



FIRE DEPARTMENT BUILDING COMMITTEE

Town of Greenland
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MINUTES OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT BUILDING COMMITTEE

Monday, January 28, 2019 – 7:00 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Dennis Malloy, Paul Sanderson, Don Miller, Dennis Cote

Members Absent: Kevin Forrest

Advisory Members: Ralph Cresta – Fire Chief; Jim Marchese – Building Inspector; Vaughan Morgan – Chairman, Board of Selectmen; Bob Krasko – Budget Committee

Also Present: John Ricci – Ricci Construction

Chief Cresta opened the Fire Station Building Committee meeting at 7:15 p.m. A roll call was taken by the Chief; he announced a quorum was present and the meeting was being recorded.

1. Approval of Minutes: January 14, 2019

MOTION: B. Krasko moved to approve the minutes of January 14, 2019. Second – D. Miller; all in favor.
MOTION CARRIED

2. General Discussion

Chief Cresta felt the Planning Board meeting and tour of the existing fire station helped the Committee quite a bit. Four Budget Committee members were present for the tour and Planning Board meeting; one or two other members have stopped in for a tour. J. Ricci and Eric Weinrieb, Altus Engineering, did a great job with the Planning Board presentation.

At the Deliberative Session on Saturday, February 02, 2019, Chief Cresta will give a brief explanation of the proposed fire station and then introduce J. Ricci. P. Sanderson reminded those present that this would be the Deliberative Session. The most important part is that if someone disagrees and tries to amend the warrant article to a lower amount, there are people present who can vote. All the facts are important, but if there aren't people present to stop amendments to the warrant article, bad things can happen.

P. Sanderson explained that under SB2, you can amend the number in the warrant article but cannot change the general purpose. The Budget Committee and Board of Selectmen can hold a meeting following Deliberative Session to reconsider any warrant articles. P. Sanderson added that the insidious part of SB2 is that the very few people attending Deliberative Session on Saturday morning decide what numbers (dollar value) go on the ballot. They have an incredible amount of authority to change how the next year goes.

John Penacho, Tidewater Farm Road, added that the fire station will have to be “sold” to residents. There is a need for the station and there are other issues facing the Town: the Library bond, the revaluation, and the School will be asking for \$1.4 million. The Deliberative Session is a powerful tool for the department if they can get people there. The warrant article can't be allowed to change.

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P. Sanderson has asked for impacts on the tax rate and should have them by Deliberative Session. He added there has been no growth in Town over the last year. Referring to growth in Town, P. Sanderson reiterated that there is not one case before the Planning Board—not residential or commercial, and there hasn't been for months.

P. Sanderson updated the Committee that a legal opinion was received from the Town Attorney regarding the warrant article to rescind the Library bond. The Town Attorney was in agreement with what P. Sanderson stated at the Budget Public Hearing: the bond is not being rescinded or repurposed; the money in the Library bond stays there, at least for the upcoming year. He added the Library project funding is there; what happens with it is a different question.

Chief Cresta stated that he's heard the Library thinks the Fire Department is trying to take money away from them. Steve Smith, Newington Road, stated that many residents are looking at the increase in their tax bill as the Library increased it by "X"; there is no set figure that indicates how much the fire station will add to the tax rate. He suggested they had to separate themselves from the Library.

There was a discussion about moving warrant articles. It was strongly recommended to leave the warrant articles in the order as prepared. J. Penacho stated there is a lot of misinformation in the community, and not to add any more. The fire station, Library and School stand on their own; let the people decide how they want to spend their money.

J. Ricci suggested stating immediately at the Deliberative Session that the Library bond couldn't be rescinded or repurposed; the fire station and Library are separate and will remain separate. P. Sanderson was in agreement. He added that the potential increase in costs of 20% to 25% per year should be stated. The Library bond was 3.14% in October 2018; that was the best rate after soliciting rates from five or six banks. J. Ricci stated that he projected the building cost to be \$3.65 million in 2020 and in 2021 it could be \$4.5 million. The fire station bond of \$2.9 million is close to the Library bond of \$2.9 million at \$235,000 next year. Delaying could increase the cost from \$235,000 to a little over \$400,000 in a just over two years. Referring to growth in Town, P. Sanderson reiterated that there is not one case before the Planning Board—not residential or commercial, and there hasn't been for months.

