

PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY COMMITTEE

Via Zoom

November 17, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

Chair R. Weatherall called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. with the following members present: R. Donahue, Chief A. Theriault, H. Schwartz, L. Alexson, T. Jones, C. Surpitski, P. Dziadose, J. Fay, Chief P. Nikas, R. McShera, and J. Emerson. Absent: K. Carlson, P. Polonsky.

CITIZEN QUERIES

Anthony DiLuzio joined Zoom to listen to discussion.

CONTINUING DISCUSSION RE THE FUTURE OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY

Bob announced that the land purchase on Linebrook/Pine Swamp Roads for a public safety building is moving forward for a closing on December 11, 2020. The Planning Board has approved the lot and borrowing has been approved.

Also, he announced that HKT, our architectural leader, Janet Slemenda will be joining the Select Board on Monday, November 23, in a powerpoint presentation of her sense of the PSFC scenario, focus on where we are, and what we are hoping to do. Tammy hopes to welcome the PSFC while making sure that it is understood politically that PSFC is acting at the request of the Select Board, making sure every time we meet with others that this Committee was given the charge by the Select Board on 12/19/16 "to identify and evaluate suitable locations for a combined safety facility,to conduct a feasibility study, to work with the Town Manager....to obtain OPM and architectural services, and to design, construct, and commission a facility suitable to present and future public safety needs of Ipswich." Currently this is the culmination of four years in this study. Charlie revealed that the Select Board at that time consisted of E. Rauscher, W. Craft, J. Field, N. Mootafian, and Charlie and the "ownness" of the project was the Select Board. Bob spoke of Janet's feasibility-study budget allowing her to do more work with strategies toward the next Town Meeting. Her executive report (of perhaps 10 pages as a record of what she has done) can be as detailed as we want and would be valuable in January at the Tri-Board meeting. Jamie commented how great and useful a valid report would be. A link to the Select Board meeting will be provided to PSFC members.

Linda, Chair of the Select Board, announced that the major agenda items on November 23 are Janet Slemenda's report on the feasibility study and to solicit public input on the Strategic Planning Working Group report. Jamie felt that it would be very important for PSFC to get the Strategic Planning group to have some kind of official adoption of that report to say that the Public Safety project comes first.

While Rob struggles with the possibility that the plan for the public safety building doesn't make the #1 position, Bob and Jamie feel a continuing amount of optimism following the disappointing results at Town Meeting. Tammy and Linda feel that public safety is at the top of most peoples' list and public safety is now ready (except for a Town emergency). People

are looking for the total project price for the safety building. Strategic planning is really two parts, Charlie said,-- needs and funding. A funding plan must be strategically laid out.

The group discussed the Essex plan where funding was broken down by segments requiring return trips to Town Meeting and the ballot box for successful votes. Financial Director Sarah Johnson, has incremental information, and Chief Nikas reminded that the OPM begins the process, but money appropriated does not get spent until the third year when construction begins, asking for all the money up front is doable, and everything gets more expensive over time. Tammy reported that the Select Board meeting last night heard reports that Ipswich has done well through the first months of Covid. Bob read Ken Savoie's letter in regard to voters not having enough information and suggesting funding only schematic design. There was discussion on this approach. Several PSFC members expressed the opinion that we should ask for the whole project, but Jamie asked why the voters would approve \$25 million when they wouldn't vote for \$2.25 million. Bob felt if our project is in line with the Tri-Board group, it brings us support for moving forward with the project.

Under Advocacy Strategy, Charlie reported that, while Gavin Keenan did not want to move on, it would be prudent if the passionate people who spoke up at Town Meeting were to be involved. He also suggested that HKT and citizens from the other successful towns could help with advocacy. Person-to-person and small group meetings in 2021 are important. Articles in the local newspaper were mentioned.

Bob reported that ICAM is willing to make a presentation for us in live conversation of the nature of public safety in 2020 with the Fire and Police Chiefs. After the first of the year, another presentation could be arranged for Charlie and Jean to be interviewed. A citizen's recent discussion with the Town Manager regarding the Central Street location and taking school land is one example of studies sitting on the shelf. In fact, in 2002 and beyond, the area had been carefully studied to acquire part of the school property, even to examining the house behind the Fire Station which was then for sale.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chief Nikas moved, seconded by Linda Alexson, to approve Minutes of October 27, 2020. Roll call IN FAVOR- Donahue, Weatherall, Jones, Schwartz, Fay, Emerson, Surpitski, Alexson, McShera, Nikas. Abstaining: Theriault, Dziadose.

NEXT MEETING

December 15 was set for the next meeting on Zoom at 7 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Rob moved, seconded by Harvey, to adjourn at 8:19 p.m. Roll call IN FAVOR- Donahue, Weatherall, Jones, Schwartz, Fay, Emerson, Surpitski, Alexson, McShera, Nikas, Theriault, Dziadose.

