

PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 11, 2019
SALISBURY POLICE STATION

Arriving at 6:30 p.m. courtesy of the Ipswich Council on Aging's van driven by PSFC member Paul Polonsky, R. Weatherall, Chiefs Nikas and Theriault, P. Dziadose, T. Jones, L. Alexson, H. Schwartz, J. Skelton, C. Surpitski, R. Donahoe, and J. Emerson entered the two-year-old Salisbury Police Building and were escorted for the next two hours by Police Chief Thomas Fowler.

Chief Fowler had the group gather in the conference room on the first floor after explaining the safety measures (Safe Haven) provided at the entrance foyer. He gave details: the headquarters is 18,000 sq. ft. after 18 months of construction at a cost of \$11.5 million and \$3 million of soft costs (furniture and equipment), coming in \$500,000 under budget. While the land was owned by the Town of Salisbury, the building is three stories because of lack of land availability in the town. HKT Architects (the same architectural firm that is designing Ipswich's new facility in the current feasibility study) designed and "earned" (the Chief's words) the whole construction project for Salisbury. The building's life is projected for 40 – 50 years out.

The detention area consists of seven cell blocks; the dispatch area for both fire and police is run by two dispatchers 24/7; police personnel total 16 fulltime officers and 13 parttime officers. The Town of Salisbury total population of 8,000 grows to 20,000 in July and August with an additional 400 campsites and 1500 parking spots. It was very important to the building committee that the facility should fit into the neighborhood. Condo owners across the street had many questions and the Chief went to their meetings.

The first step for the building committee was to do programming: A private citizen, a retired State Police officer, organized a political action group for marketing and did fund raising which paid for brochures and signage. Many public hearings were scheduled and HKT provided marketing information. Tours of current facilities were given. The third step was an election where the voters accepted the override 2 to 1 and, at town meeting, they approved the Police facility. There were no other projects facing the town at that time.

Variances to the original plans and change orders came with the project. It originally was too large, and it had to be smaller to keep the price down. For example, six bays for police vehicles was cut to two bays (with regret).

While there is currently no need for a rescue boat, the Harbormaster is housed within the new building, and the Chief is thinking about bringing it under his chain of command. Amesbury handles animal control. There is no shelter for public emergencies.

The Chief escorted the group through the rooms. The dispatch console rises so that the dispatcher can stand up in his/her 16-hour shift. The report room has armless chairs so that gunbelts on uniforms have room to fit. The breakroom with sink, microwave, and refrigerator

is “very important”. The evidence area is secure for the detective and sergeant and includes a refrigerated locker to preserve evidence. The Sally Port, interrogation room, and one juvenile/four male/two female cells are all constructed of cement block. The majority of the rest of the building is wood frame. Floors are epoxy and “Marmoleum” on the floors is easy to keep clean. There should have been more insulation within the building.

The Chief recommended a water cooler rather than a water fountain. He recommended keeping the landscaping simple for easy maintenance. All furniture in the rooms matches so that they can be rearranged within the building.

The second floor houses the offices of the superiors and a second smaller conference room complete with audio/visual technology. The IT separate room is under contract with an IT company. The third floor currently is an unfinished attic for eventual expansion. Mechanical components and ammunition are stored here. The building has an elevator, and there are restrooms on the first floor for the public.

Chief Fowler had recommendations for action by Ipswich PSFC:

1. Give tours of the old facilities.
2. Have the Town Manager explain the cost and how it will be paid.
3. Comcast phone system (fiber) is expensive but very reliable.
4. The illuminated sign outside has merit!
5. Outside finish of the building is cement board.

The group thanked the Chief and was back in Ipswich at 9 p.m.