

TRI-BOARD MEETING
FINANCE COMMITTEE, BOARD OF SELECTMEN, SCHOOL COMMITTEE
IPSWICH TOWN HALL, ROOM A
25 Green Street
TUESDAY, March 27, 2018, 7:00 PM
Accepted by FinCom 7/10/18

FinCom Members in Attendance: Rob White, Janice Clements Skelton, Walt Hartford, Chris Doucette, Jamie Fay, Michael Schaaf, Tammy Howe, and Kevin Murphy. Mike Dougherty was absent.

Select Board Attending: Bill Craft, Ed Rauscher, Linda Alexson, and William Whitmore. Nishan Mootafian was absent.

School Committee Members in Attendance: Chairwoman Sarah Player, Pavica Kneeder, Chub Whitten, and Nicole Zito. Hugh O’Flynn, Barry Hopping, and Joanne Cuff arrived at 7:50 pm. Carl Nysten was absent.

R. White called the Tri-Board meeting to order at 7:09 pm with 16 (sixteen) members present. S. Player called the School Committee to order with 4 (four) members present at 7:10 pm. ICAM was recording the meeting.

Other Officials in Attendance: Jim Engel (Acting Town Manager), Police Chief Nikas, Lt. Jon Hubbard (Emergency Manager), Jon Blair (ELD Manager), Sarah Johnson (Finance Director), Supt. Dr. Brian Blake, Tom Murphy (Town Moderator), Glenn Gibbs (Planning & Development Dir.), Greg Parachojuk (IT Dir.), and Joanne Cuff (Dir of Finance & Operations)

Abbreviations used: FINCOM Finance Committee, SB Select Board, TM Town Manager, SC School Committee, ATM Annual Town Meeting, CERT Civilian Emergency Response Team, ELD Electric Light Dept., EM Emergency Manager, EOC Emergency Operations Center, GSC Government Study Committee, IHS Ipswich High School, IT Information Technology, MEMA Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, MSBA Massachusetts School Building Authority, OPEB Other Post Employment Benefits, RATM Ratified at Town Meeting, RFP Request for Proposal, ZBA Zoning Board of Authority

Documents used:

- Agenda 03/27/18
- ELD Packet on the Storms from J. Blair
- ELD PowerPoint from J. Blair
- Version 5 of the Warrant Articles from J. Engel, 3/27/18
- Map of the Riverwalk from G. Gibbs

CITIZEN’S QUERIES—there were no inquiries.

ELD UPDATE/EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Jon Blair, ELD Manager, reported on the four northeasters in March and the electric substation that feeds into Ipswich. He described the damage for the March 2nd and 8th storms and the remote area that was affected. Some of the work crews came from other towns, and he is still

dealing with some issues today. There has been a good relationship with National Grid, and the Forestry Dept. has a good mitigation plan.

Over the past 50 years, the purposes of the power plant have changed, but there was good coordination with the departments and other towns. There are 1 ¼ miles of transmission lines which the ELD owns, but there is no good access. Jon mentioned that he is working with Lt. Hubbard to patrol that region. With phone lines and email not working, communications with the public were a problem until the ELD started to use social media.

There is a need for better standard operating procedures with departments and debriefings. Some other issues include paying the bills for the work crews staying here while they work. Jon talked about having three new positions for power plant apprentice, operations manager/superintendent, and integration/communications coordinator. The ELD could do rolling blackouts.

Even though it is more efficient to redo the electric plant, it is faster to bring in backup generators, especially for the water treatment plant. At the power plant, Jon indicated that one of the nine generators can power up to provide electricity to the ELD office, but he has limited staff. The linemen are quite busy, and sending out too much power can damage the customer's equipment. Hugh O'Flynn, Barry Hopping, and Joanne Cuff joined the meeting.

There was a conversation about our other generating assets such as wind power, which is not reliable in high winds. Another item was having more information on the Town website ahead of time and alerts. Communications with National Grid went well, but Jon would like to know about their maintenance and protocols. Another suggestion was to reach out to the big companies in town for their concerns.

