

**Town of Farmington**  
*Board of Selectmen – Public Meeting Minutes*  
**Monday, January 25, 2016**  
**Selectmen’s Chambers**  
**356 Main Street**

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Town of Farmington

Board of Selectmen Meeting

Monday, January 25, 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, Dave Groen, Jeff Greenhouse, Groen Builders

Approx. 22 residents

1). Non-Public Session A:

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3 II (b) passed 4-0 by a roll call vote (King, Proulx, Horgan, Johnson- yes) at 5:30 p.m.

Motion: (King, second Johnson) to come out of non-public session passed 4-0 at 5:50 p.m.

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

2). Non-Public Session B:

Motion: (King, second Johnson) to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3 II (b) passed 4-0 by a roll call vote (King, Proulx, Horgan, Johnson- yes) at 5:50 p.m.

Motion: (King, second Johnson) to come out of non-public session passed 4-0 at 5:55 p.m.

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

3). Non-Public Session C:

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3 II (b) passed 4-0 by a roll call vote (King, Proulx, Horgan, Johnson – yes) at 5:55 p.m.

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to come out of non-public session passed 4-0 at 6:04 p.m.

4). Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance:

Chairman King called the public meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

5). Public Hearing Regarding the Public Safety Building Bond:

Chairman King said the proposed bond for the Public Safety Building will be brought forth to Town Meeting for voter approval. Town Administrator Capello began by saying the estimated total for the bond amount is \$2.363 million which would increase the tax rate by 54 cents starting in 2017 with no tax impact in 2016. Chairman King said the figure is based on a 15 year note with principal and interest. He noted that in 2016 through 2019 a bond will end each year and “fall off” the tax rate. By 2019 this will result in about \$130,000 coming off the tax rate which amounts to about a 25 cent reduction in the rate he said. Chairman King then asked for a presentation by the builders to be followed by public comment.

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to open the Public Hearing passed 4-0 at 6:08 p.m.

Fenton Groen of told the audience that last year the company received notice of a RFP to construct a Public Safety Building. They were provided with a conceptual layout of the building which will be a super energy efficient building with 19,000 sq. ft. at about \$1.23 a sq. ft. The building was engineered to give a lot of value without a lot of frills and have a durable concrete shell that will serve the town well for many years. It will be a very safe building that could be used as a triage building in case of a disaster or emergency he said. He then turned the presentation over to Dave Groen.

Dave Groen said they received a conceptual floor plan and were told there was interest in a type of building similar to one constructed in Madbury. He said the team tried to design something to meet the functions required, be cost effective, visually appealing while keeping the overall shape of the building as simple as possible. He noted the front of the building is dressed up a bit with some different siding types and architectural millwork but other than the “gingerbread” it is a pretty basic building. The shell of the building will be constructed of ICF (Insulated Concrete Forms) which are two pieces of high-density Styrofoam tied together with plastic webs which are stacked on top of one another like Lego blocks. The door and window openings are cut out, reinforcement bars are placed inside the blocks and then the blocks are filled with concrete. This makes for an incredibly efficient, quiet and secure structure that has become very popular in the commercial industry. The company has used this product for over 15 years in everything from custom homes to fire stations and they feel it is the right product for this project he said.

Fenton Groen said the rooms and the lounge on second floor of the building will be finished but bathrooms will be roughed in and a large storage area in the front portion of the second floor will also be unfinished. All of the exterior walls will be constructed with ICF right up to the roof line.

Jeff Greenhouse said he has discussed several issues with both the Fire and Police Chiefs. One issue is to provide some protection to the front of the building. They decided they would use bullet resistant glass on the areas that are accessible from the front sidewalk and will reuse the bullet resistant glass from the present building if possible. Fenton Groen added bullet proof glass is \$22,000 while bullet resistant glass is \$7,500.

Residents then asked the following questions:

Will the building be set up for radiant heat? The apparatus bays will have radiant heat but the office areas will not. The bay area could be set at 60 degrees and be comfortable he said.

What materials will be used for the exterior walls? The materials will include cultured stone, vinyl siding clapboards, cedar gables, p.v.c. for the trim and millwork. There will be no exposed wood and the surfaces will be maintenance free.

What material will be used for the roof? Asphalt shingles will be used. It would be a lot more expensive to cover a roof this size with metal roofing which would also require snow stops to stop the snow from sheeting off the roof.

