

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

TOWN HALL RENOVATIONS PROJECT BUILDING COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 16, 2015

TOWN HALL LOWER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM L101

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Alan Bongiovanni at 7:01 PM.

II. Roll Call – Members present: Alan Bongiovanni, Chairperson; Jim Marocchini; Dave Nagel; Rodney Mortensen; Alan Nafis; and Whit Przech, Vice Chairperson. Others present: Members of the public; Chuck Boos, Elise Irish and Freddie Khericha, Kaestle Boos Associates; Joe Desautel and Paul Wojtowicz, Downes Construction Company; and Jeff Baron, Director of Administrative Services.

III. Public Participation – Mr. Bongiovanni opened by apologizing for the incorrect meeting time that was posted on the Town’s website and Town Hall meeting board that did not match the time posted on the Agenda.

Stanley Sobieski, 26 Deepwood Drive. He sent a letter to the Town Manager that it was his understanding had been passed on to the Building Committee. He was concerned about the square footage of each room. He wants to know exactly what we are dealing with. He would like to get a copy of the square footage of each office. He would like to see the location of cubicles and office walls.

Roy Zartarian, 25 Stuart Street. He has some brief questions. What provisions are contemplated for police dispatch given their current location which is attached to the Town Hall? What provisions are contemplated for solar and other alternate energy sources? Where in the budget are the estimated costs for fiber and copper data cabling and where are IDF planned to be constructed? Where can we see the notes or reports of the architect based upon his interviews with Town and Board of Education personnel?

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive. She would second Mr. Zartarian’s request to see the needs presented by the department heads. She asked TPZ about their needs for a meeting room and was told they had not been asked. People were confused about the time of tonight’s meeting. That the meeting board had the incorrect time doesn’t look good. The focus groups identified a lack of communication. She asked for a press release from the Committee after each meeting. She hasn’t seen anything yet.

IV. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes – Mr. Przech made a motion to approve the corrected minutes of the August 18, 2015 meeting as presented. A second to the motion was made by Mr. Mortensen. The motion passed by a vote of 4 YES to 0 NO, with 2 abstentions (Mr. Marocchini and Mr. Nafis, both of whom were absent from that meeting).

V. Discuss and Take Action on Recommendation to Town Council - Mr. Bongiovanni stated that the scope of the project was reduced 10% by the architect at the Committee's direction, and he had presented this reduced scope and budget in his update to the Town Council. He asked the Project Architect to comment. Mr. Boos stated that he had managed to bring the building size down to the 90,000 square feet level, as directed. This reduced the Construction Manager's budget to \$32,500,000. This smaller, all-new building was the result of an across the board 10% reduction. Mr. Mortensen asked if the reduction was everywhere or just in the offices. Mr. Boos responded that the size of everything but the gymnasiums was shrunk. The proposed building still meets code. He introduced the spec design person of his firm who will be working on this project, Tracy Irish. Ms. Irish stated that she had reviewed the new plan layout. It was very efficient. It provides easy way-finding for the public and security. There was an adequate amount of space for both conferences and offices. It was efficient but not an extravagant layout. Mr. Przech asked her to comment on the future of the municipal government office. She replied that municipal is different from corporate. In the corporate world, departments shrink or grow. Municipalities maintain the same departments and size. If you open up offices by removing walls, you have to offset that with more private space to meet, more conference rooms, etc. The design looks at the function; do they need an office or a cubicle? Mr. Nagel observed that some areas aren't office spaces, such as NCTV, and inquired if her comments were general or just for offices. Ms. Irish replied that she did not interview the departments; she was not aware of their functions at this point; her comments were more in a general capacity.

Mr. Bongiovanni stated that walls and space can move during final design. The plans were subject to change. They are for budgeting purposes. He is happy with the plans with the 10% reduction. The plans look reasonable. This is not part of corporate America. Some departments have a need for vault or counter space. Each department is unique. This is not XYZ Corp. This represents a very good solution to meet the needs of the Town Hall for the future. Mr. Przech asked the Construction Manager about fiber and data costs. Downes Construction responded that the drawings were still in the schematic stage. The next stage would have drawings that would show that. Mr. Bongiovanni said that he would like to move the plan forward. This is a plan that meets the Town's needs and with a reasonable budget for the project.

Mr. Baron stated that he had concerns about the budget, most notably that the relocation costs had been removed. He encouraged the Committee to restore them, or at least identify them for the Town Council. If not, any relocation would have to be funded out of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and that is a decision that should be made by the Town Council. The \$3.5 million of soft costs does not include anything for relocation. Relocation will be necessary for the project to occur. Mr. Bongiovanni stated that there was a lot of discussion to pare this project down to \$32.5 million in costs. He spoke with the Town Manager about this briefly. There will be areas of overlapping expense. To move out of Town Hall would result in significant savings in not running this facility for that period of time. It is hard to pin down how much savings there would be. Mr. Baron distributed a document that shows the breakdown of the project's soft costs, what is included in the \$3.5 million figure, and that the relocation costs are not included. He is concerned that there is a \$2 million hole in the project costs. Mr. Bongiovanni stated that the Committee did not wish to misrepresent the costs of the project. Mr. Baron stated that