Dr. Blake talked about the good communication between the schools and ELD. Hugh asked about the IHS generator, which Lt. Hubbard says it could power a shelter if needed, but it is not big enough for other purposes. According to Dr. Blake, the refrigerated food was moved from the other schools to the IHS.

Lt. Hubbard talked about the Ipswich CERT team, which supported over 100 people in the shelter for two storms. During the second one, he declared a state of emergency and opened a regional shelter. The National Guard was here for both storms, and the Open Door Food Pantry brought food. Red Cross came and brought cots for the overnight shelter, and Rowley residents and volunteers came.

Even though the January storm was worse, the Town almost ran out of water in March due to a lack of power. Lt. Hubbard commented of the use of social media to get the word out about the water issue, but there can be a lot of misinformation there also.

The Hazard Mitigation plan has expired, but Emergency Management has received a grant from MEMA where the Town does a 25% match. He ran a course for kids as EM in their own home in a disaster, and now this is covered in the budget. With the weather station purchase, the weather information can be posted to the website.

Bill Craft spoke about the shelter, power plant, and how many things worked well. Even though MEMA has an online map of power outages, there is no Ipswich information as the town is not a National Grid customer. MEMA did contact us using Web EOC, according to Lt. Hubbard.

PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING STUDY

Bobby Weatherall, Chair of the Public Safety Building Committee, told the group about the feasibility study for a community building based on our needs. Chief Nikas added that two firms have helped estimate the cost of the study for police, fire, harbormaster, shellfish, dispatch, EM, and Animal Control. Janice and Chris wanted to focus on the RFP first and determine the cost later. Bob continued that the Select Board (SB) asked that this be pursued in this manner.

For the previous study, Jamie noted that it was for the Elm St. location and talked about those results. This one would determine the town's needs based on demographics and infrastructure and then find solutions. Funding for the article would come from the stabilization fund and require a 2/3 majority vote.

Proceeding without a site, Chief Nikas claimed the study would say how big an area would be required for the next 40 years. If the study is complete but there is not site, once one was available, the study is already complete. They intend to look at town-owned land, cost effectiveness, and the many alternatives to meet local need. The Chief says the response time of the Fire Dept., not the Police Dept., is the most important factor. This may take one year to complete, but it would be good for 10 years.

FY19 ATM WARRANT ARTICLES - REVIEW

Doing a quick review of the articles, Jim went through version 5 of the warrant. Article 1 is supported by SB 5-0, and Article 2 is the FinCom election. SB voted 5-0 for Art. 3 and Art. 4. With Art. 5 on the elementary school, the SC is developing the final language. This article will need a 2/3 majority, and Kevin went over the mechanics of the vote at ATM and town elections. The MSBA will only reimburse the Town for one feasibility study, and there is much competition among the towns for State funds. Only 17 proposals from 83 cities and towns were considered, and there is no reconsideration.

For Bean Counting, Rob has a draft agenda but needs to find a venue for that meeting. There was some discussion on the format and the final version on Article 5. They are talking with Town Counsel and may need to include pre-school and other language. The SB is voting April 2nd and the FinCom on April 10th. For Bean Counting, the language must be clear and understandable.

For Articles 6 and 7, the SB voted to support 5-0, Article 8 is RATM. The SB is waiting for numbers on Art. 10 and are holding the Capital Plan article for now. For Art. 11, their vote was 5-0. The SB has no position on Article 12 on 40 B, which may be indefinitely postponed. There was some dialog on the ZBA involvement on this project.

The SB voted 4-1 for Article 13, the Public Safety Building study. For Art. 14, ATM would will move \$100,000 in free cash to stabilization. Art. 15 is for OPEB, and SB voted 5-0 in favor. The Planning Board will be making a recommendation for Art. 16 on zoning so the SB vote is pending. Art. 17 on Open Space is waiting a Planning Board decision.