What is the depth of the bays front to back? Approx. 77 ft. which will allow double stacking of apparatus.

How is it super energy efficient? Groen said in 2004 the company became Energy Star rated and started using all Energy Star materials and became listed in the top 10 % for energy efficiency. We have a 40% rating which means a structure would use about 40% less than a NH Energy Code rated building Groen said.

What will it take to heat this new building? Groen said an actual calculation hasn't been done but estimated it would be about 50% of what it would cost to heat a comparable sized building. We make sure everything is well insulated and seal all the penetrations with foam and are very careful about leakage because leakage is more costly than what goes through the flat insulated areas he said.

Will this building house all of the Police, Fire and Ambulance equipment? Chief Reinert said the all of the apparatus will fit in the new building with some room for growth. Right now we are housing 2 vehicles at the highway garage and this will fit our needs he said. Chief Drury said the Sally port will house 2 cruisers plus some storage area which will keep them out of the weather. It will also afford some privacy when we are transporting a prisoner and can close the door for added security. There are future plans for a holding cell and the area is included on the plan he said.

How will the new location affect response time? Chief Drury said it is easier to respond into the downtown than it is to get out of the downtown especially with where the station is currently located and they have to try to get out down Civic Street or Winter Street. It will be much easier and safer getting out at the new location than where we are now he said.

Where is the proposed location for the new building? On Route 153 on town owned property located next to the Farmington Children's Center and across from the garage building at the Farmington Country Club.

What about water and sewer? The water connection is on the same side of the road as the proposed building site and the septic system will be installed on site. A portion of the lot is a former gravel pit so the leach capacity is very high.

What happens to the existing buildings if you move out of the downtown? Chairman King said he was originally opposed to moving out of the downtown buildings but learned it would cost \$250,000 to \$500,000 to renovate the existing building, it would require additional land purchase and it would be very tight to make it work there. What will happen after they move has yet to be decided by the board.

Has the existing Fire station been entirely condemned? The Annex building has been designated to be torn down but the main Fire Dept. building has not been condemned and has not been slated for demolition.

If the Fire Station was sold, would the new owner have code issues? Chairman King said the new owner may completely redevelop the lot and that he was not implying the building is usable as is as that would be determined by the Building Inspector depending on what the owner wanted to use it for.

When the building was built the town was given a 99 year lease. Why put this in motion if we are nowhere near the end of 99 years? The town owns the property outright. About 2 years ago the Firemen's Association turned over all assets to the town Chief Reinert said.

Why do we need a new Fire Station? Chief Reinert said the current station doesn't fit our needs and the amount of money to upgrade it to give it another 20 years is cost prohibitive. We could put half a million dollars in it to bring it up to code and it still won't be big enough and still won't fit our needs he said.

Will inflation affect the tax rate? The bond is a fixed rate and decreases the effect on the tax rate every year (54 cents the first year then decreasing 1 cent each year) for five years.

Will there be a Clerk of the Works? No. There will be outside testing firm for testing the concrete pours.

Why was the current building allowed to become in a state of disrepair? Why wasn't money budgeted to maintain it over the last 20 years and how do we know we won't be doing this again in 20 years? Chief Reinert said he has not been Chief over the last 20 years, only since August. He said as long as he is Chief everything will be fixed/maintained and the building will be taken care of. He said the previous administration let things go and if Selectmen don't know what is going on at the station you can't fault them. Chairman King said the original station was built by volunteers not by the town. When the town took over 10 or 12 years ago a lot of these issues were already there. The town was grateful to receive it from the volunteers but there are several issues that are very expensive to correct by today's standards. Vice Chairman Proulx added that the board does put money in the budget every year for maintenance and repairs.

What is the actual annual bond payment? The first year payment for the 15 year bond is \$196,000.

Is the new building designed to need a lot less maintenance than the stick built building we have now? Groen said the building is designed to be low maintenance inside and out. The existing fire station was built without a building code so the space in the second floor doesn't meet code for floor strength. The structure of the walls and the concrete doesn't meet building code. If you do more than 50% improvements to a building then everything must be brought up to current codes and the codes have changed dramatically. Selectman Johnson said it's about \$50,000 for maintenance and utility costs for the Police and Fire Stations. Maintenance wouldn't be required on the new building for the first few years and the energy savings would cut that amount in half which would go another 11 cents against the bond payment he said.

