

Minutes of the Board of Selectmen Meeting

This meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 6:13PM on Tuesday, May 30, 2023 at the North Brookfield Police Department. Jason Petraitis, John Tripp and Brooke Canada were present.

Tony from Colliers and Matt from Tecton were present to discuss the Fire/Highway renovation project.

Joe Holway said he wanted to get everyone together to get on the same page for the next phase and see where the finances need to be.

Tony said the schedule he showed the Board in February had a start date of May, at the time it was an 8-million-dollar projection, but was adjusted to 6.1 million dollars. Tony is the OPM for the renovations on all 3 buildings. Tony and Matt went through the schedule making suggestions for changes (removing deck out back) and amending the contract to cover all 3 buildings. The total cost for Tecton for Fire/DPW single fee is \$454,514.00, which covers progress, concept, sketches, design, bidding services, and construction monitoring. Mr. Tripp asked if this covered the design, Matt said yes, and is included in the 6.1 million dollars. Mr. Tripp asked if it covered a Clerk of the works, Tony said that Colliers will be the clerk. Matt explained that Tecton and Colliers are different entities, Tecton are the architects and Colliers is the OPM. Mr. Tripp said that money wasn't included and there is an additional \$258,000.00 being charged by Colliers. Mr. Tripp said we don't need a full-time clerk of the works; we only need eyes on the work as needed when certain tasks are being done. Tony said roughly \$700,000.00 out of 6 million is very reasonable. He said about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the cost of construction goes to hard costs, and about $\frac{1}{4}$ goes to other services (architect, OPM, etc.)

Mr. Tripp said the Board is thinking of using Bay Path Vocational Regional High School for this project. Tony said Tecton will still draw the design. Colliers will meet with the school, as long as its part of an education program the town would have to cover the school's insurance. He also said all contractors on site will need to be CORI'd, and that the contractor will have to carry additional insurance. If the contractor is done and off site it would be different. He also said you can't do licensed work unless there is someone on-site with a license that is willing to put their license on the line. Mr. Tripp said the school can at least do the kitchen, plumbing and electrical work. Eric said you'd only get the students every other week, and for only about 4 hours a day. Tony asked what would happen during the summer months. Eric said they'd only be available during school months. They would be useful for small projects. Mr. Tripp said the breakroom at the new highway barn isn't that much to build.

Joe Holway asked how that would affect bidding. Tony said when Tecton puts the bid package together it will say "by others". He said he'll need to look at the schedule and break out the work. He also wondered how they would buy material for the school's portion of the project.

Joe asked if Jeff at Tecton has the authority to start designing, Matt said as soon as the contract amendment is signed, they can get going. Tony reminded the board that the contract includes language that allows the contract to be amended without having to go out to bid. Matt said he is in possession of the contract and it includes the fees discussed.

Tony asked what was cut from the new highway barn. Mr. Tripp said a 2-bay addition was removed.

Matt and Tony said hard cost for the highway with design and contingency is estimate to be \$844,963.00. Mr. Tripp reminded them there would be no digging, Matt also said there would be no testing. Tony said

he wasn't sure how that plan would go, it's a risk. Joe Holway said he already discussed it with the building inspector.

Matt said the Fire house, hard cost including design is estimate to be \$3,700,176.00, including the old highway barn.

Tony asked about timing? Do they want to phase it out or have it as a complete package. Matt said he was guessing but thinks Jeff wants to do the new DPW then the old DPW and Fire. Tony said that would be 2 bid phases, one for DPW, one for old DPW and Fire. Joe Holway said he thought it was all one bid. Mr. Tripp said Hucks (new DPW) needs to be done first. Tony said it could be bid all at once and give a contract for a year, every time we go to bid it costs more money and time. Supplies can be ordered and ready for next phase. Joe said to build the whole thing and ask the contractors to phase it out. Matt said there are supply chain issues causing a longer lead time.

Joe asked if we can utilize local contractors as part of the project. Tony said as long as they carry appropriate insurance and bonds and pay prevailing wage (unless working for themselves).

Tony said plumbing, electrical would be filed as sub-bids, they would need to be certified by DCAM. Eric said it would be up to the GC to determine. Tony said there will be a pre-bid conference and walk through, we can get the locals here and they can meet the bidders, let them talk it about it. Joe asked if they have a shot, Tony said we can play matchmaker but can't force it.

There was a brief discussion on bidding, Matt said construction could start as soon as March 2024. Tony said because this isn't new construction, they can more easily renovated. There are supply chain issues but people are still bidding. Matt said it would be posted in the local paper and COMMBUYS, as well as Central Register. Tony said the bidding process takes about 8 weeks, excluding holidays.

Mr. Tripp asked if we're looking at a March start, Tony said yes. Matt said to anticipate 280+ days for construction. Tony said if we use the school, we can't jam up the contractor, they'll put in claims, we'll have to build in time for the kids. We will get charged for delays. Matt said some points might be easier to let the contractor handle.

Tony said that drawings are needed regardless, after we see them we can make notes and can parcel out pieces to the school. Matt said there would be semi-regular meetings moving forward to go over the details.

Joe said he wants to bring the Fire Dept building committee back into the process, but doesn't know if the committee is still active. Mr. Tripp said instead of a committee they could be volunteers. Mr. Petraitis said the Board could accommodate something for him. Joe said the committee helped start this project and they want to help finish it.

Kathy Crevier asked what school. Mr. Tripp said Bay Path. Mr. Petraitis said they have to work in their district. Kathy asked if it was similar to other towns, Mr. Tripp said he believes so.

There will be an amended contract, the Board will sign next week. Mr. Petraitis said the Board would recess for a couple minutes to stretch and then meet with Finance Committee.

