

Police-Fire Facility Committee
Thursday, May 2, 2013, 4:00pm
Hanna Cosman Room

Committee Members: Phillip Chapman, Kathy Dowd, David Emery, Sr, Tony Farnum, Robin Sweetapple, Steve Phillips, Eli Gould

Absent: Prudence MacKinney, John Allen, Selectboard

Staff and Others Present Barb Sondag, Steve Horton, John O'Connor, Mike Bucossi, Gene Wrinn, Peter Lynch, Michael Fitzgerald, Patrick Moreland, John Wilmerding, Paul Cameron, David Schoales

- A. Sondag confirmed meeting was warned
- B. Approve Minutes – Dowd moved to accept the minutes with one correction (elimination of last sentence under F.) Motion was seconded by Chapman. Minutes were approved.
- C. Wrap-up from Site Reviews – Philips stated that it was apparent that the existing police facilities are not adequate. Philips stated that cutting back on the project and/or doing something very different is not likely and he is surprised the Town is able to retain employees. Chapman was amazed they do the good job they do in these facilities. Sweetapple stated that she believed that was true of all facilities and wanted to make sure that health and safety matters are addressed. Tour members were Chapman, Philips and Sweetapple. Sweetapple asked how the committee might convey the current conditions to the towns people. Chapman stated that he has a dream of whittling a little off the price and that will make some citizens happy and then we must move forward. Dowd suggested that if we are able to stay at the same price level and get more for our money then that is the same. Emery stated that he is not sure how to engage the towns people and get them in to the facilities. Farnum was disappointed that the Police and Fire had two open houses prior to Town Meeting and very few people came. Wilmerding suggested that if the Committee invited people to attend the open house more may attend. Philips stated that he does not believe Towns people are unaware of the need. The bond vote was overwhelming in favor and the second vote at the most recent Town Meeting was about how to pay for the project. Philips stated that we either needed to reduce the cost, reduce operating or find additional sources of revenue.
- D. Project Update by Project Manager – Horton stated that while the committee site reviews are complete, however there will be one more on site visit on May 6 to allow the architects to come along at 1:00 for police 2:00 for Central and 3:00 for West Brattleboro. There are approximately 30 inquiries into the RFP and he believes this will increase the competition and pricing. Horton suggested that close off of additional information will be May 11. There will be one addendum that Horton will be sending to the prospective bidders. Proposals are due on May 14. Horton suggested that he and the Town Managers office review the proposals and narrow it down to three for the Committee.

Horton is continuing to work with the two departments on programming needs and that process is going well. Program assessment will be performed at least three times during this process. Horton also has reviewed the budget looking for weaknesses and strengths. At this point Emery asked a follow-up question on Horton's suggestion regarding proposal review. Horton stated that we could do a preliminary spreadsheet analysis of all the firms and then bring the top 3-5 proposals back to the committee for review of the proposals. An alternative is that it be narrowed down to 3-5 and have the Committee interview those top choices. All the proposals will be ranked by the criteria established in the RFP. Ultimately the Committee will make a recommendation to the Selectboard.

Sweetapple asked for volunteers to serve on a sub-committee to review all the proposals. Sweetapple, Dowd, Gould volunteered. Sondag suggested that the subcommittee meet on May 14, report back to the full committee with rankings of the proposals on May 23. At this time the full committee will discuss the proposals and decide whether to interview firms or move forward with a recommendation. If interviews are required they will be held between May 28 and June 7. The committee will make a recommendation to the Selectboard on June 18.

Philips moved to create a subcommittee of Horton, Fire Chief Bucossi, Police Chief Wrinn, Town Manager Sondag, Sweetapple, Gould, and Dowd to review bids at opening to select the best 2-3 proposals and make a recommendation of those to the full committee on May 23. Emery seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- E. Finances – *bonding* O'Connor ran several scenarios and presented three scenarios to the Committee. O'Connor reviewed the three scenarios – splitting the bond in two at 20 years each. Splitting the bond in two with the first bond at 15 years and the second at 20 years. The third scenario was to split the bond with the first year bond at 10 years and the second bond at 20 years. O'Connor also discussed the impact on the annual tax rate with each scenario.

The scenario with the 10/20 year payback resulted in the lowest total cost, but had the highest impact on the tax rate in the first 5-7 years. The scenario with 15/20 year payback resulted in a slightly higher overall cost, but had less impact on the tax rate in the first 5-7 years. The third scenario 20/20 had the highest overall total cost, but had the smallest impact on the tax rate during the first 5-7 years.

Sondag stated that staff was attempting to balance the impact of total bond costs with annual tax rate increases. The Committee asked additional questions of O'Connor regarding the three scenarios.

Emery suggested that the Committee recommend to the Selectboard page 2 (15/20 year split). Dowd suggested she could agree with that if it was made clear to the Selectboard that the overall cost of the bond was less than the option on page 1, which would save approximately \$1,050,000.

Philips moved to support staff recommendation of option 2 splitting the bonding \$5M over 15 years and the balance over 20 years with the goal of limiting the tax hit in any one year while

still saving approximately \$500,000 and that the Selectboard know that the Committee did review the scenario with the least overall bond cost but made a decision based on sensitivity to the tax rates. Emery seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- F. Programming and Space review- Sondag stated that staff had prepared overall square footage comparisons for the committee but that detailed program square footage would be coming in the next meeting. Sondag passed out a document containing overall square footage.

Gould passed out a document he created that reviewed the architectural design. Gould explained that this exercise was to start talking about programming and square footage before the architect was on board. Gould's document had five items which reviewed with the Committee.

Gould suggested that the building curve as proposed added costs that were not necessary. And this curve did not meet the historical building design which is a square. Gould suggested that removing the curve would reduce the cost by approximately \$100,000.

Dispatch space allocation is increased and a reduction of that space would result in savings on all three floors.

Gould also stated that having as much glass on the south side was not efficient and could add energy costs.

- G. Adjourn - Motion by Dowd to adjourn, second by Phillips.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:38pm

Next Meeting is May 9 at 4:00pm