

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

TOWN HALL RENOVATIONS PROJECT BUILDING COMMITTEE

**CORRECTED SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

October 5, 2016

Town Hall Lower Level, Conference Room L101

**Corrections in Bold**

- I. Call to Order – Mr. Miner called the meeting to order at 5:03 PM.
- II. Roll Call – Members present: Chris Miner, Chairperson; Dave Nagel, Anthony Claffey, Joe Harpie, and Whit Przech. Others present: Members of the public; Roy Zartarian, Mayor; and Jeff Baron, Director of Administrative Services.
- III. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes - Mr. Harpie made a motion that the minutes of the September 21, 2016 meeting be approved as presented. A second to the motion was made by Mr. Nagel. The motion passed by a vote of 5 YES to 0 NO.
- IV. Public Participation – None.
- V. Discuss and Take Action on Request for Proposals – Mr. Baron distributed the updated draft of the Request for Proposals (RFP) document and briefly explained what it included. The discussion that took place afterwards is summarized as follows. The Chair suggested adding that firms are strongly encouraged to attend the pre-proposal conference. Mr. Baron will make that change. Mr. Przech questioned the inclusion of the statement that the project shall not exceed \$25 million. The DTC report had that figure, but it did not include the roof replacement, and only light screening for hazardous materials. He questioned if the project could be done for \$25 million and felt that it was odd to put a limit in right off the bat. Mr. Miner responded that the Town was trying to be responsible by notifying firms that the constraints are in place. If the limit were to be exceeded, it would be on the architect. He is looking to put the RFP out and see what numbers come back. He feels the project is not greatly out of line but that it will be tight. The current construction environment is aggressive and right now, that is to the Building Committee's advantage. Mr. Harpie stated that problems had occurred with previous efforts that were without a dollar limit. The Town Council has deemed this to be the dollar limit. Mr. Miner felt that the previous building committee had been working in this direction. They had lowered the square footage and the cost estimate at the end. Mr. Harpie asked about the anticipated timeline, working with the target deadlines on page 2 of the RFP. Those deadlines would allow the Committee to make a recommendation to the Town Council in March or April of 2017. The document is both an RFQ and an RFP, in that

proposals will be requested of short listed firms from among those who have submitted qualifications statements.

Mr. Claffey questioned the cost referenced for swing space, the two million dollar figure to relocate, house, and return employees while their office space is being worked on. Since this not a hard number, he suggested the Committee could ask for a better, firmer number. He questioned if the architect, rather than the Town should be responsible for this. He noted the Committee was really asking the architect to complete this project for \$23 million. The architect will say whether it is conceivable or not. He felt the Committee was leaving out an important aspect of the \$25 million. The Chair explained that if the Committee asked the architect to do that, the architect would do what works best for them, not necessarily what is the most cost effective for the Town. The Committee will have to be responsible with furniture, fixtures and equipment (FF&E) also. Mr. Przech stated that he was also concerned with the space allocations. The Committee will see how that plays out with the architect's conceptual design. Mr. Harpie felt that the Committee will know early on when the evaluation (of the two options, renovate in place or demolition followed by right-sizing) is performed by the architect. The Chair read an e-mail from Town Councilor and Committee member Jim Marocchini, who was unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Marocchini supports the RFP, would favor a 28,000 to 30,000 square foot Community Center, and would favor calling for modern style office space. These items can be discussed as the Committee hires an architect. At Mr. Claffey and Mr. Przech's suggestion section II H of the draft RFP (that dealt with relocating departments within the building) will be removed to eliminate confusion.

Mr. Przech stated he would support the RFP but felt that the not to exceed \$25 million requirement tied the Committee's hands, and that he didn't understand why it was included. Mr. Miner responded that the architect will come back with an indication that the Committee can or can't get its' gross square footage for that cost. The Committee needs to start somewhere. The \$25 million is the charge of the Town Council. The Committee will know quickly if it is possible or not. Mr. Harpie made a motion that the Committee accept the Request for Proposals document as amended. A second to the motion was made by Mr. Nagel. The motion passed by a vote of 5 YES to 0 NO. Mr. Harpie felt that the Committee had taken a giant step forward this evening. Mayor Zartarian felt the Committee had achieved a major milestone in getting the RFP together. He recognizes Mr. Przech's concern over the \$25 million limit and hopes that Mr. Przech understands the Mayor's concern as well. Two earlier Town Hall projects did not move forward due in part to the cost. The Town has other projects on the horizon. Mr. Nagel stated that he felt the Committee had reached some kind of moving point. He was happy to see that members were working together and compromising.

- VI. Any Other Business Pertinent to the Committee – The Chairman stated that he had attended the Library Addition/Renovation Project Building Committee meeting the previous evening. That Committee was discussing the summary of the draft of their feasibility study that is expected in early November. He will continue to work with them to avoid duplication. Mr. Nagel noted that he was a member of the Library Building Committee, and cautioned that the number in the initial summary **(\$19,000,000)** is not a final number. More information has to be gathered, and hopefully that will result in a lower amount.
- VII. Public Participation – Gail Budrejko, 21 Isabelle Terrace, with questions as to what options there were if the \$25 million cap was not feasible. Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive, spoke on figures from the previous Town Hall projects.
- VIII. Response to Public Participation – Mr. Miner responded that the \$2 million for swing space was in the DTC report. It is the number that has been used for a while. It will allow for swing space for the 86 employees in the building. The project would factor in a possible increase of up to 100 employees in the future. He agrees that the Town Hall project is a top priority and is also frustrated that it has taken this long. He doesn't see the \$25 million limit as unrealistic. Mr. Baron was asked if a new RFP would be necessary if the \$25 limit was not determined to be feasible. If architects failed to respond then a new RFP would be called for. The Chair noted that the Committee could ask the Town Council for a new charge with a higher threshold at that point in time. Mr. Nagel stated that the Central Connecticut Health District at one point intended to leave the Town Hall to consolidate elsewhere, but has since decided to keep a presence in Newington. A space for them is included in the anticipated project. The Chair concluded by stating that he wants to work with a unified group as a building committee to bring the project to fruition.
- IX. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 5:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jeff Baron*

Jeff Baron  
Director of Administrative Services