Has the board considered writing the warrant article to allow the option of using a bond or a commercial loan so that the board can research which is a better deal for the town? Chairman King said they have not looked into long term commercial loans or the issue of pre-payment penalties on the bond. He said commercial loans typically only lock in the interest rate for five to seven years and then you are taking your chances on the market. He added it was a good suggestion to write the article to allow the town more options for financing the project.

Would the board consider a warrant article to create a special revenue account to use some of the ambulance revenues to fund the construction, maintenance and furnishing of the new building? Selectman Johnson said the board has discussed using those funds but have not targeted the money to any specific use. There are a number of options such as funding fire equipment, SCUBA replacements or funding existing Capital Reserve funds. Capello said there is currently a warrant article to set aside \$25,000 of those funds for Ambulance Capital Reserve Fund for ambulance replacement.

Why aren't we using the \$215,000 in the Public Safety Building Capital Reserve Fund to lower the bond amount and fund the rest through taxation? The money is being used for outfitting the building and as a contingency fund for unforeseen construction issues. If there is money left over from the fund at the end of the project it will be applied to the bond amount. Capello said the outfitting and furnishing of the building would not be included in the bond so revenue is needed for those purchases.

Was the warrant article for the existing Public Safety Building Capital Reserve Fund worded to outfit and/or construct the building? Capello said he would have to check the article to provide an answer. Vice Chairman Proulx said there is

time to submit a warrant article to change the purpose of the fund if necessary and to include that any funds left over they will be used to buy down the bond amount.

If we are putting approx. 10% of the ambulance revenue towards replacement of ambulances, what are we doing with the other 90% of those funds to save for the future? Capello said the board hasn't proposed anything for the remaining 90%. The money now goes into the general fund to offset the tax rate. Vice Chairman Proulx said if more of the ambulance revenues is used to fund the Capital Reserve Fund then that revenue that is used to pay expenses or offset taxes will have to come from somewhere else.

How many ambulance calls to other towns do we have? Chief Reinert said the number of calls varies and every call is billed for the call. He said the dept. responded to 1450 calls last year and about 10% of the calls are outside of town.

What will the tax burden be? Proulx said the existing bonds liabilities will drop off over the next few years and the operation of the town is kept as close to a zero increase as possible but we can't control the school side of the budget. Capello said the proposed town operating budget including the warrant articles would increase by \$14,000 which is about 4 cents on the tax rate.

Does the building have to be that awesome looking to save taxpayers some money? Fenton Groen said there would not be an appreciable difference by making it a very plain looking building. If the vinyl siding and trim were removed the difference would only be a few 10's of thousands of dollars. They could make one long building with one long flat roof to cut more cost but the pitch helps with the snow load and the building being attractive is an asset for the town. The cost of making the building attractive is not a big percentage of the cost to build it as the shell remains the same he said.

Discussion included it is time to make an investment in the town if we want Farmington to grow, it's worth making the building attractive if it helps attract business to town, have a plan to address the empty Police and Fire Station buildings, the future of the town is Route 11 and putting the Public Safety Building close to Route 11 is advantageous to attracting new business.

Additional discussion included thanks to the volunteers that built the original fire station, using the training room in the new building for employee and public training classes, generate involvement and community pride in the building through fundraising events, fund the Emergency Command Center in the new building with a matching grant, a better work environment will boost morale of employees and increase a sense of professionalism to the public, the Farmington FD is the busiest non full time dept. in the state and it's throwing good money after bad to try to maintain something after its outlived its use.

What is wrong with the existing Fire Station? Chief Reinert said there is a long list of issues including not enough space to house apparatus, high heating and electricity costs, no sprinkler system, no fire alarm system, the exhaust system needs replacement, a major bow in the second floor, not enough operations space, structural issues with the walls, leaks in the roof, the soffits are rotted and the drain in the apparatus bay drains to the outside of the building.

What is wrong with the Police Station? Chief Drury said the building was originally designed to be a youth center, cracks in the walls, problems with the air conditioning units and furnace, lack of parking, roof problems, lack of heat or uneven heating, lack of space for evidence, locker room flooding, ladies restroom is used for a female locker room, lack of space for files and being unable to separate a defendant from the victim if they are there at the same time.

Will a new building change the fire rating on the fire insurance? Chief Reinert said the rating is based more on apparatus and response time than the building itself and the way the rate is scored has changed. He is working on ways to improve the town's rating he said.

