

**Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes
August 16, 2022
Hingham Town Hall**

In Attendance: G. Danis, N. MacDonald, T. Sherwood, B. Black, D. Cooper, C. Kirk, A. McElaney, K. Curley, J. Price, C. Tully, K. Dziergoski, Town Accountant S. Nickerson

Absent: A. Macdonald, S. Melia, L. Kruzer, J. Griffin

Call meeting to order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:02pm, and Chair Danis read the following statement:

“This meeting is being held remotely as an alternate means of public access pursuant to an Order issued by the Governor of Massachusetts dated March 12, 2020, Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law. You are hereby advised that this meeting and all communications during this meeting may be recorded by the Town of Hingham in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. If any participant wishes to record this meeting, please notify the Chairman at the start of the meeting in accordance with M.G.L. c. 30A, § 20(f) so that the Chair may inform all other participants of said recording.”

Paul Healey called the Public Safety Facility Committee meeting to order.

Questions from the public on items not on the agenda

None

Approval of Minutes from August 2, 2022

The minutes were approved 10-0-1 by roll-call vote.

STM Article B: Public Safety Building (PSFB) —Hearing and discussion

Hingham has a Special Town Meeting Scheduled for November 1st. Chair Danis read Warrant Article B for the PSFB. AdCom had a presentation on August 2nd with the PSF Building Committee, the Architect, and OPM. AdCom met again August 9th to discuss potential questions and comments for the PSFB Committee. We wanted to have a dialogue together with the Building Committee to follow up with our questions.

Bob Garrity, Paul Healey, Donna Smallwood, Chief Jones, Chief Murphy, Paul Kalous (OPM), and Sean Schmigle (Architect) were in attendance.

The Advisory Committee engaged in a question and answer session with the PSF Building Committee:

The PSFB will be the first building the Town has built since the Town made a commitment to a Net Zero future. What do you expect the operating cost to be for running the building?

- There’s an upfront charge for the building, but the buyback period for general maintenance and usage will be much quicker. We do not have exact numbers yet but are in the process of that analysis. It looks like the system will be paid off in 7-10 years and then it will reach peak efficiency.

What is the life expectancy of the heating and cooling systems?

- Pipes and pumps are standard – not costly or difficult to replace if needed. Condensers can last 20-30 years or longer if you maintain them well.

What are the annual maintenance costs for the building?

- We estimate the construction costs of each of the mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems. There will be an energy model done – but do not have a yearly model of what the maintenance costs will be. Its challenging to provide that information, because every department and municipality runs their facility differently. It's a 24x7 run facility with electric, lighting, heating and cooling, CO2 – and are all triggered by occupancy. As far as heating and cooling, the PSFB committee can talk to engineers and make estimates to understand how much energy will be saved and the costs associated with that, based on an almost-fully electric building of this size.

What is the elevation of the building above sea level?

- Approximately 10' above high tide. This was one of the first questions that was answered in the feasibility study. JR Frey and the architect's civil engineers have been very involved in this discussion. 3rd party engineer evaluated their storm water management system. Was all modified to be above the basic requirement.

Do you have any sense of how many years this building should be able to serve the Town, as the police and fire departments change dramatically over the next 20-25 years, as they have changed over the last 20-25 years.

- This building should serve for 60-70 years. The facility is designed for now and the future.

Are we building state-of-the-art systems that will be difficult to maintain and operate?

- Pipe maintenance, and condensers will be all electric and fairly simplified. Buildings have become a lot smarter. Our lighting sensors will be turned on by occupancy. It is adaptable, but will require training. The departments will make decisions on how smart or how simplified the systems will be based on who will be operating the systems.

At the fire station now, the fire fighters do a lot of maintenance for the building. Will they be doing a lot of the maintenance in the new facility?

- Chief Murphy and Chief Jones have discussed this with Tom Mayo. The fire fighters currently maintain a lot of the North Station facility including tasks like snow plowing, snow blowing, and maintaining the grounds. This is a much larger and more complicated building.

