

Foxborough Advisory Committee

Wednesday, September 5th 2018

In attendance:

Susan Dring, Stephanie McGowan, Sean McCarthy, Bernard Dumont, Seth Ferguson, Brent Ruter, Larry Ooi, Jennifer Frank-Bonnet, Sharon Weiskerger, Larry Stern, Robert Canfield, Brian Guild

MINUTES

7:05PM - Meeting called to order by Susan Dring

Minutes from June 27th presented for acceptance. Stephanie M asked for clarification to contradictory statements attributed to her. Minutes accepted (with amendment) **9-0-0**

7:10PM – Chief Hatfield presented before the committee information regarding a grant awarded for a new ladder truck (Article 1).

The Town of Foxborough was awarded a grant to replace the current ladder truck which has been in service since 1994. The grant covers 95% of the basic new truck value [approximately \$810K] and does not need to be paid back in any part. The remaining balance will be paid for from ambulance receipts. The Chief lauded his 2 Lieutenants for their efforts in coordinating the application process. The estimate for constructing a similar style ladder truck is 10 months; the fire department would like to enhance the vehicle with water pumping capacity as well as upgrading the aged equipment on the current truck. The Chief explained that the truck was refurbished 4 years ago to hopefully extend the use for another 8-10 years, but now the engine and transmission are not worth further reinvestment.

The windfall will allow the replacement truck to be removed from the current 5-year CIP plan.

Sue D – More details to this SAFERGRANT, please.

Chief – The grant covers 95% of the AVERAGE COST of a similar truck. The town contracts with a manufacturer first and is then reimbursed.

Seth F – But the town is actually funding @ 20%, with upgrades and add-ons?

Chief – Yes

Bernard D – asked about the process thus far.

Chief – We have met with 5 manufacturers already; we would prefer to work with one manufacturer who carries the warrantees as well.

Larry O – What kind of equipment costs @ \$250K?

Chief – We plan to put more ‘beefy’ equipment that can accommodate larger scale rescues, including larger ‘jaws-of-life’ and airbags.

Larry O – Is any of those items on the truck now?

Chief – Most of those tools are aged or limited due to inadequate space on the truck. The Fire Dept. is looking for longer life and longer warranties.

Larry O – Can we trade the equipment or auction it off? Could we recoup some \$\$ that way?

Chief – Proceeds would go to the general fund. The truck must be scrapped or donated to a foreign country.

Sean M – A new ladder truck is not currently on the 5-yr CIP plan – does this affect savings?

Chief – Yes, savings will be seen by not having to add \$1M to future CIP planning for a new truck. Potentially, that savings could be extended to substation planning.

Stephanie M – Is there a time limit to use this grant?

Chief – Yes, that's why the Fire Department wanted to get this item onto the Fall Warrant.

7:25PM - Bill Yukna and Amy Berdos addressed the ADCOMM regarding funding/borrowing for the Burrell School project (Article 10)

A video presentation describing the extent of the development project was shown to the ADCOMM and meeting attendees. Bill Yukna led off by stating that the town is on target with state requirements and deadlines. According to current audit, what doesn't meet ADA rules, the state won't pay for. The planned modifications include:

- Turning the auditorium into a media center and a tech lab.
- The existing gym needs to be expanded from its 2K to 6K sq.ft. and better lighting.
- A multipurpose area for cafeteria/gym with assembly stage at one end.
- The building will include a separate entrance with restrooms to add security and save maintenance, akin to the Ahern layout.
- The only room that was not funded was the kiln, but MSBA does not cover them ever.
- Expanded kitchen
- a/c units on rooftop
- updated fire alarm/sprinkler systems

Rob C – What about outside space issues?

Bill Y – Drainage modifications were required due to newer EPA standards as well as each playground having to be redone to meet newer safety codes. Additionally, the A/C has been incorporated into the plan from Day 1. History shows that you don't take an item out of the plan if you believe you may need it later. This will lessen transitions for Pre-K, which runs through the summer.

Amy B spoke to issues regarding sustainability of the school.

Ms Berdos explained that the MSBA requires an evaluation of the overall education plan/concept for the town, and then 'build to suit' that plan. She suggested that the concept to rebuild relied upon the understanding that the original building was built on the right spot – in the middle of the property. This location is the only one viable due to new regulations. Constraints would put a 2-story school in front of the old one. Modifying an existing building has advantages in the funding calculus where the MSBA awards more 'points' for re-use. Additional savings are realized for site prep by staying on the same footprint.

Larry O – Reluctantly, we have to consider deterrent issue such as glass?

Bill Y – The current code calls for School-Guard safety glass. That level of deterrence will be implemented on the inside vestibule of the entrance, where visible ID and badges will be issued before entry into the building.

Larry S – What about the financing?

Bill Y – Passed out the written motion and spreadsheet of the project budget. Bill added that some funding is contingent upon any special 'extras' that the town wants to implement. Estimate @ \$14-15M

Larry S – The project is running @ \$35M with MSBA @ 14-15M and the town @ \$20M – Why?

Bill Y – The MSBA wants the town to bond as if it was covering the total amount (\$15.3M) {@ \$20M – reserve funds set aside}. It does not allow the town to take any money off the top – but the MSBA has never NOT funded a project as negotiated. The Total = grant + bond + town resources.

Larry O – Is this project eligible for Central Air?

Bill Y – Yes, if it is included from the beginning. Additionally, consideration was given to the flooring for longevity and upkeep. It was decided on a rubberized surface which has better traction, sound absorption and requires fewer cleaning chemicals and manpower for maintenance. The state wants the concept to plan for a 50+ year lifespan.

Bernard D – What if construction costs rise above 20%, is the town on the hook?

