

OLD SAYBROOK POLICE BUILDING COMMITTEE
Special Meeting
July 29, 2013
MINUTES

A special meeting of the Old Saybrook Police Building Committee was held on Monday, July 29, 2013, at the Old Saybrook Town Hall.

Present: Committee Chairman Dan Moran and Committee Members Ben Akin, Jerry Brophy, Patrick Maher, John O'Brien, Vito Savino, Lee Sparaco and David Wight. Also present were First Selectman Carl Fortuna, Police Chief Michael Spera and Police Commission Chairman Burnham.

I. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Attendance

Committee Chairman Moran called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

Committee Chairman Moran led the Building Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Recording Clerk took attendance for the meeting. Committee Member Hanover was not present.

II. Update from the First Selectman

First Selectman Fortuna announced that the contract with Downes has been signed by both parties.

III. Meeting Minute Approval

a. July 17, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes

Committee Member Brophy made a motion to approve the July 17, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes. Committee Chairman Moran seconded the motion. The motion to approve the July 17, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes passed with a vote of 8 in favor and 0 against.

IV. Downes Contract

See Item II.

V. Budget Update

Downes Summary:

Ed Moriarty presented an updated budget and possible ways to decrease the cost. The Soft Cost and cost of the storage building is the same but the cost of the Police Department has increased by \$203,991. Ed distributed a copy of the new budget with a line item comparison to the previous budget. The cost of the electrical increased by \$78,000 because of items identified at the "technology" meeting held at the PD during the previous week (\$45,000 for the telephone system, \$13,000 for fiber from the Tower to the PD and \$20,000 for server upgrades). This additional cost was offset by savings in the cost of the roofing but the site cost based now upon actual budgets increased by \$174,866. This will be decreased by \$40,000 based upon discussions with a local site contractor. After taking all changes into account the Project cost stands at \$10,788,000.

Two additional cost items were priced as add alternates rather than adding them to the budgets. The two items were adding a Fiber Loop in the existing building at a cost of \$112,000 and providing two UPS systems rather than one at an increase of \$23,520. Chief Spera felt these items were both necessary and should not be considered alternates. After discussing the pros and cons it was agreed the 2nd UPS was required to provide redundancy to prevent a loss of communications if the first UPS failed and the Building committee voted to include the cost in the budget. As far as the fiber loop Ed Moriarty expressed his belief that copper wiring would not diminish the quality of the camera's video images. Ed will investigate this further and report back to the Building committee before a decision is made

The following comments and questions were discussed during this Agenda Item:

Chief Spera stated that the Department would like both the fiber ring and second UPS added to the line item budget for the project, as opposed to their current bid alternate status. He described both as part of the Department's needs list, as opposed to something that the Department wants. Chief Spera explained that the Fiber Loop is not for the computers in the building but is to ensure the necessary bandwidth to properly run High Definition cameras throughout the building. Recent court mandated regulations have made audio and visual aspects of arrests important to prosecuting procedure and as such, the Department needs to ensure that there is enough bandwidth for cameras to meet these requirements. The Chief also stated that Phil Coco, the Department's Director of Emergency Communication and EMS, expressed the need for a second UPS as a measure of redundancy. Chief Spera concluded that the increase of \$23,520 is not the cost of a second UPS but the cost of going from one large UPS to two smaller, more efficient ones.

Committee Chairman Moran stated it did not make sense for Emergency Communications to run off of one UPS. He added that the Committee should make a motion to have the second UPS added to the project budget.

Downes asked the Committee to let them bid the fiber loop as a bid alternate.

Chief Spera objected, restating the need for high quality video for court proceedings. He added that it would be more costly to add the fiber loop after the building is constructed.

A representative from Downes replied that fiber is not necessarily better than copper and that there are many variables that could affect the quality of a visual picture.

Chief Spera asked if a fiber backbone is better than copper one.

The representative from Downes replied that it depends on many variables.

Chief Spera stated that he wanted to question a camera expert about the pros and cons of copper and fiber. He also stated that \$112,000 is a large amount of money for a bid alternate that the Department has identified as a need.

Downes stated that the best way to approach the problem is for the Chief to outline his needs and then have a camera expert explain to the Committee the best way to achieve the stated goals.

