

## Safety Services Building Committee

May 8, 2019

**Members Present:** Bruce Healey, Chair; Dick Wright; Bob Wilkonski; Jim Lord; John Dean; Ken Holmes; Lynn Wallace; Scott Wheeler, Pam Bryk, Nick Bibeau, Members; Hank Thomas; Dennis Pavlicek, Ex-Officio Members.

Mr. Healey started the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Mrs. Wallace said that she had 3 things that she wanted to talk about 1) the make-up of the Committee, 2) longevity of the building and, 3) pros and cons of all the options, not just pros and cons of building a new fire station on Bald Sunapee. Mr. Healey said we could work the topics in as the Committee goes along.

Review of minutes from 5/1/2019 meeting. Mr. Wheeler made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Mrs. Wallace seconded the motion. All in favor.

Public Input: Mr. Healey thanked the public for their participation and said that the Committee found their input helpful.

Mr. Healey asked if there were any Committee comments about the Issues-Solutions report and pointed out that he had changed the headings from pros and cons to advantages and disadvantages. The Committee agreed with the report.

Mr. Healey asked Mrs. Wallace to tell the Committee the findings of the site visit to the parcel identified as map/lot 032-652-477. Mrs. Wallace had suggested that the Committee take a closer look at this parcel as a site for the fire station. Mrs. Wallace said the parcel does have enough room for a fire station, but the problem is that it wouldn't be a cheap excavation, there is a lot of rock and a lot of ledges. Mrs. Wallace continued that there are some wetlands on the north side that would have to be dealt with. Discussion followed. Mr. Wheeler said that if there was not another usable piece of land, and if it was going to be outrageous to build somewhere else then this parcel might be something to look at. But between the cost of what the Town would purchase the parcel for and the cost of excavation it would be expensive. Mr. Wheeler continued that even if the speed limit were to be reduced on the state road a set of lights would still be needed and in the winter time, the likelihood of accidents would be high. Mr. Wheeler said that this parcel does not make sense if you have a better option. Discussion followed.

Mr. Healey asked the Committee if they had thought any further about the list of public priorities that was talked about at the last meeting. Mr. Healey suggested that the Committee make sure that they understand what the public priorities are, a slightly different perspective from the Issues-Solutions report. Discussion followed. Mr. Healey asked if the Committee was okay with the priorities list-attached to these minutes. The Committee agreed. Mr. Healey asked of the priorities on the list, what did the Committee think was the single most important item. Mr. Wheeler said justification of new fire station should be at the top of the list. Mrs. Wallace said people she had talked to have no issue with the idea of a fire station it was the Bald Sunapee/Camacho location. Mr. Healey asked what second most important item was. Mr. Lord said cost of the new fire station, the cost of existing building as a police department and the cost of what else the Town has on its 10-year plan. Discussion followed. One topic on the list of Public Priorities highlighted by Mrs. Wallace was Options: She suggested the Options included sub-stations; rehab of existing building just for FD; the Bald Sunapee/Camacho property; some other location; do nothing. Discussion followed.

Public Input: Tim Gove said that he recognized the need for a new fire station, but his concern was that the new fire station debt was only part of the total debt that Town residents would be facing. Mr. Gove continued that he thought the SelectBoard should disclose all potential projects for the next few years that the Town was planning such as the disposition of the current safety services building and the library expansion.

#### *Discussion of cost*

Mr. Healey asked the Committee if they wanted to talk about costs and address potential options in terms of cost or say that there is a plan and rely on public relations to solve the problem. Mr. Healey continued that he thought it was worth the effort if the Committee could show an improvement in the cost. Mr. Healey said that he had toured the new Warner fire station with the Warner Fire Chief and compared the floorplans of each building and talked about needs versus wants. Mr. Healey said that he is convinced that we can look at a redesign of the building in a way that potentially shows the community that the Committee made a significant reduction in cost. Mr. Bibeau said that it was an excellent point and shows compromise and integrity, but Mr. Bibeau said that there were two issues, 1) the cost savings would not be seen due to inflation and 2) there were people at town meeting that said that the fire station should be bigger now rather than add more later. Discussion followed.

Mr. Healey discussed the possibility that some aspects of the building design may appear to be a “want” and not a “need”. Mr. Healey suggested 2 examples. Mr. Wilkonski concurred with the examples. However, the Committee determined some flexibility in building design today is necessary to ensure the long-term life-expectancy of the proposed building (later determined to be 50+ years).

Public Input: Mike Bedard said that as part of the public relations it needs to be made known that there will not be requests for new equipment. Chief Thomas pointed out that there is a CIP plan in place that schedules the replacement of equipment. Discussion followed. Mr. Healey asked if the Committee was done with cost. The Committee agreed that it was done with cost. Discussion followed.

Public Input: The Committee was asked if they could come up with a fact sheet of newer fire stations in surrounding towns in order to compare with the proposed fire station as a way of promoting the facts behind the numbers.

Mr. Healey said that it would be valuable to the Committee if Chief Thomas could bring ideas from other fire chiefs. Mr. Healey continued that as an example, while Warner was trying to get their new fire station approved, they held an open house at the old fire station every Sunday (June-October) with the goal being to educate, answer the public’s questions and show the need for the new fire station. Discussion followed.

#### *Discussion of design*

Mr. Healey said that the SelectBoard has questioned if there is any interest in a combined fire and police building. Mr. Healey said that a combined building was looked at closely in 2011 and again in 2016 and the findings were that architecturally the building would not be attractive, and that each department is unique as to their needs in a building. Mr. Healey asked if the Committee agreed that the fire and police stations should be kept separate. Discussion followed. The Committee agreed.

### *Discussion of PD facility*

Mr. Healey asked the Committee if it was agreed that the recommendation to the SelectBoard will be to come up with a design and estimated cost to renovate the existing Safety Services building for a police department and municipal use. The Committee agreed. Mr. Healey said that there have been police department floorplans done in the past and Chief Wheeler should take a look at them. Discussion followed. Mr. Holmes said that the SelectBoard should also give a timeline as to when the renovation could take place.

Further discussion decided the Committee Report to the Selectboard would suggest they publicly propose the disposition of current safety services building before next Town Meeting as follows:

- Floor Plan
- Cost of renovation + inflation
- When the renovation amount will be requested
- Life-expectancy of renovated building

### *Discussion of long-range planning*

Mr. Healey said that there should be an expectation of the longevity of the fire station building as well as the renovated police station/municipal use building. Discussion followed. The Committee consensus was that the fire station building longevity would be 50+ years with regular maintenance. Mr. Healey said that it would be difficult to set a longevity for the renovated police station/municipal use building because there is no plan. The Committee agreed. Discussion followed.

Mr. Healey said that the meeting on May 22<sup>nd</sup> the Committee should focus on public relations.

Mr. Bibeau made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Dean seconded the motion. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tiffany Favreau

Recording Secretary