

MINUTES
Sanbornton Building Construction Committee (BCC)

Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, October 22, 2020 at 7:00 PM

Meeting Place: : Online in accordance with Emergency Executive Order #12 (via Zoom)

Nina Gardner called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM.

Chair Gardner read the following statement:

Good Evening, as Chairman of the Building Construction Committee, I am declaring that an emergency exists and I am invoking the provisions of RSA 91-A:2, III (b). Federal, state, and local officials have determined that gatherings of 10 or more people pose a substantial risk to our community in its continuing efforts to combat the spread of COVID-19. In concurring with their determination, I also find that this meeting is imperative to the continued operation of Town government and services, which are vital to public safety and confidence during this emergency. As such, this meeting will be conducted without a quorum of this body physically present in the same location.

At this time, I also welcome members of the public accessing this meeting remotely. Even though this meeting is being conducted in a unique manner under unusual circumstances, the usual rules of conduct and decorum apply. If you wish to speak, please wait for the Chair to recognize you, then state your name and make your statement.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by Roll Call Vote.

Let's start the meeting by taking a Roll Call attendance. When each member states their name, also please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.

Roll Call of Members Present on the Phone

Regular Members present: Nina Gardner (Citizen Rep - Chairman), Chuck Flanders (Citizen Rep), Steve Cobb (Citizen Rep - Vice Chair), Brendan Morrison (Citizen Rep), Jim Dick (Selectmen's Rep). None of the members had anyone else present with them.

Regular Members absent: Ken Carleton (Employee Rep) (Training), Chuck Flanders (Citizen Rep)

Others Present: Various members of the public. Chief Steve Hankard, Sanbornton PD.

Design Concept Presentation

Nina Gardner welcomed the members of the public who were present to hear the Committee's presentation on their two design recommendations for the Police Department and Town Office. There was a total of nine residents present.

- a. Nina began the presentation by providing an overview of the Committee's history and charter, and she introduced the members of the Committee. Brendan Morrison covered the safety and security issues with the Police Department and showed some photographs of the current conditions. Chief Hankard amplified on some of Brendan's points, and stated that he felt both designs did a good job of addressing the issues with the current PD facility, but that

over all he preferred Option 1 because it offered more in the way of shared space and had the advantage of keeping the PD on the same campus as the Fire Department.

- b. Steve Cobb presented the summary of issues with the current Town Office space, then Nina summarized the key factors that led to the Committee's recommendations. She said that the Committee felt that the two options presented the best way to meet the Town's needs, address the identified issues with the two current facilities, and keep the cost to a minimum. She emphasized that the designs were meant to serve the Town's needs for 20+ years, so they had some room for minimal growth built in – but they were not designed to provide huge increases above what was required.
- c. Nina began the presentation of the two design options, beginning with Option 1 – the expansion/renovation of the current Town Office building and then Option 3b, the standalone PD building.
- d. Jim Dick discussed the financing of the project and the estimates for total cost and tax rate impact, based on information received from the New Hampshire Municipal Bond Bank. He explained that the current rates are much lower but that NHMBB uses the higher rates in estimates as a hedge against future changes. If a bond was approved in March, the Town could get rates as low as 0.87% on a 10-yr bond or 1.67% on a 20-yr bond (versus the 2.25%/3.0% NHMBB used in their estimates). That could reduce the tax impact to as low as \$0.05 per \$1,000 of assessed value on a 20-yr bond for Option 1. Nancy Durgin asked whether the money that would go into paying a bond could continue to be withheld after the bond was paid off and put into a fund for future projects. She noted that this issue had been going on for 20+ years, and we should learn from that and plan for future work on the Life-Safety Building or any of the Town buildings. Jim Dick said that the decision about what to do when the bond was retired would be up to a vote at Town Meeting, but the Committee would strongly agree that steady planning and saving for a project would be the prudent thing to do. Nancy then asked how she could encourage the Board to move forward if she is unable to attend the public hearing. Nina Gardner suggested a letter or email to the Board expressing her views, as well as potentially a letter in the paper if the project gets placed on the 2021 warrant.
- e. Nina Gardner asked the attendees for any feedback. Justin Howe said he was struggling to understand how the cost for Option 3b could be higher than Option 1. He has private and commercial building experience, and he feels the estimate is high. Jim Dick pointed out that Option 3b includes two fire suppression systems (one for each building) plus the addition of a well and septic system in the field behind Old Town Hall. It also requires more site work to create an access to the field. Justin believes that some opportunities to save on costs may have been overlooked, like tying in the new building to the septic system for Old Town Hall, since the PD typically only has 3-4 employees present at a time. He also believes the Town-owned property to the southeast of Old Town Hall could provide a location for an access drive that might require less site work. He encouraged the Committee to explore those options as a way to reduce the cost. Nina pointed out that BPS is working on the detailed cost estimates using the H.L. Turner designs, and those cost estimates might change now that there are firm plans. Justin also expressed concerns about Option 1 limiting future growth. He noted that if the building is expanded, there would be no room for future growth for either the PD or the Town Office. With Option 3b, both buildings retain the potential for expansion. He acknowledged that Option 3b doesn't address all the issues with the Town Office staff (like the Welfare Director) but he felt that the potential for future expansion was important. He also asked about the bond amount for the expired highway bond. He wanted to know if a smaller project could be planned at that same amount so that it would have zero

impact on the current tax rate. He felt that a smaller project now (smaller even than Option 3b) that addressed the most pressing safety issues but stayed below a bond payment of \$130,000 per year would be easier to get passed. Nina said the Committee would certainly take a look at the issues that Justin raised and would discuss them with both BPS and H.L. Turner. Jim Dick invited Justin to review the revised cost estimates from BPS once they are received to provide another set of experienced eyes to see if they make sense. Justin said he would be happy to review them.

- f. Nina Gardner thanked the participants for attending. She pointed out that there was a feedback form on the Town website.
- g. The Committee deferred a vote on approving the minutes from October 22, 2020 because not all members had an opportunity to review them.
- h. Nina said she had confirmed again today that under the new revision to RSA 33-a, passage of a municipal bond only requires a 60%, not the 2/3 majority as previously required.\
- i. Nina talked to Keith McBey today about the questions raised about water issues and basements. Keith said that the water issues exist because they have never been dealt with properly (drainage). He said H.L. Turner's engineers will develop a drainage plan that solves both the current runoff issue from the hill, as well as addresses the risk of flooding from the pond. As far as the basement, he said they would develop a cost estimate to add a basement under any new construction once the detailed cost estimates for the two options are complete. Those cost estimates are progressing, but he didn't have a delivery date yet. He noted that they are trying to be careful to make sure the final number is something that can be used to propose a bond and not create any issues with cost changes later/Nina also asked him what he thought the 2019 building proposal would cost today. He felt that with the higher construction costs, that project would carry a base cost of about \$5.5 million today.

The Committee agreed the next meeting will be October 29, 2020 at 1:00pm. It will be an in-person meeting at Old Town Hall.

A **motion** was made to adjourn the meeting by Steve Cobb and seconded by Jim Dick. There was no discussion. Roll call vote: Gardner – Aye, Cobb – Aye, Dick- Aye. (Note: Brendan Morrison lost his audio connection and was unable to participate in the voice vote). Motion passed **passed** unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 PM.