Bill Y – The MSBA grant is the grant. The additional cost would have to be brought before the town as a warrant article to Town Meeting. The town has had a good history of getting conservative estimates and bids.

Bernard D – asked about bonding and the town's bond rating.

Randy S – stated that the bonding agencies are focused on the town's ability to pay back the investors, not on how often it has borrowed.

Bill Y – added that by the time the town goes to bonding, the MSBA \$\$ will be on the books.

Brent R – What is being reused?

Bill Y – Most of the brick and structure - @ 95% of the footprint.

Sean M/Larry O – regarding the expected debt, how will it be bonded?

Randy S – We expect to go to Wall Street in Q1 2020. The Treasury interest rate forecast is in the 3.5% range.

Larry S – How will this item be paid back; how incremental?

Randy S – The town has budgeted for the expected debt service and planned for future cash flows. The amount bonded has been reduced due to funds put into a stabilization fund for this project.

Sean M – Has the project factored in expandability options?

Bill Y – We can't build up but we can extend out to the south side.

Sue D – asked how many students are expected to be at the Burrell.

Amy B – 230 students + 86 Pre-K and Special Needs

Brent R – How would interruptions be coordinated?

Bill Y – The plan is to rotate classrooms from one side of the building to the other by utilizing the gym space for 6 classrooms.

Larry O – Is there need for any hazardous materials mitigation?

Bill Y – The Media Center contains asbestos tiles which were covered by carpeting and they will be removed. Pipes in the rafters of the gym will be secured but, since they are not in a normal maintenance area, can be left in place and covered. This is part of the estimated costs.

Amy B – The future plan is for 15 classrooms to accommodate 270 students @ 18/classroom (not including Pre-K). Now, enrollment is 230. It is hard to reduce classes as it can lead to either too many/few pupils.

8:30PM – Randy Scollins explains the bond servicing process.

The town aims to bond for \$15.340M. The motion to appropriate buying down the need to borrow by \$4M. The first payment will be in FY 2021.

Bernard D – Will this require increase in amount used from Free Cash?

Randy S – in 2021, \$1.3M will be added to included debt.

Sean M – How does this fit into the Capital Plan?

Randy S – The town anticipates revenues/savings realized from the sale of Fire Dept. assets, fully leveraged Solar Field generation and Centralized Maintenance budgeting.

Bernard D – asked to look at recurring revenue projections, to understand the source of funds – where might 'hiccoughs' occur?

Randy S – The projections are rather conservative: Stadium receipts have fallen \$800K

Larry S – What metric (cost per people) can the board refer to?

Randy S – Relatively, the MSBA bases its projections on usable sq. ft. area. The Burrell project matches the set tolerances. Future auditing/tracking will be on a sq. ft. basis.

8:48PM – Sue Dring announced that the Police, Library and Dispatchers contracts are not ready (Articles 7,8,9)

Brent R – asked when they would be ratified.

Bill Keegan responded that this process surprised Admin – especially curious about the Dispatch changes waiting since it ends in June.

8:52PM – Dick Hydecker was recognized by the Chair to speak to the ADCOMM.

Mr. Hydecker raised concerns he had with the content of the Bond issue – that there has been no continuous assessment of properties. Dick followed up with a proposal to create an ad-hoc committee to assess the enrollment impact of declining elementary school aged children. He claimed that the School Dept did not want to engage in such a committee. He added that he could not find where there had been 300+ births in town which would warrant the current classroom infrastructure.

Mr. Hydecker continued by stating that when the Burrell and Taylor school were constructed, they planned to house @ 500 students, but now, they are bound to no more than 270 yet supplying for upwards of 22 seats per classroom. Dick asked that a long-term plan/audit of the School Dept be added to the funding motion (Article 10).

9:05PM – Open discussion amongst the board

Bertrand D – voiced his concern for the annual budget creeping up to \$80M. The town needs to be wary of the impact of Brady retiring and Revolution leaving on PILOT revenues. There should be a holistic approach to attracting people to move here. What are the tangible and intangible assets the Town provides? If we don't spend/invest in our schools, where is Foxborough in 10 years?

Brent R – People in the school system are looking at projections.

Bill Y – Yes, we are now but admittedly, not before the ad hoc committee proposal.

Larry S – “I’m not sure what is broken.” At some point the town is going to have to put faith in the elected/appointed officials asking what can be done.

Dick H – We want more long-range public disclosure – if Maintenance can be expanded, why not the buildings too?

Larry S – “It isn't the role of this board to install such programs that you're asking for.”

Brent R – Those are issues for the School Committee.

Bill K – Respectfully, build it into the program for annual maintenance budgeting.

Other Business:

9:20PM - Sue Dring asked if there any additional questions for the fire truck item (Article 1)

Sean M – stated that the CIP shows that it is not currently on the 5-year plan, which will reduce future expense.

Bernard D – reminded everyone that the 95% grant really amounts to @ 80% based on non-covered upgrades.

Sue D stated that Michael Johns (Veteran's Agent) will return before the ADCOMM on September 12th to address more questions regarding Article 2.

Sean M – asking Bill K: Mike Johns said that we can't do our own town stipend?

Bill K – replied that the state provides statutes for these programs which can be eligible for state reimbursement.

Sean M – suggested that, like Canton, perhaps it could be written into the employee contracts – to make it a collective bargaining item.

Sue D stated that Bob Worthy and Randy Scollins will both return September 12th to address further questions on Articles 6 & 10.

9:32PM - Brent took a pause in discussion to motion for Adjournment


Stephanie M - 2nd

Vote: 12 – 0 – 0

Minutes approved by Vote of the Advisory Committee.

Date of Meeting: 5 September 2018

Vote: 9-12-18



Signature of Chairperson



Signature of Vice Chairperson