

**IPSWICH PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 13, 2023
ROOM A, TOWN HALL**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair R. Weatherall called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. with the following members present: Chief P. Parisi, Chief P. Nikas, Dep. Chief L. Prentiss, C. Surpitski, H. Schwartz, P. Dziadose, K. Buhl, J. Fay, T. Jones, and J. Emerson. Also in attendance were Town Manager Crane, CHA Joe Sullivan and Laura, TGAS' T. Gallante, Kylee, and Brian. Absent were Dan Morris and R. Donahue.

PUBLIC FORUM

Bob began the meeting with a more formal approach as a Public Forum with an adjournment time set for 9 p.m. Architect Gallante will give a presentation (also on ICAM) with the Project Manager Joe Sullivan and committee members. He stated that the plans are as proposed today. Elevations are new. The meeting is on TV and protocol is to come to the microphone when desiring to speak.

Ted Gallante projected the site plan and reviewed the outside with place holders for planting with the intent to screen from Pine Swamp Road and along the side of Linebrook Road, all of the development having been kept outside of the wetlands. Solar panels are projected for the roof. A generator on the outside of the building will provide power when necessary. The building is higher than the street by approximately 10 feet.

Ground-level plan. At elevation 37', the level is partially underground (10') housing the Sally Port, lockers for Police staff, holding rooms/booking rooms, etc. and will house electric/ATS room on the Fire side.

First-floor plan. At elevation 50', are Police areas, public areas, restrooms; Fire areas including engines and ambulances, fire equipment, decontamination area, laundry, gear storage, and the possibility of another bay for fire apparatus.

Second-floor plan. At elevation 64', the program area for the Fire Department including dorm rooms, day room, laundry, offices for Fire Chief, etc. and offices for the Police personnel and conference room. Elevation at 70' is the programming area for Fire Department and two fire poles.

Exterior projections showed the stair tower on the roof and the possibility of a potential future bay, the front of the building, and at elevation 37', the canopy over outside parking essentially to provide a light source and coverage from the elements and a plan for electrical headquarters. Other projections showed the community entrance to the building at the front of the facility.

Bob was not implying that this is the color of the building yet, but saying that there is a lot yet to be done and a need now for something to show. Overall, the building is 26,376 sq. ft. at \$820/sq.ft.= \$21,628,320. The budget is \$21,500,500. Design development time frame is 1/2/223 to 4/26/23. Construction document: 4/27/23 to 9/27/23; bidding: 9/28/23 to 11/7/23; and Construction administration: 12/22/23 to 2/28/25.

Bob opened up the meeting to questions:

Eric Johnson: "There has been over-budget and inching that down?"

There are two budgets—we have the construction budget. Total budget is \$27.5 million which included construction, architecture, engineers, OPM (owner's project management), furniture, and equipment. Bob remarked that PSFC is making sure that this building's total costs are obvious and doable.

Michael Schaff, Fin Com member, spoke about rising costs, mentioning the history of the fire building and its importance for being utilized and planned for the benefit of the community rather than the newer plan for using it for other choices. He has concern for the finances of the Town and thinks that joining the regional dispatch should be seriously considered, \$530,000 being currently spent on Dispatch, save \$5.7 million but have an impact on current personnel. Bob responded that PSFC's charge is to carry out the operation of buildings that satisfy the needs of the Town including Dispatch. This Committee recognized there are pros/cons. We are building with a facility that houses areas that have been in the two facilities for many years. At this point, it is simply a conversation, and many of us see the merits of keeping this old firehouse, but it has not been decided. Currently we are responding to the current status of use in the new building.

Tammy commented that she will be bringing this back to the community. Chief Nikas quoted Dispatch as occupying 405 sq. ft. or 1½% of the building space. Charlie Surpitski (retired Public Safety Director) appreciated viewpoint on the operation but doesn't think it was the Dispatch in cost. It was supply and demand, etc. Ask our representatives or liaison with the Select Board not too long ago: there was strong vote then to keep Dispatch and voted very loudly—unanimous at the time. It had one of the largest crowds who came to Selectmen's meeting. Bob added that the conversation was never an issue that was put to referendum or Town vote.