Chairman King said work on this project started about 3 years ago with a subcommittee to investigate the construction of a new Public Safety Building. They came up with some great ideas but with a \$4.3 million price tag. The board said

wouldn't work and didn't bring it to the community. The board spent another year back at the drawing board to try to get a reasonable plan he said.

Will there be a flashing safety light on Route 153? The board has talked about access in and out of the site but that is a state highway so it is up to the state to determine what type of light may go there.

Are the site work costs included in the \$2.363 million cost? All estimated costs are included in the price.

Do we need a deceleration lane on Route 153? The builder has not had that conversation with the state.

If the project is approved in March what is the proposed construction start date and how long will it take to complete the building? After voter approval, there will be approx. 6 weeks to complete the agreements and paperwork, another 4 weeks to complete the bidding process with the subcontractors and 8 months of construction. Occupancy is expected by Jan. 31, 2017.

There were no other questions from the audience. Capello said the town attorney recommended the board hold an additional public hearing due to the conflict with the Donald Trump campaign event at the high school. He recommended the board hold the hearing on Feb. 22 at 6 p.m. The location is yet to be determined.

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to hold a new public hearing on Feb. 22 passed unanimously.

Chairman King then closed the public hearing at 7:50 p.m.

Motion: (King, second Horgan) for a five minute recess passed unanimously at 7:55 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:03 p.m.

#### 6). Review of Minutes:

Jan. 11, 2016 – Public Session

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

Jan. 11, 2016- Non-Public Sessions A through E

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

Jan. 11, 2016-Non-Public Session F- Fifth sentence, change "was considering" to "implied".

Motion: (Johnson, second King) to unseal the minutes of Jan.11, 2016, Non-Public Session F and accept the amendment to line 5 changing "was considering" to "implied" passed 4-0.

#### 7). Public Input:

Capello said he wished to give the highest compliment we can give to the Police and Fire Depts. for their coordination and abilities to allow Farmington to host the Presidential campaign event. They all worked a lot of hours on very short notice and worked with a lot of outside agencies to make sure the event went off as safely as it could for the residents. A letter of recognition for their efforts is forthcoming he said.

#### 8). Decision on '79 General Military Trucks:

Capello said he reposted the bids for the trucks instructing bidders to send their bids to him in a sealed envelope or by e-mail. Two bids were received which were given to the board for review. The first bid was from Dan Coleman for a total of \$9,700 for the two vehicles. The second bid was from Keith Draper for a total of \$5,800 for the two vehicles.

The bidders met all of the updated bid requirements he said. Mr. Draper submitted a bid the last time that the board rejected. His new bid is lower because he misquoted the shipping costs for the vehicles.

Motion: (Johnson, second King) to accept Dan Coleman's bid for \$9,700 passed 4-0.

Capello will work out reasonable conditions for payment and pick-up of the vehicles with Mr. Coleman.

9). Town Administrator's Report:

A). Public Thank You-Capello thanked the residents who attended the Public Hearing saying it was well attended and very informative. It will be re-broadcast on the local cable access channel but the board also decided to hold a second public hearing on Feb. 22 at 6 p.m. with the location to be decided.

B). Employee Handbook- The board was given copies of the existing handbook with suggested revisions from the Town Administrator. He asked Selectmen to review it and determine what revisions should be made for discussion at the next meeting. He will then send the draft revision to town counsel for review.

C). Ambulance Billing Write-offs- Capello said the proposed total amount of the write-offs is \$363,300.15. He said the invoices have gone through the collection agency process and they have done everything they can do without patient Social Security numbers. Discussion included why write off a bill for a patient who still lives at the listed Farmington address, the town no longer attempts to make collections, no response to letters or phone calls, some patients listed may be deceased, is the town listed as a debtor in bankruptcy cases, there is no staff to research these issues, the Fire Dept. can request Social Security numbers but the patient can refuse to give them, ways to track down information and who will do it, possibility of placing a lien on the patient's property, some people may not remember they still owe the bill and mutual aid towns are not responsible for their resident's bills.

Chairman King said he would like to give the board time to consider what actions could be taken and asked to have the Fire Chief come before the board to further discuss the matter. Capello asked Selectmen to review the list and make any changes or corrections they are aware of.

