

**Sudbury Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 25, 2020**

ATTENDANCE

Finance Committee Members Present: Chairman, Jeff Barker, Vice-Chairman, Eric Poch (arrived at 7:30 pm), Susan Berry, Ron Brumback, Bryan Semple, Scott Smigler, Jean Nam (arrived at 8:20)

ABSENT: Chris Carmody and Lisa Gutch

ALSO PRESENT: Dennis Keohane, Finance Director/Treasurer-Collector; Jennifer Roberts and Janie Dretler, members of the Sudbury Select Board; Bill Barletta, Combined Facilities Director; Maryanne Bilodeau, Interim Town Manager; all attending to present

CONVENE:

Chairman Jeff Atwater called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. The meeting convened at Police Station Conference Room, 75 Hudson Road, Sudbury, MA 01776.

ITEM 1: Public Comment

Leon Goodman, Maple Avenue, spoke in favor of the Fairbank Community Center project, in particular the portion of the project that he is familiar with, the Senior Center, where he is a participant in programs and has made and moderated presentations; was also a participant in Master Plan process. He wished to reinforce value of Senior Center to the Town, as well as to the seniors.

John Sherman, Raymond Road, spoke to the lifesaving and life-enhancement part of Senior Center, offers an outlet for socialization and connection that seniors may or may not otherwise have.

ITEM 2: General Business

- **Approve Meeting Minutes**

There were no minutes to approve.

- **Transfers**

Two transfers were requested to the Health Contracted Services line item - one for \$26,275 to abate conditions at 26 Maple Avenue and one for \$15,000 to secure an abandoned house at 29 Stone Road and clean hazardous conditions. A lien has been placed on both properties so the Town will eventually recoup these costs. If the transfers are approved, there will be \$176,605 in the Reserve Fund.

Motion and Vote

Ron Brumback moved and Susan Berry seconded the motion to approve the requested Reserve Fund Transfers. **The vote was unanimous.**

ITEM 3: Fairbank Discussion

Jennifer Roberts, member of the Select Board and Select Board liaison for the Fairbank Community Center goal, began the presentation with a brief executive summary and current state of the Center. (See supporting materials - Fairbank-Community-Center-Presentation.) She clarified the portion of the existing building that is part of the original 1958 school - Slide 6 of the presentation. She stated that the \$28.8M project will be brought to the May Annual Town Meeting for a vote.

Select Board member and member of the Fairbank Working Group, Janie Dretler, presented the **How we got here and why** portion which included the General Description and Building History from BH+A Feasibility Study and the history of studies/actions and Town Meeting articles related to the Fairbank Community Center.

Bill Barletta, Combined Facilities Director and member of the Working Group, presented the **Future Project** section, including comparison of existing and proposed spaces and the conceptual design in a blocking diagram. The proposed project will consist of 42,574 GSF in new construction and 11,384 existing for a total of 53,959 GSF. The pool will be saved, and the new construction will be on the south side of the pool, taking advantage of environmental analysis.

Mara Huston, a Park & Recreation Commissioner and a member of the Working Group, was recognized and talked a bit about how P&R and the Senior Center worked to coordinate the shared space which must accommodate a Senior Center program that is consistent over the year and P&R that have varied "seasons." Bill Barletta also talked about the importance of this building serving as an emergency shelter.

Janie Dretler continued with the **Impacts** portion of the presentation. In answer to an inquire about the gym, Dennis Mannone, Director of Parks, Recreation, & Aquatics, stated that the proposed gym is smaller than an elementary school size gym.

Bill Barletta went through the **Construction Costs** portion of the presentation, including an estimate by the consultant for doing a renovation to repair, replace and modify the space. The estimate does not include any costs for relocating users during renovation.

Dennis Koehane presented information on the **Revenue and Operational Costs**. He stated that debt is the primary cost of this project; he estimates the operational cost might increase by a little under \$7,000.

