FIFTEEN ROPE FERRY ROAD   Town of Waterford   WATERFORD, CT 06385-2886

Oswegatchie Fire Station Building Committee Minutes

January 16, 2024

Meeting called to order at 6:30pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Members Present: Robert Tuneski, Matthew Blankenship, Ted Olynciw, Paul Rafuse, Wayne Gilpin, Richard Muckle, Rocco Bracciale

Members Absent: Beth Sabilia, Jen Bracciale

Guests: Director Michael Howley, Atty. Nick Kepple

- Public Comment: None

- Opening Remarks:
  Chairman Tuneski mentioned at the Zoom meeting on 1/8/24 he had moved the question which was taken as an aggressive tactic. This was not his intention, it was simply to bring what was being discussed to a vote. Going forward with our meetings everyone is requested to be respectful and sensitive of one another and being sure we are not making disparaging remarks, advertently or inadvertently.

  1. T. Olynciw asked for an updated list of the current committee members.
  2. T. Olynciw read a "Point of Privilege" to the committee members. (Attachment 1)
  3. A copy of meeting minutes from 2/4/19 was presented which showed T. Olynciew was not on the RTM at that time. (Attachment 2)

- R. Tuneski distributed a schedule showing a summary of the Architect RFP, the Project Manger and the schedule provided by SP&A. Below is a summary of all the meetings of the different boards and committee. (Attachment 3)

- Approval of minutes:
  Motion to table minutes from 1/4/24 and 1/8/24 until next meeting due to their delayed release– R. Muckle
  Second – T. Olynciw
  Vote - Unanimous

- Summary of Board Meetings:
  The request for additional funds for the purpose of hiring the chosen architect was brought before the Board of Selectman (BOS) on 1/9/24 and the Board of Finance (BOF) on 1/10/24.

  1. Director Howley had compiled calculations based on the existing footprint. The BOS estimated the project could cost around $12 million. A concern of the BOS was: Is spending this amount on Oswegatchie setting a precedent that the Town would have to do the same for the other fire stations? Director Howley explained the conditions of the other existing fire stations and spending this amount would not be necessary.

  2. A concern was raised regarding the issue of notification to the BOS and the BOF of wanting a vote on these funds 24 hours before the meeting. It was explained to the boards that the meeting to select an architect had taken place 24 hours prior to the Board of Selectman's meeting.

  3. If there does become a reason that the square footage rates increase other alternatives will need to be considered in order to be responsible in the eyes of the public.

  4. Both Boards voted unanimously for the additional funds.

  The floor was given to Director Howley:

  1. B. Tuneski's input was reiterated adding that the committee has not determined a square footage of the new build. Estimates are based on the DRA drawings from 2018. The funds are being requested so the committee can move forward with an architectural firm to work toward an actual square footage which can then be presented as a proper budget to the boards.

  2. Comments were raised about the land transfer agreement. Both Atty. Kepple and R. Bracciale confirmed the agreement should be in completed very soon. The committee's minutes have the motion that there will be a completed agreement prior to taking this to the RTM.

- Discussion ensued regarding the committee's responsibility to the public and the need to provide some informational background at the RTM meeting as to how things work within the town and the committee. B. Tuneski believes the educational information for the new members of the RTM should be limited to a certain range. R. Muckle indicated that information should come from the discussion at the RTM meeting. The committee may need to hold informational meetings to help get the public and politicians onboard before delivering the final presentation.

- Fire station needs:
  B. Tuneski stated the needs and wants should be 50-75% decided upon over February and part of March in order to turn over to the architect.

- Unfinished Business:

1. Phase I Environmental Study:
   Atty. Kepple spoke with Director Bartelli for recommendation of an on-call engineer. Wright Pierce was recommended along with a specific individual, Marius (sp?). Atty. Kepple is in the process of connecting with this individual. There should be no problem with completion of the Phase I Study prior to closing of the contract with Oswegatchie.

   Kepple suggested confirming the actions of the Oswegatchie Board of Directors were consistent with their bylaws with giving authority to R. Bracciale to be the decision makers.

2. Project Manager RFI:
   There were no submitted questions. R. Bracciale suggested going with the voting process that was performed for the Architect. Director Howley suggested if there are less than or equal to four bids, bring all to the table. If greater than four carry out the same grading process performed for the Architect.

   Motion by P. Rafuse to perform the same process for the Project Manager as was done for the Architect and do a grading system to narrow the field down to top three if there are more than four proposals.
   Second – R. Muckle
   Vote – Unanimous

   Proposals are due on 1/25/24. If necessary, short list on 2/6/24. Interviews on 2/20/24 at the EOC with refreshments. Time will be determined once the number of proposals is known. Time for each interview 15/15 minutes. Selection on 2/23/24. T. Holland will put together a grading scale and should have it for the next meeting. Director Howley questioned when the committee plans on bringing on the Project Manager. Intention was to bring this individual on as soon as the architectural firm is hired. A special meeting will be necessary to prepare a memorandum for additional funds.

When presenting at the RTM on 2/5/24 it should be brought forward that the committee intends to hire a Project Manager and an additional funding request will be forthcoming.

Director Howley will put together an informational package to submit to the Town Clerk David Campo by Tuesday, 1/23/24 to go out to the RTM members. The committee should talk more over the next week about the strategy on how to proceed at the RTM meeting.

Motion by R. Muckle to adjourn.
Second – W. Gilpin

Meeting adjourned at 7:36pm

Respectfully submitted by:
Linda Finnegan, Recording Secretary