D). Public Works Director and Deputy Director Job Descriptions- Capello told the board that he and Public Works Director Dale Sprague worked on his job description and plan to develop the job description for the new Deputy Director position. He asked if the board wished him to wait until both descriptions were complete before posting the ad for the Deputy Director position or post it now. He said he could get enough information in a posting to advertise the opening and continue to complete the description in the meantime. Selectmen requested he post the opening as soon as possible.

Selectman Johnson asked if DPW Director Sprague meets the current licensing and certification requirements listed in the job description. Capello said Sprague does not have a civil engineer's degree but the description says the degree is preferred but is not required. Johnson said he did not want to create a description with requirements the current Director does not meet.

E). Presidential Campaign Visit Expenses- Chairman King said there was discussion about expenses incurred by the town due to Donald Trump's campaign stop at the high school. He said Capello prepared an estimate of the costs already incurred for preparations for the event and brought it to the board for possible action. Capello gave the board a breakdown of expenses incurred so far totaling \$8,700 but asked the board to word the town's request for reimbursement without a figure as the total amount of expenses which is unknown at this time,

Motion: (Johnson, second Proulx) to bill the Trump campaign for the town's expenses relating to his Presidential campaign appearance passed 3-1(King opposed). Chairman King said he was opposed to seeking reimbursement because he did not feel any presidential candidate should be charged as it brings a lot of positive press for the community. Even though there is some cost to it, it is a big benefit where we are always getting bad press he said.

Selectman Horgan noted that the motion could be reconsidered when the Town Administrator brings the final figure to the board.

F).Map of Town Owned Parcel- Capello gave the board copies of the map of the parcel of land located behind the former Davidson manufacturing company building as requested at the previous meeting. Discussion included putting the lot in conservation in memory of Selectman Gerry McCarthy, an underground water storage tank is located there, the Metal Farm abuts the lot, the parcel contains 26 acres of land, an easement would allow the town access to the tank, locations of access to the property, the parcel was put up for auction last year but remained unsold, look at protection of the tank and for any other areas of concern. Selectman Horgan said that he and Conservation Commission Chairman Dave Connolly plan to walk the site and he will report his findings following the site walk.

G).Budget Committee Presentation- Capello told Selectmen the town budget presentation to the Budget Committee is scheduled for Wednesday night at 7 p.m. if any of the board wishes to attend. The Public Hearing on the town budget will be held on Feb. 9 at the Municipal Office Building he said.

H).Deliberative Session- Selectman Johnson said the School District Deliberative Session will be held on Saturday, Jan. 30 at 9 a.m. at the high school. The school budget as proposed could result in \$1.59 increase in taxes, an additional 22 cents for the Para contract, a five cent increase for a mini bus for a total \$1.86 increase in the tax rate. Plus there is a potential addition of \$324,000 to the budget for the teachers' health insurance plan which would be an additional 73 cents to the tax rate. He said this could result in approx. \$2.50 increase to the tax rate and urged residents to attend the meeting no matter which side they are on and make their opinions known.

I). Status of Rec. Bus Purchase- Capello said he received an e-mail stating the bus has been repaired as requested by the town and is ready to be delivered for the final inspection. He said a delivery time and date has not been scheduled.

J). Public Safety Building Presentations - Capello said the Police and Fire Chiefs will prepare a presentation on the Public Safety Building for town meeting. Selectmen requested some information about the presentation before the annual meeting. Groen Builders will attend the second Public Hearing and the Town Meeting and will also make a presentation he said. Capello added he will look into the details of a commercial loan for the Public Safety Building and if there is a pre-payment penalty for the bond as discussed earlier in the meeting.

K).Easements for Christmas light poles- Vice Chairman Proulx asked for the status of the easements that needed to be resigned. Capello said he received the corrected easements but said the matter was not a priority as no more poles would be installed until spring. There are six easements that need to be re-signed because of small errors such as not putting Jr. in their signature. Proulx said the motion made by the board was to sign the easements before the poles were put in and requested the remaining easements be signed so they don't get overlooked. Capello said he will visit the property owners to obtain the necessary signatures.

10). Next Meeting: Monday, Feb. 1, 2016 at 6 p.m. in the Selectmen's Chambers.

11). Adjournment:

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to adjourn the meeting passed 4-0 at 8:50 p.m.

Respectively submitted

Kathleen Magoon, Recording Secretary

Charlie King

Paula Proulx

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Neil Johnson

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James Horgan