

Board of Selectmen & Board of Finance
Joint Special Meeting
February 7, 2023 — 07:00 PM
Town Hall (in-person) and via Zoom
MINUTES

Members Present: First Selectman Kevin Cwikla, Kathleen Smith, Robin Chesmer, Betsy Petrie-McComber, Mark DeCaprio (arrived at 7:30 PM) – Board of Selectmen

Liz Charron, Gregg LaFontaine, Diane Malozzi, Gregg LaFontaine, Michael Nintean (alternate); Philip Johnson, Meghan Scott (via Zoom) – Board of Finance

Others Present: Rob Cady, Chuck Eaton, Jim Hallene, Jay Tuttle (Public Works Building Committee members); Jim Russo (J.R. Russo LLC); Francis Malozzi (Planning and Zoning Chair); Dean Hunniford (Director of Public Works and Facilities); Hayley Wagner (Finance Director); Phil Chester (Town Planner); Bernard Dennler (Office Manager)

1.0 Call to Order – Board of Selectmen

K. Cwikla called the Board of Selectmen meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2.0 Call to Order – Board of Finance

L. Charron called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. M. Nintean sat seated as an alternate for D. Scata.

3.0 Presentation regarding the possible purchase and renovation of 859 Beaumont Highway for use as a Department of Public Works facility

K. Cwikla presented the history of the efforts to find a new site for the aging Public Works facility and the ongoing deterioration of the existing facility. He reviewed the 2018 proposal at the Middle School and 2019 proposal at the Fire Safety Complex. Cost estimates were presented comparing the original projected costs for these proposals to 2023 escalation estimates. He also presented a hypothetical proposal at the Transfer Station based on the 2019 Fire Safety Complex proposal. It was noted that the Transfer Station hypothetical proposal does not account for additional site work or modifications to the Transfer Station itself that would likely be necessary.

K. Cwikla presented a proposal to purchase and renovate existing structures on a 16-acre parcel located at 859 Beaumont Highway for a purchase price of \$1 million and renovation cost of \$4.7 million. The proposal includes a bus depot to provide a secure location for school buses and free up parking for school events where the buses are currently parked.

J. Russo presented regarding the 2023 estimates and the proposed renovation of 859 Beaumont Highway.

Beaumont Highway proposal: \$5.7 million (price includes \$1 million land purchase and \$4.7 million renovation)

K. Cwikla compared the costs of the previous proposals, the hypothetical Transfer Station proposal, and the Beaumont Highway purchase and renovation proposal.

2023 Cost Estimates:

Middle School proposal (originally presented in 2018): \$8.75 million

Goshen Hill proposal (originally presented in 2019): \$6.94 million

Transfer Station proposal (hypothetical): \$7.3 million

Beaumont Highway: \$5.7 million

K. Cwikla and H. Wagner presented funding options. K. Cwikla stated the library project is approximately \$900,000 under budget. Because the Town bonded \$500,000 less than budgeted, they expect a cash-on hand surplus of around \$350,000. These remaining funds can be rolled into this project if specified in a potential bond resolution. This would reduce the final amount the Town needs to borrow. He said the Town is also working with state legislators from both parties to secure additional funding. Bills have been submitted by M. DeCaprio, who also serves as state rep., and by state Sen. Cathy Osten to request state bonding.

The Selectmen proposed that the project be partially funded with \$650,000 from ARPA and \$350,000 from the General Fund Balance. This would cover the land purchase, leaving the Town to borrow up to \$4.7 million to cover the cost of the project. K. Cwikla said the Selectmen hope to present this proposal to Town Meeting in late March with a referendum to follow two weeks later. The existing site is planned to be cleaned up and returned to grass using on-hand funds such as LoCIP and Fund 218 (Misc).

G. Lafontaine requested estimates on the operational cost of the proposed Beaumont Highway facility. M. Scott and L. Charron agreed that this is necessary information. M. Scott also raised concerns for neighbors and environmental issues. M. Nintean said these are legitimate concerns, but he believes a new facility is needed. P. Johnson said he supports including the bus depot. B. Petrie stated that the Town is already in contact with abutters. She noted that the legal environmental requirements for a Public Works site today are much stricter than the practices when the current facility began operating.

M. Scott also requested an update on ARPA projects that are being funded.

4.0 Discussion and possible action regarding financial strategy for possible purchase and renovation of 859 Beaumont Highway for use as a Department of Public Works facility

L. Charron requested that legal review the potential language for the Board of Finance's action. Board of Finance will consider the proposal again at their February regular meeting.

5.0 Adjourn – Board of Selectmen

The Board of Selectmen adjourned at 8:25 PM.

6.0 Adjourn – Board of Finance

The Board of Finance adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Bernard W. Dennler III
Office Manager to the First Selectman