

Town of Farmington
Board of Selectmen – Public Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 22, 2015
Selectmen’s Chambers
356 Main Street

Town of Farmington
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Monday, February 22, 2016

Board Members Present:

Charlie King, Chairman
Paula Proulx, Vice Chairman
Jim Horgan
Neil Johnson

Others Present:

Town Administrator Arthur Capello
Police Chief Jay Drury
Fire Chief James Reinert
Fenton Groen, Groen Builders
Farmington residents

1). Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance:

Chairman King called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. at the Old Town Hall. All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

2). Second Public Hearing on Public Safety Building Bond:

Fenton Groen of Groen Builders presented an illustration of the proposed building and the conceptual floor plan and gave a brief description of the process thus far. He said his company received a request for proposal last March; they were awarded the bid in May 2015 and have been working with the board, Town Administrator and the Police and Fire Chiefs through each phase of the process. He outlined reasons why the Route 153 site was chosen, some of the energy efficient materials to be used in the construction of the building, expected savings and the interior/exterior changes requested by the town. The estimated project cost was determined in December and totals approx. \$2.363 million he said.

Chairman King then opened the hearing to public comment/questions at 6:15 p.m.

Residents expressed concerns about moving the Police and Fire Depts. out of the downtown area as they felt there are more problems and danger of fire in that area than in the rest of the town. Selectmen said the present downtown location has drainage issues, logistical problems with the demo and rebuild, DES would require a detention pond, reduced parking, the need to buy additional property, working with new is cheaper than trying to re-work with old and the potential to sell the existing site.

Why are we using some of the Sarah Greenfield property? The proposed location for the new building is next to the Farmington Children’s Center and across the street from the garage area of the Farmington Country Club. The town-owned parcel is not part of the Sarah Greenfield Business Park and was not designated for any particular purpose.

What about the Middle School which will be unused? The Middle School will not be become unused with the withdrawal of the Middleton students. Four classrooms will be freed up and the School Board is looking at possibly using that space as the new SAU office.

Some residents expressed concerns about the tax impact of the project. Discussion included the project would result in a 53 cent increase starting in 2017, the town portion of the tax rate is up 3 cents, over the last 11 years the town portion is up 77 cents while the school portion has gone from \$5.00 to \$11.00 and the town doesn’t have any control over the

school budget as the school district operates under SB2.

Selectmen also cited other efforts to bring down project costs and stabilize the tax rate including a planned warrant article for 2017 to use leftover funds from the project to buy down the bond, using remaining undesignated general fund money to buy down the tax rate, current bonds start falling off the books starting in 2017, sell the existing property and buy down the bond with the proceeds, repurpose the current Capital Reserve Fund to buy equipment and use as a contingency fund if needed.

What was the vote of the former Public Safety Building Committee?

Chairman King said the decision to move forward with the current proposal was made by a vote of Selectmen not by a formed committee. Vice Chairman Proulx added that four years ago the original committee was made up of the general public and dept. heads and their proposal for a new Public Safety Building totaled more than \$4 million. King said that amount was deemed unreasonable and the board at that time decided not to move forward with that plan.

A former member of the Public Safety Building Committee said 75% of the committee was made up of life- long residents who favored keeping the Police and Fire Stations in the downtown area. After six months of investigating the issues the vote was to recommend building a new facility at the Route 153 location. He cited unsafe conditions getting apparatus out of the downtown area, the need to install light systems at the Route 75 and Central Street intersections, building codes and OSHA requirements not in existence when the current buildings were built, lack of space to expand, lack of room to properly perform functions and the lack of proper ventilation as reasons for the vote. He suggested the town not put a band-aid on a problem needing a major operation to fix.

Additional discussion included whether the current buildings should be condemned, the response time from the proposed new location, paying for other road/infrastructure needs, the location of the geographical center of town, installation of a traffic signal at the site and attracting business to town.

Police Chief Jay Drury said at the current location it is difficult for officers responding to a call to get out of the station. He said he encourages officers to leave the station via Winter Street as there have been five cruiser involved accidents trying to see past the Cumberland Farms store. It will be easier for emergency vehicles to get out of the lot at the new location he said. He added that space is at a premium at the existing location and said the only way to expand would be to build up.

Fire Chief James Reinert said his dept. also has issues with obstructed views and noted it can be a nightmare getting out of the existing fire station during commute times.