P. Sanderson's goal in presenting the project at Deliberative Session was to leave the \$2.9 million alone and let it go to the people. Chief Cresta stated the project would have to be "sold" during the six weeks between Deliberative Session and Town Meeting. V. Morgan stated that if the fire station doesn't pass this year, it could be passed on to the next year; the ground work is done. P. Sanderson pointed out that was true, but it wouldn't be any cheaper.

J. Penacho noted that people don't understand why the repairs are being done on the existing station. That building is going to stay, so it needs to be repaired. Chief Cresta responded that you don't fix something when you're unsure of its future purpose. In 2018 the roof was repaired to preserve the structure. D. Miller stated there was a simple answer: the existing building, no matter what was put into it, would not be adequate for a fire station; however, the building, with a little bit of work is more than adequate for a Public Works Department. The Public Works Department will be removed to build a new fire station. The building can be repurposed for a reasonable amount of money and possibly expand the Town Offices. V. Morgan encouraged D. Miller to address the question at Deliberative Session. P. Sanderson stated the money in that warrant article could be used on other Town infrastructure; he felt "making the building pretty was a low priority".

P. Sanderson will address the Fire Station bond at Deliberative Session. It was strongly suggested that it be made clear at the start that the bond and the petitioned warrant were two separate issues; neither

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had anything to do with the other. V. Morgan stated residents needed to vote as well as go to Deliberative Session. He has found that if the Budget Committee and Board of Selectmen are at odds over warrant articles, they generally don't pass.

J. Marchese had concerns about E. Weinrieb's site plan: maintaining the 20' setback vs. moving the building over, the drainage at the back of the building, add the existing parking lot to show shared parking, comments made by the Planning Board, etc. Basically, to make sure he would be following through with the Planning Board comments. J. Ricci responded that E. Weinrieb would follow through. He wanted to get the bond approved first. P. Sanderson felt it was more important that overall the Planning Board felt it was a good presentation. There are some adjustments that needed to be made, but thought the basic project was sound and well-prepared.

J. Penacho asked if there was anything that was going to hold up the fire station being built or effect the ability to build on that site. The response was no; J. Ricci explained the steps the Building Committee has taken to date. To build tomorrow, the foundation and building would need to be designed structurally, permitting would need to be done; other than design, it's 85% ready to go and priced. Stormwater could be an issue with the site; J. Ricci felt they have gone over and above what is needed. Problems are usually below the ground. There are no environmental issues. The septic permit is the only outstanding permit needed; it would involve an adjustment and redesign of existing systems. There is capacity on the site to handle the proposed effluent; DES would need to approve the exact design. J. Ricci noted that very little funding has been put into the project and they're ready to build. The existing building has been surveyed for hazardous waste.

B. Krasko explained the vote at the Budget Public Hearing on Thursday, January 10, 2019. Steve McKenzie did abstain; the initial vote was 5-4-1 to recommend. The Budget Committee could decide to allow that vote, or re-vote after the Deliberative Session.

P. Sanderson noted that there will be a Voter's Guide available at Deliberative Session. It will be revised based on what happens at that meeting.

At the Deliberative Session, P. Sanderson will speak initially then introduce Chief Cresta and J. Ricci. If they're not asked questions by residents, P. Sanderson will ask questions. Flyers will be done and distributed between Deliberative Session and Town Meeting on March 12, 2019. The fire station will also be open to the public on Wednesday's and Saturday's.

3. Adjournment

MOTION: D. Miller moved to adjourn at 8:02 p.m. Second – B. Krasko; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

To Be Announced

Respectfully Submitted: Charlotte Hussey, Secretary to the Boards

Approved: