

TOWN OF SEEKONK
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS BUILDING COMMITTEE
JOINT MEETING WITH BOARD OF SELECTMAN

DATE: Wednesday January 31, 2024

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

PLACE: Board of Selectman Meeting Room
Seekonk Town Hall
100 Peck Street
Seekonk, MA 02771

MEETING MINUTES

Present: John Pozzi, Chair; Michelle Hines, Michael Gagne; Kevin Hurst, Edward Monigan

Attendees: Board of Selectman: Chris Zorra, Chair, Michelle Hines, Pamela Pozzi, Justin Sullivan, Shawn Cadime, Town Administration; David Cabral, DPW Director; Nate Ginsburg, Brewster Thornton Group Architects (BTGA); William Lavery (J. Casali Engineering); Joe Casali, (J. Casali Engineering); Marybeth Carney, CGA Project Management (CGA); Dan Tavares, CGA (OPM)

A. **Call to Order:** Chairman John Pozzi opened the Building Committee meeting 6:44 PM.

B. **Presentation of Project:**

1. Dan Tavares opened the presentation with an overview of the project history, preliminary schedule, and the estimated Schematic Design Budget.
2. The Project Overview included milestone dates of the initial Feasibility Study, Town Meeting to approve the budget for preconstruction services, forming the Building Committee, and procuring the Owner's Project Manager and Architect. D. Tavares reported that since formed, the Building Committee has met 14 times and there have been more than 20 design-related meetings. He noted that preliminary soil investigation has occurred, but additional investigation might be necessary prior to construction bids.
3. The project schedule included the design phases and outlined milestones through bidding, town approvals, construction, and owner occupancy. D. Tavares stated that due to the construction costs being over \$10 million general contractors and subcontractors would need to be prequalified to bid on this project. The prequalification process would take a few months to conduct. The schedule was aggressive, but the intent was to bring the actual construction cost and total project budget to the November 2024 Town Meeting.
4. D. Tavares reported on the Estimated Schematic Design Project Budget and explained that the cost was based on two independent cost estimators, one hired through the OPM and the other through the Architect. The average of the initial draft estimates was over \$49 million, adding that the project team worked closely with the town to identify ways to reduce the costs through "value engineering" exercises. This also included refining and confirming the building program. Construction cost estimates were reduced to approximately \$26.7 million,

with the total estimated project budget to \$31.25 million. CGA noted that project costs would continue through the remaining phases and will continue to fluctuate prior to bid.

5. Nate Ginsberg presented a cost analysis, building floor plan, site plan and building renderings.
6. The Cost Analysis offered explanations for the increase in project cost since the 2021 Feasibility Study. N. Ginsberg reported that the increase was attributed to market increases, project scope increase and soil remediation. Adding that there has been an unprecedented increase in construction costs over the past three years since the Feasibility Study was performed. The project now includes several outbuildings to cover the equipment while not increasing the size of the garage but were not envisioned during the Feasibility Study. There have been more site investigations, which supported the need to remove existing soil and import structural fill. To reduce this higher project cost, N. Ginsberg recounted that value engineering exercises conducted were able to right size the overall building and mechanical systems, determine the feasibility of relocating unsuitable soils on site, reducing the covered storage and the proposed glass in the building.
7. BTGA presented the proposed building floor plan and site plan which reflects the accepted value engineering changes. Proper circulation was being provided for the salt shed and fueling station, as well as the visitor and employee parking. N. Ginsberg noted that the salt shed was designed to be dual level, with the ability for trucks to drive through and be loaded from the salt storage floor. The garage was sized to house the DPW inventory, which would have a long-term savings cost verses leaving equipment exposed to the elements. The site plan showed secondary covered storage for seasonal equipment, which allowed for the reduction in overall garage size. William Lavery of J. Casali Engineering explained how the site worked within the wetland and other site setbacks.
8. Dave Cabral reported that the building had initially been larger, but the size was reduced to eliminate excess spaces, but still maintain the ability for the DPW staff to grow.
9. Renderings of proposed building showcased proposed materials, windows for natural lighting in administration and the ability of viewing the incoming vehicles and circulation around the site. N. Ginsberg stated that the high point of the garage, approximately 30', was set by using the required height for the wash bay and the bridge crane in the maintenance area but were investigating ways to lower the height.
10. Selectman Zorra stated in his opinion, the garage was too high. The additional height would be wasted space. He also suggested that the building would be in use for 70 years, to make sure it was designed to fit future growth without being excessive. BTGA acknowledged the concern and confirmed that the height of the garage will continue to be evaluated.
11. Selectman Sullivan questioned where prevailing wage rates were 3-4 years ago compared to now. He suggested that this explanation and understanding would help the residents understand the project cost increases. Project team will include this information in future community outreach meetings.

C. Adjournment: John Pozzi made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 PM, which was seconded by Kevin Hurst. Motion passed unanimously.