

Police-Fire Facility Committee
Thursday, April 25, 2013, 4:00pm
Hanna Cosman Room

Members Present: Phillip Chapman, Kathy Dowd, Tony Farnum, Eli Gould, Robin Sweetapple, Prudence MacKinney, Steve Phillips, John Allen, Selectboard

Members Absent: David Emery, Sr

Others: Steve Horton, Project Manager, David Schoales, Lester Humphreys, Spoon Agave, Barb Sondag, Chief Bucossi, Chief Wrinn, Asst Chief Lynch, Captain Fitzgerald, Patrick Moreland, Press: Howard Tissman Reformer

Philips Called the meeting to order. (Sweetapple joined the meeting at 4:15pm)

- A. Confirm Meeting was warned – Sondag confirmed that meeting was warned.
- B. Approve Minutes – Dowd recommended two changes/corrections. The first is that David Emery Sr was not in attendance of the April 18 meeting. Second was to clarify that the Committee discussed the planning scope for the project. Motion by Dowd to approve the minutes as corrected, second by MacKinney, motion passed 6-0.
- C. Public Participation - Spoon Agave addressed the committee and stated that he would like to establish a liaison between the Police-Fire Facility Committee and the Town Representative Finance Committee. Allen suggested that the Finance Committee members attend the meeting. Sondag suggested that the PFF committee develop a process for how it will inform other interested Town Committees of the progress of the project and how other committees can have input into the process.
The PFF Committee decided that it would take up the matter of communication with other committees at an upcoming meeting.
- D. Wrap-up from Site Reviews – Phillips stated that four committee members toured the two fire stations. Members were able to ask questions of Chief Bucossi. Chapman, MacKinney, Phillips, Sweetapple toured the property.
Consensus of the four members was that there was definitely a need for improvements. The four members also talked how necessary the West Brattleboro Station due to insurance rating, response time to West Brattleboro residents, safety risks to staff and public due to the increased response time. Gould suggested that the cost of development in the rural area was easier and more cost efficient than trying to squeeze everything onto one site in the commercial area.
Dowd asked why the Fire Department only had four engines and not five. Bucossi stated that several years ago when he took leadership of the department, they did an analysis of the equipment needs. It was determined that the department which had five engines really only needed four.
Dowd also asked if there was a “real number” associated with the increased insurance rates – It is often stated that removal of the station would result in higher rates. No one in attendance was able to quantify the possible rate change. Sondag stated that staff has in the past attempted to get that information but that it was not available.

The committee decided to tour the Police Department Thursday May 2 at 3:00pm.

- E. Project Update by Project Manager – Horton stated that the RFP was out for architect services. He will be hosting site visits for those who are interested. Horton does not anticipate that more time will be given to respond, so the date of May 14 is still the target. Horton explained that the committee would review the responses and may interview a couple of firms if necessary. Horton has toured all facilities and is more knowledgeable of the needs. He remains reasonably comfortable that the dollars budgeted will suffice for the work. However he cautioned the committee that rarely, if ever, are first draft numbers at or lower than the budgeted number. The committee will become more active after the May 14 meeting when they will begin discussions of with the architect.

Phillips asked if there were savings to bidding out the architectural service for each building. Horton said that there would not be significant savings and that there is desire to have one architect for consistency of design. There was much discussion regarding the need to pick the right people we will be working with.

- F. Financial update - John O'Connor presented the committee with draft bond payment schedules – one of bonding the entire project with one bond and the second by splitting the bond equally into two. Sondag stated that due to the timing and frequency of bond availability the Town could bond in 2013 and 2014. The Committee then discussed the best way to split the total project over the two years. O'Connor stated that he had spoken with representatives of the Bond Bank and that he was told that the Town should only borrow what is needed. Dowd suggested looking at splitting the bond with the first bond being a lesser amount for a shorter period. There was discussion on how the various scenarios would impact the tax rates. Sondag stated that prior to the next meeting Horton could firm up numbers on what might be needed to cover costs. O'Connor would take those numbers and prepare several spreadsheets on possible bonding schedules.

The Committee then discussed programming and space needs. Gould stated that he is interested in making sure that prior to the architect coming on board the committee has reviewed the programming and space needs. This topic will be taken up at the next meeting.

Staff will review the programming sheet for next week.

- G. Lester Humphreys, Chair of the Energy Committee, stated that he wanted to make sure that the Committee was looking at energy efficiencies as it designed the building. Horton stated that the best dollars on energy efficiency came from insulation. Horton stated that he has worked on various projects and is very familiar with the pay-backs on a variety of energy efficiency items.
- H. Adjourn Phillips moved to adjourn and Gould seconded the motion.

Next Meeting is May 2 at 4:00pm