Dennis stated that the Town typically borrows using a 20-year level principal debt payment method based on financial policies. These policies don't prohibit other debt payments and he will

recommend 30-year level debt to the Select Board as the way to pay for this project as the most equitable way to fund the project such that tax payers in year 1 are paying no more than tax payers in year 30. Based on 30-year level debt at 3%, the taxes on the average single-family home would increase \$230 per year.

Jennifer Roberts wrapped up the presentation with a summary and an outline of next steps. She then opened the discussion for questions from members of FinCom.

Bryan Semple asked about how the proposed Fairbank Community Center fits with Sewataro. Janie Dretler went through info on a slide which showed Fairbank as the hub of the wheel of various recreational areas throughout Sudbury; Sewataro is not one of these. She also went through reasons why Sewataro is not being considered in the Fairbank plan (See slides included in the supporting materials).

Scott Smigler asked, given the demographic data presented on the growth of the senior population, how do we have confidence that in 5 to 10 years we have allocated enough space. Deb Galloway, Director of the Senior Center, was recognized to respond. She said the groups have made compromises, but they are counting on the shared space in order to have enough space for current programs and for programs that might be added. Maryanne Bilodeau added that cutting space from P&R would also cut space for the Senior Center. Mara Huston added that the plan includes three dedicated spaces that can open into larger spaces allowing for flexible use of the space.

Scott Smigler asked whether there were estimates about demographics in deciding about space needs and questioned the size of the increase in space for P&R.

Jeff Atwater mentioned that another broad FinCom question was why SPS administration is included in the Fairbank Community Center plan. Jennifer Roberts went over the reasons the three groups are included in the plan. (See slides included in the supporting documents.) She also went over the reasons why there is not a recommendation for renting space for the SPS administration, including the short versus long term estimated costs.

Jean Nam suggested that we might get a better deal than the prices found online if the Town put out an RFP. Maryanne Bilodeau mentioned that Town Meeting would need to approve a lease and an appropriation. Bryan asked if FinCom could get a copy of the analysis on the rental estimates. He stated that he would recommend renting space short term for SPS while figuring out how to consolidate more employees in a space. Eric Poch added that he thinks we have a piecemeal approach in terms of office space, open space, etc. and need to establish a strategy. Bill Barletta

stated that he believes the Fairbank Community Center project solves four of the most pressing needs - Senior Center, P&R, SPS and Emergency Shelter.

Jeff Atwater asked if SPS is comfortable that the space will meet the SPS needs for the foreseeable future. Brad Crozier, SPS Superintendent, answered that they looked at current needs; they didn't have a compelling reason to look to expand their space.

Bryan Semple asked how we make sure we put money aside for ongoing maintenance, and Scott Smigler said cost of maintenance should be part of the information on any new project.

Jean asked about the cost of renovation in ICON's report and opined that the renovation estimate is a very general number.

ITEM 4: How to present findings to town meeting

This item was not discussed.

ITEM 5: Town Meeting Articles

No articles were discussed.

ITEM 6: Public Comment

Kirsten Roopenian commented that this is the 1st time many have heard this level of information about the Fairbank Community Center proposal, and it is a lot to digest. She hopes FinCom will ask questions and get as much info as possible before taking a position.

Pat Brown suggested that the information in the presentation be sent to FinCom and be posted on the Fairbank project page with date presented/version. She added that a three-page executive summary up front would be helpful.

ITEM 7: Possible Future Agenda Topics

A meeting on the 16th of March was added to the FinCom schedule to continue the conversation about the Fairbank Community Center project with reps from the user groups.

ITEM 8: Adjourn

Ron Brumback moved, and Bryan Semple seconded the motion that the February 25, 2020, Finance Committee meeting be adjourned at approximately 10:10 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Next scheduled meeting of the Finance Committee is Tuesday, March 3, 2020, to join the Select Board for the portion of their meeting to discuss Town Meeting articles.