First Selectman Fortuna asked if a switch to fiber replaces the cost of copper in the budget or if the price of fiber would add \$112,000 to the existing budget.

Downes replied that a fiber loop would be a \$112,000 addition to the budget.

Committee Chairman Moran made a motion that a second UPS be added to the project budget. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Brophy. The motion passed with a vote of 8 in favor and 0 against.

Chief Spera asked if the cost of a fiber loop would be reflected in the project budget if it remains a bid alternate.

Downes replied that bid alternate costs are not reflected in the project budget.

First Selectman Fortuna noted that a presentation with regards to the cameras and the fiber loop issue could be presented to the subcommittee, with that group making a recommendation to the full Committee.

Committee Member Savino agreed as long as the recommendation made by the subcommittee was adopted by the entire group without having to open up the conversation to further discussion and debate.

VI. Radio Communication System

Downes Summary:

Julie Reibold of Northeast Communications, the incumbent communications service provider for the Town of Old Saybrook explained the options (as listed below) available to the Town in selecting what consoles to purchase for dispatch positions as part of the new Police Department. At present the Town has three consoles, 2 at the PD and one at the Town Hall for the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). When the PD is complete five consoles will be required, three dispatch positions, one for a supervisor and one at the EOC.

Option #1 - Relocate three existing consoles and provide two new ones of the same type as the existing ones. The Cost for Option #1 is \$173,680

Option #2 - Provide five new consoles of the latest technology. The Cost of Option #2 is \$490,000

It was noted these prices include the relocation cost for the consoles when the Police Department moves into the new PD.

Julie explained that the existing consoles including the two new ones purchased by Option #1 will have to be replaced in about 5 years by new consoles because of new technology and the manufacturer, Motorola, will not continue to support the old consoles at that time.

Chief Spera noted the Radio Communications System is used by other Town departments in addition to the Police and he introduced the Fire Chief who talked in general about the communication system and noted that Old Saybrook is being considered by the state as a regional provider to supply dispatch services for surrounding towns. In order to qualify as a regional dispatch provider it would require the Town to spend the \$490,000 and acquire the latest consoles.

It was agreed by all that the funding of the Radio Communication System should not be in the construction/project budget prepared by Downes Construction and that the Town does not have to make a firm decision for at least 6 months on which option to pursue.

The following comments and questions were discussed during this Agenda Item:

Committee Member Savino asked if other Shoreline towns in the state have upgraded to the new system.

Julie responded that some of the communities that have upgraded include Branford, Darien, Naugatuck and New Milford.

Committee Member Savino asked how old the current system is.

Fire Chief Dunn responded that the current system was put in place four years ago.

Julie noted that the current system was purchased near the end of its life. She added that the new system is designed in such a way that the entire system will never have to be replaced at one time. She estimated that in 20 months, the new system would be considered the industry standard.

Committee Member Sparaco stated that it would be difficult to go to the public and explain that the communication system that was purchased four to six years ago needs to be replaced

Julie responded that the expected usable life for equipment that is used 24 hours a day and 7 days a week is approximately 10 years, which makes replacing the system a bit premature. But she also stated that the question the Committee has to ask is how much more money should the town spend on a system that will need to be replaced in the near future.

Chief Spera stated that this decision should be a capital project for the town and not part of the new building's construction budget. Chief Spera asked Julie how much more it will cost the town to outfit the building for the new system after construction is complete, should the town decide to upgrade at a later point.

Julie replied that there is not much of an expense because the new system actually requires less wiring than the old system. By outfitting the new building for the old system, an upgrade would be immediately achievable.

Committee Member Maher asked how many Dispatch stations the Department needs to become a regional center.

Chief Dunn replied that the current plan for the Dispatch area would be sufficient for regionalization. Currently, there are plans for three Dispatching stations and a Supervisor's office, with room for a fourth station in the future.

Julie added that the new radio system would make regionalization much easier to communicate from town to town. The old system would limit these efforts dramatically.

First Selectman Fortuna stated that regionalization is a complicated issue and there are no guarantees that Old Saybrook would become a central hub for other towns. First Selectman Fortuna clarified that the current system would be supported for 6 years after the end of the system is no longer being manufactured.

Julie confirmed that the current system would still be supported for 6 years after the product is no longer being manufactured.