As far as Planning Board and Conservation - are you comfortable with those conversations or are there red flags?

- We have been discussing parking and lighting concerns. The PSF Building team has shifted parking in the secured area including re-stripping for back-in-only for both personal

and emergency vehicles. The discussions are likely to make the project better. We have lost 5 parking spots in the secured area but the parking is still sufficient.

When we went to Town Meeting in 2022, the building was 93% electric. Now are we closer to 100%?

- The building is all electric except for the heat recovery in the apparatus bays – which is not electric – it is natural gas. The bays must be kept warm during the winter months. Also, the emergency generator will be diesel.

During the planning and the design – how did we come up with this size building?

- About two years ago, we began with the feasibility study. We started with a building study and initial programming. The police and fire came in with their needs - and some wants – and we looked at possible efficiencies. Over a year ago, we worked to value-engineer the design, and came to bare minimum requirements for each station to operate. We have done approximately 85 buildings in the Commonwealth. We were lucky to find this property in order to meet the departments' needs. The building will meet our needs from day one, and into the future. It can accommodate Hingham's potential growth - up to 30,000 residents – which has been predicted over the next 25 years.

With other towns that have built new facilities – have we talked about things they missed or wish they had done differently?

- We have spoken to a lot of other stations including Scituate and Needham. One example that came up is stations that thought they had built locker rooms to accommodate the changing demographics with male and female employees, but many of the stations realize they didn't build enough. There are a lot of national resources available. Chief Murphy attended a Fire Building Design conference with attendees who recently built, are in the process, or are planning to build, new stations. There are magazines focused on building new emergency management stations.

What might we do with the existing North Fire Station? What could that be used for or will it be sold?

- That is under the purview of the Select Board. There is a committee in town that is evaluating all town properties, how we might use them and if they should be sold.

Having done a lot of facilities throughout the Commonwealth – are there themes, operationally, for the future?

- Technology, training areas, remote learning, camera-based patrolling, drones, solar and all-electric buildings, electric vehicle charging, providing infrastructure for opening day and preparing for the future are some of the themes we have seen.

Is there anything about this project that is a design challenge, or anything that is particularly awkward or might run a risk of execution.

- Nothing that we haven't already discussed with this group, the Select Board, Conservation, Planning Board and the Town Administrators office. From personal

experience working in Hingham, there are a lot of excellent committees with smart people who are focused on getting the best results.

The longer time passes, the more buildings cost to build. We are going to bid in the 4th quarter, with supply chain and labor issues - what do you think about the timing impact on cost?

- The cost estimates that have been produced to craft the project budget include a contingency. We are getting a cost estimate on 60% construction documents in two weeks – which should substantiate the contingency and escalation we built into the budget. The bidding will begin in December – which may prove advantageous to getting contractors. It will be a good time to go to market. Will be breaking ground on this project in March. Everything is set up favorably as far as schedule is concerned.

The roof is going to be solar panel ready. Is the intent to put solar panels on shortly thereafter?

- We are building the building to be solar ready. It will have substantial structural elements to support solar panels and is being built to easily run the lines needed for that. The committee not including solar panels in this project. There are a number of different ways of moving forward with solar panels that will require a lot of research. We want to build the building and have it done before we try and move forward with the solar panel component.

How does this building compare to other towns who are doing similar projects, as far as per square foot costs? It would be helpful to be able to point to other projects being built to compare costs.

- In the near future we should be able to provide per square foot costs. Its challenging because every project is different. Today's costs are substantially higher than they have been in the past. Our estimators are very versed with projects all throughout the Commonwealth.

Is there any way to stage any part of this project so that the two project costs (for the PSFB and Foster) don't come together at the same time?

- We will need to talk about the right way to structure the debt and do it as efficiently as possible. There is no piece of this project that could be held off and done in the future.

If we are building additional bunk space, and additional office space – if we are building for 30,000 people when we only have 24,000 now. Could we stage that growth as we go forward?

