

Town Hall Building Committee
April 10, 2023
Virtual Meeting via Zoom at 7:00pm

Members Present: Phil Lehr-Chairman, Wayne Sawchuk-Vice Chairman, Carolyn Coffey, Mark Cameron, Josiah Stevenson, Tucker Meehan

Members Absent: Gerhard Lubitz

Also attending: Steven Kirby (Vertex), Michelle Leary, David Farrag (39 Beechwood Street)

Agenda

1. Provide an update to the committee on Select Board vote
2. Review and discuss funding strategy
3. Public relations update and forthcoming public relations efforts
4. Bidding update from Vertex

Chairman Phil Lehr called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m.

Update on Select Board vote

The Select Board invited the Town Hall Building Committee (THBC) on February 28th to a vote that at the last second went against the project 3-2 and the THBC members left the meeting feeling they did not have full support of the Select Board. The Select Board chairman contacted the THBC chair inviting the committee back the next week saying the Select Board would have a vote to support having the project on the ballot for the Town Hall Meeting. The THBC went to the meeting on Tuesday April 4th and the vote was 4-1 get the project on the Town Hall Meeting floor and the debt exclusion was a 5-0 vote in favor.

The Select Board voted to place the project on the warrant. It was not a vote on whether they supported the project. The Select Board will wait until Town Meeting and see what the opinion is of the Capital Budget committee and Advisory Board before making a recommendation on the project.

Review and discuss funding strategy

CPC has only agreed to give \$1 Million so THBC will be asking for \$20 Million to complete the funding of the project. The THBC is meeting with the Capitol Budget committee on April 24th.

The Cohasset Finance Director determined, based on \$21 Million of borrowing, that it would cost the taxpayers 40 cents for every \$1,000 of assessed value of a house. The median house in Cohasset has an assessed value of approximately \$990,000 which translates to about a \$400 annual increase.

Based on a list of current projects that were done within the Commonwealth, the THBC project is in line with the average cost per square foot of other municipal buildings.

Public Relations update and forthcoming public relations efforts

Some members met earlier in the day to discuss the messaging and the different ways of delivering that message. They discussed the need to create a couple of videos; the first one would show the conditions of the town Hall “as is” and a second one that would focus on “why doing this project makes sense”. The website needs to be updated and made more user-friendly. They also discussed doing a postcard mailer to direct people to the website as well as offer the opportunity to attend a forum on Thursday April 27th that would be held in Town Hall in person. At the forum the committee could potentially give tours to see the physical plant and talk about why the project needs to be done and why this project is the best answer.

Bidding Update from Vertex

Trade bids are due on Tuesday (April 11), and then Commodore is then supposed to provide a draft of the GMP on Friday (April 14). A review with Commodore, Vertex, and JRA is scheduled for the following Tuesday or Wednesday (April 18/19) with a final GMP ready for Friday April 21. The Committee members expressed concern that they would not have enough time to review the GMP before presenting it to the other town boards and committees.

Upcoming Meetings

The meeting on Wednesday April 12 will be a hybrid meeting in Town Hall. The following Monday there is no meeting due to the holiday (Patriots Day). At the meeting on Wednesday April 19th the committee will get a quick PR update and focus on reviewing the draft GMP. A tentative meeting for Thursday April 20th will be posted to potentially review the final GMP based on the results of the review meeting between Commodore, Vertex and JRA. A meeting will also be tentatively posted for Monday April 24th at 6:00pm ahead of the presentation to the Capital Budget committee scheduled for 7:00pm.

Adjournment

Carolyn Coffey moved that the meeting be adjourned at 8:49 p.m., seconded by Marc Cameron and approved unanimously.

Summary of Motions

No motions were made at this meeting

Respectfully submitted by: Leontina R. Marcotulli