What will happen to the abandoned buildings? Chairman King said the Police Station is part of a public building and can't be sold. Some of the space there is not readily usable but one suggestion is to use it for non-profit meeting space. Chief Drury added other possible uses would be for a teen center as originally intended or as a Senior Center.

Chairman King said the Fire Station is in a desirable location for business with available parking. There has been some preliminary interest in purchasing the parcel and we should carefully consider the allowed uses there he said.

We didn't have a plan or funds in 1991(to build/repair buildings) are we planning now? We have a Capital Improvement Plan which contains information on departmental capital purchases for the next 6 years with a schedule for setting aside money to fund the purchases.

Do we plan to apply for Emergency Management construction grants? Chief Reinert said he plans to apply for grants but the project must be approved by voters before a grant application is submitted.

Chief Drury and Chief Reinert then invited residents to tour the facilities and see the conditions at the current stations. There were no other comments and Chairman King closed the public hearing at 7:33 p.m.

Motion: (King, second Johnson) to take a five minute recess passed 4-0 at 7:34 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 7:52 p.m.

3).Public Input: None.

4).Review of Minutes:

Feb. 8, 2016- Public Session- Page 3, #6- Crushing and Screening- add the word "be" to read "may be due to lack of guidance...". add the bid totals for Merrill Construction and Custom Construction.

Line Striping- add "per foot" to read "one-half cent per foot difference..."

Motion: (Johnson, second Proulx) to approve as amended passed 4-0.

Feb. 15, 2016- Public Session-

Motion: (Johnson, second Horgan) to approve as written passed 4-0.

Feb. 15, 2016- Non-Public Session

Motion: (Johnson, second Horgan) to approve as written passed 4-0.

5). Dumpster Bids:

Capello told the board bids were received from Waste Management and Casella Waste and Recycling Services regarding dumpsters and pickup services at the Old town Hall, Fire Dept. and Highway Dept. Discussion included a dumpster is to be placed behind the CAP Center building, getting pickups for three dumpsters for the cost of two with Waste Management, Casella bid \$257.66 for three dumpsters, pickups and a sustainability fee, Waste Management bid \$194.36 for three dumpsters and pickups, comparing apples to apples in contract terms, the need to renegotiate the current contract if the bid is awarded to Waste Management, the current cost for the dumpster at the highway garage is too high and any potential problems with accessibility of the dumpsters.

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to award the bid to Waste Management passed 4-0.

6). Contracts:

A). Strafford Regional Planning Commission- Capello told the board they had previously approved contracting with the Commission to receive planning services by a Regional Planner and budgeted for the payment of services but neglected to sign the agreement.

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the contract as previously approved by Selectmen passed 4-0.

B). Stantec Consulting Services- Capello said Fay, Spofford & Thorndike, Inc. (FST) was acquired by Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. and requested the board's approval to assign the present contract with FST to Stantec. Selectmen requested Capello review the contract with the new company line by line to determine if the language is the same as the FST agreement and to investigate the new company to provide some background information to the board.

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to table the matter passed 4-0.

C). CMA Engineers- Selectmen received copies of a request to approve an amendment to the engineering services agreement associated with the post closure and air/water quality monitoring at the landfill. Capello said the cost increase from \$20,000 to \$25,000 is primarily due to the groundwater quality report that is due to be completed and filed this year. Discussion included the groundwater management permit needs to be renewed, whose responsibility it is to file for the permit, putting the groundwater monitoring service out to bid to save money and finish this contract and bid it next year.

Motion: (King, second Johnson) to table the matter to allow the Town Administrator to obtain more information passed 4-0.

D). Eastern Analytical, Inc. - The board also received a quote for water/air sampling and analysis. Discussion included the company quote is \$11,013.20, EAI's cost is cheaper than analysis done by the state and what does the \$5,000 charge for the engineer cover. Capello will clarify the terms of the agreement.

7). Non-Public Session A:

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3 II (c) passed 4-0 by a roll call vote (King, Proulx, Horgan, Johnson- yes) at 8:15 p.m.

Motion: (King, second Johnson) to come out of non-public session passed 4-0 at 9:30 p.m.

Motion: (King, second Johnson) to seal the minutes until the review is complete passed 4-0.

Respectively submitted
Kathleen Magoon
Recording Secretary

Charlie King

Paula Proulx

Neil Johnson

James Horgan