

TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER
INFORMATONAL MEETING FOR FIRE STATION BOND VOTE
FEBRUARY 25, 2020

Draft

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Lynne Bertram, Selectboard Chair.

Present: Brian Bontrager, Nancy Robinson and "New Building Committee Members"

Bruce Seely, Josh Maxham and Bruce Maxham,

In attendance were 22 voters of the Town of Bridgewater.

Lynne opened the meeting with a brief history of the project.

Josh Maxham began with a power point presentation explaining why a new fire station is important and needed in town; quicker response time, safer environment, longevity of equipment, part of town's identify. Current station does not meet life safety codes, no space to work on equipment, store gear and supplies, building is not structurally safe or energy efficient. Current fire house building is not large enough for all of the equipment roof is pitched toward doors which is unsafe and creates a time barrier when the firemen have to shovel the snow out of the way of the doors. The current building is too close to Route 4 creating traffic hazards. Parking for firemen is inadequate, cannot property dry hoses, no ventilation, cannot store everyone's gear, cannot wash apparatus or equipment or repack hoses inside the building and cannot decontaminate gear, equipment and personnel.

If town did not have the volunteer fire department, response time to fire calls from another town would be longer, would have to contract with an area fire department and be under their control and expense. Property owner insurance rates may increase or insurance dropped if not serviced by department within area. Mortgage's may also be impacted.

Committee contracted NBF Architects of Rutland and obtained scaled blueprints and schematic plans for a new building, completed soil borings, property survey, geotechnical report and site plans. New building would be code compliant, safer working environment, energy efficient with a decontamination room, washers and dryers and lockers.

Committee has explored options of building sites and found the town property to be the most useable. Have also looked at several building material types including concrete and steel. Cost estimates for building types comes in at approx. 1.8 million. Committee sent out a survey to all of the legal voting households to get a sense of how the project would be accepted as a whole and with or without a community room. Have held 3 informational meetings and 2 open houses at the fire station. Presented information to the Selectboard in December at which time the board voted to move the project ahead to a bond vote without the community room at 1.8 million dollars.

How will this new building impact the taxpayer – Jerry Oppenheimer has produced an interactive spreadsheet showing the loan of 1.8 and individual's property assessment to get an idea of tax implication to each taxpayer. Bruce explained the bond vote process. Funds will not be available until mid to late summer pending affirmative vote. Can and will work on getting plans and investigate hiring a clerk of the works. Ground breaking in spring of 2021. Cost may also be lowered by grant opportunities, fundraising and volunteer time.

Bruce and Josh took questions from the public- available grants, maintenance of building, water source (new drilled well) and project oversight (Selectboard and Clerk of Works).

Bruce thanks everyone again for coming out this evening. Meeting adjourned at 7:38 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Robinson

Nancy Robinson,

Clerk

22 total in attendance