Downes asked if other companies were going through the same change in technology.

Julie responded that every industry is making efforts to switch from analogue to IP.

Committee Chairman Moran asked if the price of the new system will come down as more are made.

Julie replied that it was unlikely the price would come down at all. She explained that the original version was valued at close to one million dollars and that the version being offered to Old Saybrook is a scaled back version, which has already reduced the initial price significantly.

Chief Spera asked if there are any available refurbishing plans or trade in possibilities with the state as they upgrade their systems.

Julie replied that this was a possibility but that the equipment the state is looking to upgrade is an older generation than what the Department already owns.

Committee Member Savino made a motion that the installation of the town's Emergency Communication Radio System be excluded from the Police Building Construction Budget. The motion was seconded by Committee Chairman Moran. The motion passed with a vote of 8 in favor and 0 against.

VII. Cost Reductions and/or Reallocations

Downes Summary:

Possible ways to reduce Project cost were presented by Ed as follows:

#1 – Delete the Clerestory above the courtyard infill at a savings of \$78,684

#2 – Delete Courtyard Infill at a savings of \$287,373. This includes deleting the Clerestory. This revision would decrease the gross sf of the building by almost 1,200 sf.

The Building Committee did not want to accept either revision #1 or #2

#3 – Delete two bays (out of five) from the storage garage for a savings of \$234,000. and bid those two bays as an add alternate. Chief Spera said any reduction in bays would mean some items would not fit in the storage building.

The Building Committee voted to delete one bay for a savings of \$117,000 and to bid that bay as an add alternate.

#4 – Delete 3 bays (out of five) from the fleet storage area for a savings of \$445,225. Chief Spera noted that although the space is called fleet storage it is required program space serving other functions.

The Building Committee decided to not delete any bays from the fleet storage area.

#5 – Provide separate funding for the following items. Note this item doesn't reduce the initial cost to the Town but some of these items should not be included in a bond cost.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Savings</u>
FF & E	\$225,000
Dispatch Center Furniture	\$ 50,502
Metal lockers	\$127,915
Specialty Lockers	\$ 13,200
Mobile Storage Shelving	\$ 67,000
Appliances	\$ 6,900
Lab Equipment allowance	<u>\$ 50,000</u>
Total	\$540,000

First Selectman Fortuna noted that similar changes have been made on previous projects and it is possible some of these items may be paid separate from the construction budget but a formal decision would be made at a later date.

The following comments and questions were discussed during this Agenda Item:

Committee Chairman Moran stated that it did not make sense to take project space away from the Department at this phase of development, which is why he was not in favor of options 1 or 2.

First Selectman Fortuna agreed that options 1 and 2 would mean redesigning the building, which would not be beneficial to the project. .

Chief Spera stated that option 4 would also constitute an unnecessary redesign of the building. He added that even though the area of the building is labeled as Fleet Storage, the Department utilizes this space for medical supply storage, laundry services, boot wash, tactical lockers and various training exercises. He concluded that this area is only used as fleet storage primarily during inclement weather; otherwise, the space serves many other Department purposes. Chief Spera recommended that if space had to be cut from the building that the Committee should look to the storage building.

Police Commission Chairman Burnham stated that the biggest proposed savings comes from shifting money out of the project. She also agreed with Chairman Moran that it doesn't make sense to remove project space that two space needs studies have confirmed as essential.

Committee Chairman Moran stated that he would like to meet with the Chief and the First Selectman to further discuss the FF&E budget.

Downes noted that none of the cost saving options are proposals that Downes is pleased about putting forward but the options have been determined as the best financial cuts with the least amount of impact on the Department's operation.

Chief Spera replied that Downes was never charged with getting the project under 10 million dollars. He acknowledged that the overall price was higher than everyone wanted to see but no one asked for cost reduction proposals at the last meeting. He added that if money needed to be cut from the project that all options should be explored before program space is cut from the building. He concluded that if program space is cut, it is likely that the Department will never get it back and that the Department has already made compromises and accepted certain realities of the project such as the decision on the firing range and moving Department functions from the main building to the storage building.