- Our office space is being built for potential expansion. We are building it with a view towards growth with the ability to move walls and make changes in the way it's being used. There will not be a lot of extra space that is not in use on day one.

Next week we will be discussing Foster. It is also an electric building but they are using geo-thermals. Did you consider geo-thermals for the site?

- Yes and we worked with Hingham Net Zero. Depending on the quantities and capacities – we needed to determine how many wells would be needed. It came down to the parking lots and how much limited space was left on the site to make it work sufficiently. Our site would limit the number of wells we could have. The cost and the design did not work for this building.

Do we know the size of other facilities (Norwell, Scituate, Needham) for comparison?

- Our site is 49,500; Needham is around 60,000 sq ft and is the headquarters; unsure of exact size of Scituate.
- Scituate and Norwell are substantially smaller departments than ours and may not be an accurate representation. Needham is larger than ours. We have documentation that will show different stations with population size, which stations are headquarters, etc. It is important to realize, it is not just community size and call volume. Hyannis has one fire station because the community is so much geographically smaller. Looking at Needham – it might not compare to ours because of differences in the community's make-up.

Liaison Reports

Climate Action Planning Committee

The Climate Action Planning Committee has been very active over the summer. The next Community Engagement meeting with Town residents will be September 14th at Town Hall. The Committee will be presenting ideas for the Town's Climate Action Plan with the feedback and ideas from the survey, and the stages of implementation for the Town. This is the second of three public engagement events with the third being in January where they will be presenting what the Climate Action Plan looks like at that point. The Climate Action Plan survey is online and people are encouraged to fill it out.

Sustainable Budget Task Force

Met last week to discuss the viability of solar panels on Foster and other town buildings as a revenue source. It was determined that there might be some opportunity there, but there might be some infrastructure spend that is very difficult to tie to a particular project – so there was discussion around the idea of creating a separate budget in Town to support these sustainability initiatives together and not as individual projects. This could include a Warrant Article at Town Meeting at some time in the future. Technologies are evolving so quickly. There is a lot more to be considered including a possible mass spend for solar panels, but we need to look at our infrastructure for things like electric vehicles, charging stations, retro-fitting buildings, etc.

Harbor Development Committee

The Harbor Development Committee is having a great summer. The boat ramp is finished. A big celebration is scheduled for September 10, 2022. The committee has been talking about the Harbor Master Plan and a tour may be scheduled to see the potential walkway in September.

Capital Projects Financing Options

The CPFO working group has met twice since our last meeting. We met together with Tom Mayo (Town Administrator), Michelle Monsegur (Asst. Town Administrator for Finance), Sue Nickerson (Town Accountant), Bill Ramsey (Select Board), Lori Magner (Town Treasurer), and Jon Asher (Financial Planning Model Mechanic), along with Janet Morley (CMA), Rick Manley (Bond Counsel) and John Coughlin (Town Counsel) to have an open conversation with Janet and Rick about their view of the markets, and questions about how to structure the debt for Foster and the PSFB. The working group also met with Jon Asher who gave us an overview of the Financial Planning Model that he created to look at the potential impacts on the budget and the taxpayer. The current numbers in the model are not accurate, as the Forecast Group is still

working through the Five Year Forecast. The Town Administrator will be giving the Select Board an update on the process and the progress to date on August 23rd.

Discussion of Advisory Committee housekeeping items

Chair Danis noted that 8/23/22 will be a hearing on Foster School and the first look at the draft comment on the Public Safety Facility Building. On August 30th we will hear Article C, the Stabilization Fund Article, and will also have the first draft comment on Foster School. Both meetings will be hybrid.

Chair Danis will forward the 8/16/22 AdCom Meeting Minutes to the School Committee that list many of the questions AdCom asked about the project.

Chair Danis will send out the new guidelines for writing Warrant Articles to the AdCom members.

Matters not anticipated within 48 hours of meeting

None.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 pm by roll-call vote.

Documents Distributed for this Meeting:

AdCom Agenda August 16, 2022

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Sherwood
Advisory Committee Secretary