

IPSWICH PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY SELECTION COMMITTEE
1/9/19
TOWN HALL ROOM C

CALL TO ORDER

Chair R. Weatherall called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present: P. Polonsky, C. Surpitski, Chief A. Theriault, H. Schwartz, R. McShera, L. Alexson, K. Carlson, Chief P. Nikas, P. Dziadose, T. Howe, and J. Emerson. Absent was R. Donahue.

CITIZEN QUERIES

None.

INTERVIEWS WITH ARCHITECTURAL FIRMS

Bob reviewed the expectations for the evening in 45-minute interviews with three firms who have expressed interest in being selected to provide the Town with a feasibility study for new/renovated public safety facilities.

HKT ARCHITECTS, INC. of Charlestown, MA. Scheduled alphabetically, at 6:45, Janet Slemenda and Amy Dunlap, principals, were interviewed with six questions prepared by the Committee and put forth by individual members of the Committee. Bob asked if HKT would be comfortable with the extension of 30 days given to Ipswich for the final selection of an architect; they saw no problem.

1. In response to the first question pertaining to buy-in from the community, Janet felt that transparency with the public is part of the process, that her firm would help PSFC in developing a web site, writing articles, and holding community meetings about the project to give the townspeople answers to their questions, especially about taxes.

2. They responded to the second question— two projects similar to Ipswich and the difficulties they encountered—by explaining Chelmsford’s and Ashland’s difficulties and solutions with sites for their complexes.

3. Weighing neighborhood support/opposition to a possible site was explained by doing matrix studies of sites and scoring the good and bad points. Weighing three different buildings in a system of matrices in the communities was another method.

4. The women responded to the question of how does the firm sell a site and design to the community?) by saying that they learn from their work with the PSFC how to make presentations, have presented at Town Meeting, but have also played a supporting role. Sometimes Fire and Police Chiefs do the majority of the convincing.

5. The commitment of Ipswich to energy conservation is a subject where opposition is expected within the Town. Janet and Amy mentioned their Tewksbury project that wanted LEED certification. HKT is very committed to sustainability, and the newest version does not require certification but includes many “green” advantages depending on the site, even in a renovation. Creative options would be examined.

6. Lastly, the three biggest challenges to overcome with the Ipswich project are (1)when people ask why you can’t just fix up the buildings, (2)when cost is the driver, and (3)choosing

the site that public safety wants. The firm does questionnaires in advance, field investigations, interviewing (always individually) with fire, police, and public safety, and then compares.

Peter asked, in follow-up questions, about a campus design as a selling point with a ballpark, etc. They stated possibilities and mentioned that community rooms are a huge sell as well. Bob asked about doing a project in phases; the architect replied that the cost escalates as the years go by. (\$500 per sq.ft. currently)

KAESLER-BOOS of Foxborough, MA At 7:45, Michael McKeon, Todd Costa, and Paul Dominov were asked and affirmed that they were comfortable with the 30-day extension. In business for 50 years, the firm does only public safety and school buildings.

1. Mike stressed the need for a marketing plan, a web site, and transparency. In talking to all of Ipswich citizens, PSFC or the architects would make presentations. Paul mentioned three-dimensional graphs, virtual reality, and building a model as a design tool which is very powerful for presentation.

2. Sharon, Sandwich, Holden, and Plainville were all projects similar to Ipswich in design context. The key to a feasibility study is getting enough information which comes about in three parts: the questionnaire, interviews, and programs from fire and police for sharing of facilities, discussing with both entities what will work and what may not work.

3. For addressing opposition and getting support from the community, Michael mentioned local press and using the website for questions.

4. The role of the architect in selling to the community—Michael stated that the selling has to come from the Town's professionals and while the architects are the experts, coordinated plans from interested citizens, letters to the editor, and even incorporating somebody from the "no" side are all essential.

5. Commitment to energy conservation and green building—Michael spoke of projects they had done which include geo-thermal heat and talked about the new energy requirements/costs.

6. Three biggest challenges to overcome—Michael gave as follows: 1. Transparent educational process to bring people on board, 2. Ground water problems, and 3. Cost—"getting the best bang for the buck".

Peter asked, in follow-up questions, about working with coastal communities and combining emergency management and other departments within the complex. They had, in fact, worked with several coastal communities and spoke of mechanical systems and variable refrigerants in campus facilities.

TGAS of Cambridge, MA At 8:45 Theodore Galante, the principal, and his two associates set up visuals and spoke of their specialization in public safety facilities.

1. In obtaining buy-in from the community, Ted exclaimed that what doesn't work is not engaging in community early enough! Open meetings should be held that invite community members, and abutters should be brought into the project immediately.

2. A project that was similar to Ipswich was in New Bedford and the presenters showed a graphic of the site solution.

3. Their method for weighing support and opposition is to present the site with its pros and cons and hear what citizens and neighbors have to say, listening, and then responding.

4. To sell the project to the community, they become part of the Ipswich team doing digital models and, in particular, physical models which can be displayed and studied by citizens. Ted spoke of quality assurance and quality control to eliminate change orders. In Davenport, Iowa, they were able to observe all that went on in the project due to the installation of cameras.

5. In regard to building green, Jamie informed the group that the codes put in force in 2015 require architects to be pretty energy efficient in designing. The general M O is to design with sustainability in mind. Ted said cost estimators are really great. They are always trying to capture the needs of the team and the neighbors for the building design.

6. The three biggest challenges for TGAS are (1)the need to go through the programming and understand the building needs, (2)the need to study growth and response times, and (3)finding suitable land (site) to include vehicle needs. (Cost: \$480-500 per sq.ft.)

When Keith asked if they build websites, they answered affirmatively. Harvey asked for the advantage of the physical model and was told that it stays in Town Hall for study by the people. Ted also said they study carcinogen transfer working with the school of public health in Boston. TGAS departed at 10 p.m.

Comments were made by the group in favor of having conducted the interviews and a decision was made to conduct a straw poll by each member ranking the firms as first, second, or third place. While there was a reversal of second and third places by two of the 12 members, Keith suggested making it a unanimous vote.

Jean E. moved, seconded by Bob W., to offer the feasibility project for Police and Fire Facilities in Ipswich, MA, to HKT as the #1 choice, TGAS as the #2 choice, and K-B as the #3 choice. UNANIMOUS.

In discussion, Charlie felt that we should include a physical model as part of the agreement since it had been mentioned by several members as an important hands-on portion of the study.

Chief Nikas felt, and others agreed, that the committee members had rated the firms' responses to the Committee's six questions, their presentations, their response toward the townspeople's needs, and the capabilities in their presentations for the best fit for the community of Ipswich. The Town Manager has thirty days to draw up an agreement before the other two firms will be notified.

The next meeting date will be deferred until the Town Manager has completed his work on the selection process.

ADJOURNMENT

Bob W. moved, seconded by Linda A., to adjourn at 10:25. UNANIMOUS.