Committee Member Sparaco stated that if the Committee is satisfied with the Building Design and if everyone believes that the cost only represents what the Department needs to perform their everyday functions, then it is the Committee's responsibility to send that price to the public. If the public shoots the project down because it's too expensive then the Committee needs to return to the project and find ways to cut costs but the people should have a chance to decide what they are going to pay for.

Chief Spera asked if there is enough information to defend the project at referendum.

Downes replied that the Committee had done its due diligence on the project and there was enough information to defend any question from a member of the public.

Chief Spera asked if Downes had enough information to sell the project to the public.

Downes replied that the only piece of information missing is the exact tax increase for the average Old Saybrook resident.

Committee Member Savino stated that the only reasonable cost cutting option was option 5 and maybe option 3.

Chief Spera stated that two space needs studies have been conducted that have confirmed the Department's need for the space that has been designed. He added that Downes and the Committee have developed a defensible proposal for the tax payer.

Committee Member Brophy noted that the vote needs to take place in September before everyone's homes are reassessed in October.

Committee Member Wight stated that options 1, 2 and 4 should not be considered.

Chief Spera proposed that the 5th bay be removed from the storage building and be changed to an add alternate, which would be built if money permitted at the end of the project.

Committee Chairman Moran stated that the Chief's proposal was reasonable and would at least show than effort was made to lower the cost of the project.

Downes added that they are going to continue to design 5 bays for the project.

First Selectman Fortuna stated that he was hoping the Department could do with less and that the Committee would entertain suggestions on options 3 and 4. He acknowledged that the Committee seemed set on pushing the current design forward.

Chief Spera emphasized that it is important for the First Selectman to be behind the project and actively working to sell the idea to the citizens of Old Saybrook.

Committee Member Sparaco stated that he believed the public meetings would tell the Committee a lot about where the general public stands on the building.

Downes agreed and stated that the Committee would know if the project was going to pass before referendum.

Chief Spera asked about the likelihood that budget numbers would go up or down at this point in the project.

Downes replied that the number will not go up at this point but that it probably would not go down significantly either.

Committee Member Sparaco made a motion to approve the current design of the building but to remove one bay from the storage outbuilding and include it in the project as an alternate. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Wight. The motion passed with a vote of 8 in favor and 0 against.

Committee Member Akin stated that he was not satisfied with the data he had with regards to the budget.

Downes replied that they would send him a more detailed analysis of the project budget.

VIII. Radio Tower Regulations

Time did not allow for the discussion of this item.

IX. FF&E

The Committee agreed to review the project budget and work with the First Selectman on which items should be represented in the FF&E budget.

X. Schedule Update

Downes reviewed a calendar of upcoming meetings with various local Boards and Commissions with regards to the project. The proposed referendum date is Tuesday, September 24.

Downes reviewed public information strategies with the Committee. The following questions were asked and answered:

Chief Spera asked how much the renovation of the old building should be highlighted as part of the sale's pitch.

Downes replied that most people are less interested in the "what" than the "why". In other words, people are going to want to know why certain space is needed as opposed to what is being done.

Committee Chairman Moran asked if Committee Members should come to the next meeting with comments and suggestions about the one page flyer.

Downes responded that comments on the flyer would be helpful.

Committee Chairman Moran stated that the First Selectman should review the flyer as well since it will also include the school projects.

Chief Spera agreed that there should be one flyer all the referendum items.

Committee Member Sparaco noted that the education lobby is one of the biggest groups in town so it would be beneficial to have their projects on the same question.

Chief Spera asked if it would be more beneficial to hold a public informational meeting when school is back in session.

Police Commission Chairman Burnham responded that the informational meetings should begin as soon as possible.

Lisa Carver asked that public meetings be held after a presentation is made to the Board of Finance so that they could have a chance to weigh in first.

Committee Member O'Brien responded that it would be better to engage the public first so the Board of Finance could have an idea of the general public opinion.

XI. Comments or Concerns from Committee Members

There were no comments.

XII. Public Comment

There were no comments.

XIII. Adjournment

Committee Chairman Moran made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Maher. The motion to adjourn the meeting passed with a vote of 8 in favor and 0 against.

The next Regular Police Building Committee meeting will be held on August 12, 2013.

The meeting minutes for July 29, 2013 were prepared and respectfully submitted by:

Trent Gerbers
Recording Clerk for the Old Saybrook Police Building Committee