Mr. Petraitis said the Finance Committee met last week and discussed liaisons to various departments, he asked if they had recommendations. Mike Zalansky said he thinks Shiela incorporated their ideas into a spreadsheet.

Mr. Petraitis asked if the deficit was brought down to \$289,000.00, Mike said it was something like that. He said that includes taking \$300,000.00 from Stabilization and \$300,000.00 from Group Health, which will have to be replaced by Free Cash in the Fall. Mr. Petraitis asked if that would cover the deficit, Mike said yes.

Mike said that Shiela and Jason went over the numbers, Mr. Petraitis asked if Finance Committee had anything to add. Mike said that the decision was made to cut street lighting by \$5,000.00, and to reduce the budgets for Finance Committee, NBEMA, Tree Maintenance, Schools, Group insurance, and then they voted to take \$300,000 from stabilization to balance.

Mr. Tripp asked about reduction to street lights. Ashley said we will have to shut some off, maybe every other light. Tina said the Town could shut off the one in front of her house.

Mr. Petraitis asked if the school was able to find any money. Tim McCormick said they increased their off sets by \$275,000, and then found \$150,000 from 3 positions. They are hopeful to get ARPA money for their tech needs, about \$20,000.00. Mr. Tripp asked if they had cut \$425,000 from their initial budget, Tim said yes. Tim Canada said they are several iterations from their original ask.

Kathy said taking money from stabilization is only a band-aid and the money will need to be replaced immediately with free cash. She said the residents need to know what's happening and questioned how this happened. Mr. Tripp said unfunded mandates. Kathy said it will be worse next year, do we talk about that now or wait and see? Mr. Tripp said we won't be painting lines, and we will shut off street lights. Chet said the street light deal is wrong, we need to look at lighting, taking \$5,000 from that budget won't help. Kathy asked who would be in charge of that, Chet said the Safety Committee.

Mr. Petraitis said the FC Reserve Fund was boosted from \$40,000.00 to \$150,000.00 when we had the money, we knew we'd have to knock it down again, he suggested dropping it to \$50,000.00. Kathy said that FC talked about it, they have many people coming to them for the funds, they've already given out \$88,000.00, and it will be worse next year. Chet said FC doesn't spend it, its given when needed and doesn't need a Town Meeting vote. He agrees with what was said but thinks they should leave that budget alone. Mike said if the budget is cut the departments will come to FC anyway. He said if there are funds leftover it goes back to the Town anyway.

Mr. Tripp said he doesn't agree with giving up the stipend for the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Petraitis asked if they should vote on this budget now. Mr. Tripp asked if there's anything else the school can cut, Mike said there really isn't, they've met with them 5 times.

Mrs. Canada moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to approve the budget as written. So voted.

Parks and Rec: Brandon said the P&R Committee met last week, he was appointed Chair, he has some questions for the Board. The current request for resources form doesn't mention Playground or Common, if someone wants to use the space it goes to BoS first, then police, fire, EMS. Ashley said she

can easily add a Parks and Rec approval line to the form. Brandon asked if they could use the sheds by the Playground for storage, Mr. Tripp said one is almost empty. Brandon asked why the use of the Senior Center parking lot, on weekends, is an issue. Kathy Crevier said that when the COA was approached by the Coalition, they said they would charge a fee and monitor the lot, then give the money to the Senior Center. The Coalition then said they couldn't get volunteers and wanted the seniors to monitor it. Kathy said it's a poor idea to ask seniors to do that, so the COA said no 3 days ahead of the event. Mr. Tripp said the Senior Center sometimes has sewing classes on Fridays and weekends. Kathy said they have a sign they have a sign that reads 'Senior Center Parking Only' as they've had trouble with neighbors using the lot. At some points Highway couldn't plow because people were using it overnight. Mr. Petraitis said if signage is up maybe they could put the hours. If it's public parking we need to determine the legality of restricting parking, it's been public since the town purchased that property. Brandon said P&R would be happy to work with the Senior Center for this event, there's a shortage of parking in town and this is a rare event. Mr. Tripp said no overnight parking in the lot. Kathy said Hart's customers uses the Senior Center parking lot, and that neighbors in the area use it as their own parking. Mr. Tripp said every house has to offer 2 off street parking spots per unit, he believes that's a bylaw.

Kathy Crevier asked about the Town Beach, Mr. Petraitis said they are trying to arrange talks with East Brookfield.

STM Warrant: Mr. Petraitis read the warrant for the STM. Mr. Tripp moved, and Mrs. Canada seconded, a motion to sign the warrant. So voted.

Mr. Petraitis said in light of the budget, we need to discuss a spending freeze.

Public Comment:

Ethan Melad requested that the Board of Selectmen discuss setting aside more ARPA funds for the Town Administrator. He said \$200,000.00 would suffice for a part-time TA, but we wouldn't be able to accomplish our goals. He said if they agreed to \$300,000.00 that would be pay for 2 years of a full time TA. He said Kelli from Brookfield is very informative, it would be worthwhile to get other perspectives. Mr. Petraitis said the Board approved \$200,000.00 for 1.5 years if we start them mid-year. Ethan said an 18-month contract would be a tough sell. Mr. Petraitis said he would take it under consideration.

Tina Floria said regarding the Social Media Policy-a screen shot was taken from an official Town Facebook page, it was BoS or BoH. Tina showed the BoS the logo and said someone was using town Facebook to take screenshots. Mrs. Canada asked if it's a public page. Tina said yes, but this instance is using the town's Facebook to collect evidence, which is unethical. Ethan said it's a public logo and anyone could be using it, Tina said she searched and no uses it.

There being no further business, at 7:54PM Mr. Tripp moved, and Mrs. Canada seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ashley Barre