

Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes
September 10, 2019
7:30 PM
Town Hall – Room 204

Present: Christi Andersen, Roland Bourdon, Jason Cole, Tom Farley, Mike Majors, Sahana Purohit, Christine Russell, Steve Noone, Al Vlajinac (Associate)

Absent: Dave Wellinghoff

1. Opening

Chair Roland Bourdon opened the meeting at 7:30 PM
This meeting was recorded by Acton TV.

2. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

3. Acton Police Department Green Fleet Initiative

Acton Police Chief Richard Burrows presented to the Finance Committee on the Police Department's Green Fleet Initiative.

- The Department's 1st electric acquisition was an electric motorcycle which was donated by Bursaw Gas. It will be used primarily on the rail trail or special events, not on regular calls.
- Deputy Chief Cogan spoke about the PD's 2nd green venture, a plug-in hybrid Ford Fusion which was acquired over the summer. He has been driving the vehicle to evaluate its potential use for the department. The hybrid will not be used for patrols. It gets 308 miles per gallon and will run 30 miles on electric alone.
- The Police Department will also be acquiring 2 hybrid cruisers by early October. These vehicles are different than the aforementioned Fusion because they are specifically built as police cruisers. Ford, the maker of the vehicles, released calculations on the expected Police Department savings, which are based on mileage and also anticipated vehicle idling time.
 - With the current PD fleet of 13 marked & 10 unmarked vehicles, switching to hybrid vehicles is expected to save \$35,000 per year (using an estimate of \$2 per gallon of gas).
 - The entire fleet is expected to turnover to hybrid by 2025. Vehicles no longer part of the active Police fleet will be repurposed to other departments.

- Hybrid Vehicles cost + \$3,200 to purchase. The breakeven point is year 2.

4. Acton Boxborough Regional School District Proposed Building Update

Superintendent Peter Light updated the Finance Committee on the proposed Douglas/Gates Dual School Building Project. The School Building Committee reviewed 15 different options for the site of the Douglas & Gates Schools. They ultimately chose to go with a single-phase construction, twin elementary school. It will include both the Douglas & Gates Schools plus 9 preschool classrooms.

Some design aspects:

- The 1st floor will have administrative offices, shared common space, gym & cafeteria space, STEAM labs, & house the preschool classrooms (with own separate entrance).
- The 2nd & 3rd floors will be identical with one of the schools on each floor. There will be a shared 2 story library/media center.
- Capacity 990 students. Including the preschool 1,150 students.

Value aspects:

- Original estimate for one school was \$99,000,000. Final Budget for both, plus preschool, \$117,500,500.
- Completing the project in a single-phase will save \$7,000,000 & 15 months of construction time
- Were able to deduct \$3,500,000 by scrutinizing original cost estimates for areas to save on through value engineering.

Funding aspects:

- MSBA will reimburse for 49.7% of the eligible project costs. Estimated to be \$39,700,000. A factor in MSBA reimbursement is the ability of taxpayers to fund the project.
- \$36,500,000 of the costs are excluded or ineligible for MSBA reimbursement.
 - Will only reimburse for 1 set of administrative offices, while 2 are needed for dual school. Preschool classrooms and offices excluded as well.
 - \$333 per sq ft of construction costs covered, project will cost \$505 per sq ft
 - Technology up to \$1200 per student is covered, but not a realistic figure per Light. (\$1500 per student budgeted, plus technology for preschool areas)
 - Some building contingencies are not reimbursable.
- Remaining \$76,900,000 will need to be funded by the School District. Acton's portion estimated at \$65,300,000 which will impact the average tax bill \$450 to \$600 per year.
- Permitting fees were not factored into the presentation. In Acton, they are typically 1.5% of the total project costs, but Light is working with Town Manager John Mangiaratti to reevaluate how the fees will be charged. He explained that there is ample money in the contingency plans to cover the permitting fees.

The expected timeline of the project:

- MSBA project approval October 30th. 120 day window to get funding.
- Acton Town meeting in December for funding approval.
 - Mary Brolin from the School Building Committee, and a resident of Boxboro briefly spoke with feedback of Boxboro residents. She said more outreach is needed.
- Finalize some interior design before breaking ground in late June 2020
- 2 years of construction, open Fall 2022
- Over the following year, tear down the old Douglas & Gates Schools. Build parking lot.

5. North Acton Fire Station Update

The Finance Committee was given an update on the North Acton Fire Station project by Town Manager John Mangiaratti and Fire Chief Robert Hart. Also assisting in the presentation were representatives from the design team, Kaestle Boos Associates Inc. When Mangiaratti last updated the Finance Committee, the fire station design had been completed and independent cost estimates were sent out. The cost estimates have now been reconciled.

- Total anticipated costs are \$10,915,550, which include soft costs, like equipment, & contingency costs.
- Some of the considerations driving up the price are the busy state of the construction market, the strive for having a green building, & site complexities
- The project team is working on community outreach while waiting for the project to go up for vote at the Special Town Meeting & Special Town Election in December

6. Finance Committee Business

A. Approval of meeting minutes

The July 23rd minutes were reviewed and approved as amended.

The August 6th minutes were reviewed and approved.

The August 27th minutes were reviewed and approved as amended.

B. Committee Liaison Reports

Committee Members who are liaisons to Committees that met during the interim between last FinCom meeting and this meeting gave reports as to what occurred at those meetings.

7. Adjournment

At 9:58 p.m., it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

Handout on Ford Motor Vehicle Police Hybrid Option

School Building Project Slideshow

North Acton Fire Station Slideshow

July 23rd Meeting Minutes
August 6th Meeting Minutes
August 27th Meeting Minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Finance Committee