For Art. 18, a citizen's petition, for Planning Board elections, the SB opposed 4-1 as there are some issues. Ed suggested that the GSC review this and determine a course of action. Art. 19-22 are also citizen's petitions, and the SB opposed 5-0. There was some discussion on placing these on the ballot, the forensic audit, and other related items.

FY19 CAPITAL BUDGET REVIEW

Copies of the Capital Budget had been sent out with changes to some definitions and items. Jim explained how columns F, G, and H were utilized. There was some dialog on the leases. IT Director, Greg Parachojuk spoke about the technology replacement program and the two items not funded by the SB—email migration to the Cloud and a risk assessment. He mentioned the Town and Utilities share of the costs, and it time to upgrade the 13-year old system. The Police Dept. has its own email system. There was a conversation about servers, technology support, having better IT, and more collaboration.

Ed noted that the Town pays for IT user fees, archiving, backups, hosting, the number of users, and migration, and he indicated the differences between the school and town networks. With a major upgrade a few years ago, the schools obtain donations to help pay for services, and Greg stated their licensing is free. There is some concern about working together instead of having information silos and funding the technology from the budget. E. Rauscher left at 10:20 pm. When the new Town Manager arrives, this should be part of the budget conversation.

Supt. Blake had a priority list of facility items, and Michael mentioned the wind turbine. J. Clements-Skelton left at 10:22 pm. Jon Blair added more information about the turbine and costs. There was some discussion about the school scoreboards and the tennis courts, which are 20 years old. For other buildings, Jim has an RFP for the work that is needed throughout the town.

The next item was the Pony Express barn and improvements, but Linda Alexson opposes this plan. Glenn Gibbs went on to talk about the funding for this in the previous year, and bids are coming in higher than anticipated. After talking about taxable and non-taxable bonds, Bill Craft mentioned the uses of Pony Express and how the project may have to be scaled back. The subcommittee can look at the fields, parking, and other options, and Glenn will send the document to the FinCom.

Before the storms, the Police Dept. was having some issues with their generator. Chief Nikas is also looking at where the generators are in town and where they are needed. One of the generators at the Police Station will be replaced, but it can be reused elsewhere, and a study on the generators would have more specifics about this.

Other concerns with the generators included possible zoning issues, permits, and generator startup times at Police and Fire stations. For the winter emergencies, Lt. Hubbard stated that no clients from assisted living facilities were sent to hospitals. Jim indicated that there are a number of vehicles for various departments in this budget. There was some dialog on having smaller vehicle for the deputy chief car.

On the Riverwalk, Glenn described the economic development in that area and the easements. H. O'Flynn left at 10:53 pm. This plan has been going on for 15 years, and he outlined the amounts that have been set aside since 2004.

The conversation turned to planning for climate change and monies received from Coastal Zone Management to address king tides and flooding. Some other topics mentioned included the Town Wharf pumping station, planning for sea level rise, uniform standards, and funding sources. Jim listed the various ways including set asides, where an amount is placed in an account for unusual expenses. For example, the fire engine set aside will be there for three more years and has helped fund several projects.

At the High School, Rob brought up the lack of air conditioning in half the rooms and the microphones at the Performing Arts Center. Dr. Blake explained how the system works, but there may be a need for more microphones and also in Room A at Town Hall. There was some concern for the deputy fire chief space at the fire station. Sarah noted that the capital plan process needs improvement.

FY19 – SHARED SERVICES REVIEW

The shared services are IT, Facilities, and Human Resources (HR), and there were a number of concerns about collaboration. Bean Counting might be a better time for further discourse. Jim

wanted to focus on the needs of the schools, utilities, and town and shared personnel rather than just IT as an issue. Dr. Blake commented on HR. The school system has about 400 staff, while the Town has 149, which is a big difference. In the schools, there are 1700 computers plus the servers and other equipment.

NEW BUSINESS—there was no new business

It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 11:41 pm. The vote was unanimous for the FinCom and BOS.

For the School Committee, it was moved and seconded to adjourn at 10:53 pm. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by

Cynthia D. Quinn, Minutes Secretary