from start to finish?

1. Application
2. Review
3. Recommendation

Key Point

Leave a lot of time between application and the vote to make sure everything is complete.

A project can be bonded against future 1% funds over future years. (This would also include interest)

City Councils vote is limited to:

1. Approve
2. Reject
3. Reduce
4. Reserve

Who is eligible for CPA Funds?

1. Government entity
2. 501c3 Nonprofit

Excluded are:

Non-incorporated entity
Individual homeowners
Privately-owned historic buildings

All money awarded must have a public benefit

Anti-Aid Amendment to Constitution from 1850 (Funds must advance a public purpose)

Key Point

CPA Applicant Allowable Use Chart

The chart will help guide the committee as to what is appropriate use of the fund and what is not.

CPA Uses

1. Allow nothing out of city budget
2. Not for maintenance

3. Reimbursement for city staff
4. If land purchase it must be filed with a permanent restriction
5. Bonds can be granted for projects going in the future (years ahead)
6. Outdoor recreation only

Meeting is adjourned at 8:18pm