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TOWN OF NORTON

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Municipal Center – Selectmen's Conference Room

MAY 13, 2019

7:00 P.M.

MINUTES

I. 7:00 P.M. Call to Order

The May 13, 2019 meeting of the Finance Committee was held in the Board of Selectmen's Room and was called to order beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 P.M., by Mr. William Rotondi, Chairman.

Members Present:

Mr. Peter Carignan, Mr. Richard Dorney, Mr. Stephen Evans, Mr. Walter Eykel, Mr. Michael Fiore, Ms Aimee Sawyer, Mr. Aaron Smith, and Bonnie Yezukevich.

Absent: Mr. Thomas DeLuca, Mr. Paul Helmreich

Also in attendance was Mr. Yunits, Town Manager

II. New Business

Mr. Rotondi handed out fliers to the committee for an event with Barney Frank on June 2, 2019.

Mr. Rotondi requested that the recording secretary keep a running tally for follow up items.

Review, Discuss, Vote, and/or Revote Town Meeting Requests

ATM

Article 12 – East Main Street Water Main Improvement Project

Mr. Yunits introduced Frank Fornier who reviewed the Construction Cost Estimate of \$620,000. He is requesting an additional \$80,000 in case of any unforeseen issues. Although this project is funded by Water Retained Earnings, it needs to be approved because the money will be borrowed.

Mr Carignan made a motion to approve Article 12 for \$700,000 to be borrowed.

Ms Sawyer seconded

Unanimous

Article 13 – West Main Street Sewer Project

Mr. Luke Grant, Chairman of the project, introduced Mr. Steven Peterson, representative of Weston & Sampson Engineers. Mr. Peterson handed out copies of a slide presentation. He stated that the open bids came in very close,

Is there any insurance for home owners along the route in case of damage? Yes.

Mr. Carignan made a motion to recommend Article 13 to add an additional \$1.5 Million to the sum of money to be borrowed and bring the total to \$5.7 Million.

Mr. Dorney seconded

Unanimous

Article 19 – Zoning ByLaw Amendment – Chapter 175 – Article IV- Use Regulations and Chapter 175 – Article VIII – Signs Digital/Electronic Billboards

Mr. John Carol, Carol Advertising, and Bob Messier, DakTronics representative were introduced. They went over the slideshow presentation and answered questions. They also stated that there have been meetings with the neighbors in the area to answer their questions and hear their concerns, regarding light emissions and their proximity to the sign. The closest is 1800 feet away. The sign will have 6 – 10 second messages with no scrolling. There is also display time allocated for the town as well as state alerts. They will be installing an antenna that will boost the fire and police radio strength. There'll also be a traffic study after a year of use and will change to a static sign if a problem is shown. Carol Advertising is a small local company, DakTronics is located in North and South Dakota.

Questions asked of Mr. Carol and Mr. Messier:

Was the feedback from the first neighborhood considered? Mr. Yunits stated yes and their concerns were the same as the current neighborhood.

Could we make a statement that no Billboard will be closer than 1700 feet? Mr. Yunits stated yes. 1500 feet is good and also non-intrusive to residents.

At the last meeting there was a statement about height? How high will this be? Mr. Yunits and Mr. Carol, both agreed that they do not want it too high. This is targeted to face the highway. There are light sensors that will automatically adjust the brightness of the sign according to the day or night light. There is no glow at all behind the sign.

What would the impact be to push this to the Fall Town Meeting? Mr. Yunits stated just delay – no other changes.

In the Bylaws it states "It" shall not exceed more than 90 feet. Define "it". Mr. Carol stated that even with the antenna on top of the sign the entire height will not exceed 90 feet.

How many potential signs could be put along Route 495? Mr. Carol stated the frontage along 495 considered, there could only be 2 digital signs.

Mr. Yunits stated that in the ByLaw distance from the Edge of 495 be will changed to state no further than 500 feet from Route 495.

What would the emergency displays be? Snow Storms, Amber Alert, etc.

How do you back up Audio? There is no audio. There is a separate power for this sign – no sound, no buzz or hum. If the power goes out in the area, the sign goes out.

Finance Committee: No action at this time, pending additional information.

Mrs. O'Brien, Chairman of the Town Hall/Community Center Committee, gave background covering the steps that have been taken over the last two years. This included the search for land, questionnaires to the public, bids from architects and the design reviews. This brings us to \$25.7 Million Final Estimated Cost for both buildings, which includes furnishings and equipment. This is a high end estimate and it is anticipated that the final cost will be less. This committee has already received the endorsement of the Board of Selectmen. Once this is approved at Town Meeting it will go out for Final Bid.