Town Manager Crane mentioned that the subject is not in the purview of the Public Safety Committee and suggested that discussion be held until 2024 or 2025.

Ken Swenson supports the project and thanked the Committee with the hope for taking all of the Elm Street Departments with them because both buildings are abominable! Bob replied that nothing that is currently housed at Elm or Central Streets would remain on the same premises. Mr. Crane stated that PSFC chose not to go back to Town Meeting currently as it applies to the "time factor". We are able to maintain all facilities in both departments, he said, and thinks the Committee has done an excellent job.

Chief Parisi stated that, if the project moves forward with the number that TGAS has given, you will not see the bay that you saw on the screen. Without the bay and without some more storage, we will not have a choice but to keep Central Street; we will need the whole building. We currently have four bay doors that we respond with. We will have three bays in the new facility and having the engines shuffled in order to respond will be difficult and time-consuming in an emergency.

Chief Nikas is pretty confident that Police can reclaim the Emergency Management office space as well as Community office space and Harbors. Still in working mode, there is a need for "Operations"; meanwhile, a 6- 8 mo. period means costs are going up hundreds of dollars. The 4th bay is really needed. The boat will not fit in the new building. We had to make a load of compromises as we went along. As we move forward, Nikas said, we are on target for the next 40 years with the 4th bay.

Charlie, at the Dec. 6 meeting, made a promise to the Town that we would put all Public Safety in this new building and now thinks OPM can't put all facilities in this proposal. TM Crane mentioned the Recovery Act (\$2 million) which is being researched and talked about with others. Carolyn Britt (Resiliency Committee) asked for the construction advocates for air-source heat pump; Bob would like to find a way to make it work. TM Crane said that geothermal is still on the table along with solar on the roof and/or roof over cars.

Jim Engel wished to clarify if there is anything beyond the 4th bay that needs this kind of prioritization, and Ken said the training tower or anything else that is not represented. Nikas added the canopy over the vehicles. Ted showed the 4th bay, the training tower, and the canopies—three items not in the budget. Jim suggested having an estimate of these costs included relative to the other \$5 million. Jamie said we are on budget with the rest of the costs on soft budget. December estimates based on schematic design will come out to bid in April/May and another later. Jim felt that there is a lack of clarity: being very clear about expectations, keeping Select Board informed as there is an expectation that they should have the opportunity to understand.

To Chief Parisi's question of being worth telling the audience, Bob reminded that Town Meeting voted \$27.5 million, on behalf of a report of the Town's needs and the number was based on a rate of inflation of 3.5% per year. The number taken to Town Meeting was looking forward. A certain number of months later was the ballot, and we were using the best estimates at that time. It is clear that we have come to a point where the rates of inflation are far from those estimates. Nikas states that we voted on 29,600 sq. ft. building @ \$630/sq. ft. We are off 6,000 sq. ft. and the price is now \$820/sq.ft. Joe Sullivan's (having worked on 19 combination facilities for other towns/cities) comment from the 2021 \$630 sq.ft. figure is FEAR: and he described the intricate workings of general contractors and sub-contractors. Because of delays, they are now asking for 20-24 months for construction.

Jim thinks that the community needs to know with a strong statement that (1)although this project isn't to the letter of what was proposed several years ago, it has stayed very close, and (2)a little bit more about the fact that if it did keep to the original size, the current price.

In general, conversation agreed that the new facility will provide a welcoming and safe community building for 14,000 people to enter. However, Chief Parisi and Charlie agreed that the whole purpose was to fulfill all the needs, and three bays for fire apparatus is not fulfilling the needs. If funds become available or if someone is kind enough to donate, that is the essential thing to be a fully operational building. Coverage for vehicles is also very important.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Tammy moved, seconded by Peter D., to approve Minutes of January 30, 2023.
UNANIMOUS.

NEXT MEETING

The full committee will meet on February 28, 2023, at 5 p.m., in Room C.

ADJOURNMENT

Tammy moved, seconded by Kendall, to adjourn at 9 p.m. UNANIMOUS.