the \$3.5 million dollar figure was the number used for the previous referendum project. A number of categories within the soft costs have been adjusted or removed. The total is still at \$3.5 million and the relocation costs are not included in that figure, but are shown at the bottom of the sheet, on the last line. Mr. Bongiovanni stated that it was his understanding that some of the relocation costs are out of pocket or pay as you go, and would not be bonded. Mr. Baron recommended that the Committee identify the costs to the Town Council and let them make the decision on where it will be funded. The Town Council makes the decision on what goes into or comes out of the CIP. If this were all to come out of this year's CIP that would have a significant impact on a number of other projects. That is a big picture item that the Town Council should really be making the decision on. Mr. Bongiovanni stated that the budget for the new building is \$32.5 million and then there is a \$2 million figure assigned earlier for relocation costs. That can go up or down. The Committee has already spent \$87,000. We are looking at \$34.6 million. Mr. Baron stated that \$32.5 million is what the Committee is recommending that the Town borrow. It should identify the extra \$2 million for the Town Council, so if they wish to add that to the bond cost they can do so or, if they wish to include it in the CIP, they can do that also. Mr. Mortensen noted that there is a \$500,000 placeholder for the Town Hall already in the CIP. You don't want to pay for the moving costs for the next 20 years. The Committee is not trying to hide the moving costs.

Mr. Nagel noted that a third public hearing had been promised. He asked if the Committee should wait until after that public hearing to vote on a recommendation. Mr. Bongiovanni stated that this concept was the lowest cost option. It addressed all the needs. It is a cost effective solution. He would like the Committee to say "this is our collective choice". Mr. Nagel asked how the public would feel about being asked for input after the decision had been made. Mr. Bongiovanni felt that this was the conclusion of all the Committee's efforts of the last six months. Mr. Nafis stated that the Town Council would have to hold public hearings before adopting a referendum question anyway. Mr. Mortensen said he agrees with Mr. Nagel, in part. There would be more agreement if the Committee had something that was significantly different. There would still be public hearings. The same pros and cons will be there. He is disappointed that the Committee missed this year's election. He is ready to vote on the concept as the Committee's final plan. He felt there was nowhere else to go. The Committee did get somewhat of a consensus on renovation versus a full knockdown of the building. You need to get the public's input. We have had their input. This is not a radical change. Every month the Town delays the cost goes up \$100,000.

Mr. Bongiovanni said that he would entertain a motion that the Committee has a 90,367 gross square foot proposal to present to the Town Council to construct a new Town Hall with two gymnasiums, for a budget of \$32,500,000 plus an estimated cost of two million dollars additional for relocation, moving, modification, rental and the like, and the Committee has already spent \$ 87,023.50, for a total of roughly 34,600,000 dollars. This motion was moved by Mr. Nafis. A second to the motion was made by Mr. Marocchini. Discussion: Mr. Przech stated that he agreed with Mr. Bongiovanni's and Mr. Mortensen's comments. When he was first on the Committee he was in favor of renovation. After seeing the condition of the building, he changed his mind about renovation. He believes that the best option is to knock down the existing building and re-build. A roll call vote was then taken. The motion passed by a vote of 5 YES (Mr.

Marocchini, Mr. Mortensen, Mr. Nafis, Mr. Przech, and Mr. Bongiovanni) to 1 NO (Mr. Nagel). Mr. Bongiovanni stated that he would appear at a future Town Council meeting to explain the Committee's action.

VI. Any Other Business Pertinent to the Committee – Mr. Baron notified the Committee that he had requested menu pricing for the Construction Manager's pre-referendum services proposal of \$20,000 and had received the response that this proposal was not a la carte. Mr. Przech asked Downes Construction Company to speak to the services proposed. Mr. Desautel stated that his office had done an assessment of the personnel required to provide all these services at the time of the proposal. It is difficult to gauge the time needed for individual services because the time required will fluctuate in accordance with the amount of public involvement and the areas of public concern. Mr. Baron summarized the five services contained in the Downes Construction Company proposal: advice on strategy development, assistance at Town Council meetings and public hearings, assistance at presentations to smaller groups, one-time advice in the event a political action committee is formed, and assisting the Finance Department in communicating the financial impact of the project. This proposal expired on November 2nd. Mr. Desautel agreed to extend its cost an additional six months. Mr. Baron will issue a purchase order for \$20,000 for these services, to assist the Project Building Committee and the Town.

VII. Public Participation – Peter Arburr, 133 Tremont Street. He asked if the Committee had made a formal motion or if they were voting on consensus. Mr. Baron answered that the Chairperson had stated a motion he would accept, that Mr. Nafis had moved that motion, and Mr. Marocchini had seconded that motion.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive. This is her third anniversary of listening to this discussion. She requested if, when this goes to the Town Council, the Committee could have a timeline. The Committee is going to the Town Council with a plan, but with no money and with no date. The Town Council changes in less than eight weeks. She does not know what the rush is to get on the Town Council's agenda. The last time there was money in the CIP for the realignment of Garfield Street that got changed to something else. It was very confusing to her. If the Committee is taking \$2 million from the CIP something will lose out. She would like to see the whole picture, both bonding and pay as you go. She thanked the Committee for their work.

VIII. Response to Public Participation – Mr. Bongiovanni stated that any timeline would be provided by the Town Council. It is the Committee's intention to include solar energy, but the details have not been worked out as the project is not yet at that stage of design. The Committee incorporated the concerns of the departments that will use the facility. The Town deserves a new Town Hall and this is the best plan to provide that.

IX. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 7:51 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Baron

Jeff Baron

Director of Administrative Services