Questions asked of Ms O'Brien:

Is there a breakdown for each building? Yes

Why two buildings? Wouldn't building up be cheaper? This could be looked at during the final bid since the project is still fluid. Mr. Yunits stated with the current construction costs steel is very expensive and would be costly to build up. Also having one building wouldn't save on HVAC, Water, or other utilities.

Could we get an estimate on gutting this existing Town Hall and using it? Mr. Yunits stated it would cost \$4 Million to just bring this building up to code. This would not address the need of additional space as there is no additional square footage available, no additional parking. This was looked into previously.

How comfortable are we that this is a good estimate? We feel comfortable that this project could be built for less. There is a 4% increase per year built into this estimate. Mr. Yunits stated that as soon as we have town approval an Onus Project Manager is the first person we hire which will keep costs within budget.

The land is safe and buildable, right? Yes. The EPA has cleaned the site. We did look at other possible sites in town but none of them worked.

Will this building be linked into the new Sewer Line? No it will have its own septic.

Didn't Foxboro build a New Town Hall for less money recently? Yes, but they built it in the parking lot they already owned.

What happens to this old Town Hall? Mr. Yunits spoke as to the portion that the fire department will take, and the other possible use is storage which would incur minimal cost.

Would we need a town employee for this new community center? Mr. Yunits stated there is already a clerical person in this new budget. The energy costs for this new building should be less. The current town hall is drafty in the winter and overly hot in the summer. The HVAC should be less in the new buildings.

Is it possible to put Solar on the roof of these buildings? No, but it could be put in across the street.

What is the estimated Bond Rate for this project? Mr. Yunits stated that today it is 4.21%, but can change in either direction.

The chart you have showing the cost for a property at one, ten, and twenty years is nice, but could we have the same thing breaking down the amortization for each year? That would be helpful for the Town Meeting.

The Finance Committee discussed many items regarding this project. Including the following: whether enough information has gone out to the public, the need for these buildings, not sure if we need to bundle them together, the desire to concentrate on doing this one right from the start unlike some of the other recent projects (Middle School, Police Station) that have issues soon after completion due to cutting corners. Further statements about getting our priorities straight: Do we need new offices while other departments are doing without? Do we want to expend this amount of money for these new buildings? We do need a new Community Center.

priorities straight: Do we need new offices while other departments are doing without? Do we want to expend this amount of money for these new buildings? We do need a new Community Center.

A suggestion made to Mr. Yunits to have additional information for the town meeting to address additional costs in keeping the old building and cost of the new building.

What happens if the Town Meeting votes this down? Would it still go for a vote? Mr. Yunits stated yes. If it is voted down in the Town Meeting, the vote is already in place and would go forward. If it wins at the vote, then another Special Town Meeting is required to approve the project.

Mr. Rotondi wanted to delay the vote until all the members were present. The reply to this suggestion was whether he could guarantee full attendance at the next meeting. The vote proceeded.

Mr. Carignan made a motion to recommend Article 1 to raise and appropriate with debt exclusion \$25 Million at the June 3, 2019 Special Town Meeting

Mr. Dorney seconded

4 Yes

5 No

Motion Failed

III. Old Business

Mr. Yunits stated that he has spoken to Dr. Baeta regarding the School Budget. He is fine with the budget the way it stands and will not make any changes at the Town Meeting.

IV. Open items

Article 19 – To amend Zoning ByLaw regarding Digital/Electronic Billboards.

To be addressed on Wednesday, May 15, 2019 at 6:00 P.M.

Next Meeting Wednesday, May 15, 2019 at 6:00 P.M. before Town Meeting

V. Minutes

Mr. Rotondi requested that a note be added to these minutes to state that there was a disconnect in Paragraph 2 and Paragraph 4 on the Finance Committee's letter to the town in the report. This was emailed to the committee for approval and the following responded "Yes": Mr. Peter Carignan, Mr. Richard Dorney, Mr. Stephen Evans, Mr. Walter Eykel, Mr. William Rotondi, Ms Aimee Sawyer, Mr. Aaron Smith, and Bonnie Yezukevich

Ms Sawyer motioned to accept the minutes of May 6, 2019 as amended

Mr. Evans seconded

Unanimous

VI. Adjournment

Mr. Carignan motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:47 P.M.

Seconded by Mr. Evans

Unanimous

Respectively submitted by:

William Rotondi
William Rotondi, Finance Committee Chair

5/20/19
Date Approved

Patricia Tarantino
Patricia Tarantino, Recording Secretary