

PUBLIC HEARING
THE TOWN OF WINDSOR LOCKS

50 Church Street

Windsor Locks, CT 06096

Minutes of the January 2, 2024, Public Hearing

BOARD OF SELECTMAN PRESENT:

First Selectman Paul Harrington, Selectman Scott Storms and Selectman Jonathan Savino

ALSO PRESENT:

Chief of Police Eric Osanitsch, Building Committee Chairman Michael Rosadini, Board of Finance Member Patricia Murphy (Coordinating Zoom), Brad Anderson (Downes Construction), Jeff Anderson (Downes Construction), Mark Allen (Jacunski & Humes Architects) and Brian Humes (Jacunski & Humes Architects)

I. Call to Order

- a. The Honorable First Selectman Paul Harrington, called the Public Hearing to order at 7:00PM in the Ella Grasso Room located at the Windsor Locks Town Hall.

II. 2024 Amending the Senior Center Project and Police Headquarters Project to increase the appropriations and borrowing authorizations for each.

- a. First Selectman Paul Harrington gave a brief history on the Police and Senior Center projects. Spoke about how in 2008 a Police Headquarters Committee was formed. At that time, it would cost \$13.5 million dollars to build a new Police Headquarters and the project was never pushed forward to the public. In 2021 the new Senior Center and Police Headquarters was proposed for \$28 million dollars. In March of 2022, the town hired Downes Construction as the construction manager. The first schematic drawings of the buildings came at \$11 million dollars over budget. The team went back to the drawing board and “value engineered” the two buildings on ways to bring down the cost. One of the ways they were able to bring down the cost of this project was to have both floors of the Police Headquarters the same size. It is cheaper to build up than out. In July of 2022, the buildings were presented to the Board of Finance and the total approximate cost for both buildings would be \$33.5 million dollars and we would know the exact amount of these buildings after the projects went out to bid. At this point, the building designs by Jacunski and Humes were turned over to Downes Construction to open the project to bid. Once the bids were tallied, the project cost total was \$32,212,356. This was \$4.7 million dollars over budget. Harrington did explain that prices have gone up since 2020. Also, there was a need to add a fire pump to the buildings because the municipal water is low on pressure which would add to the cost of these buildings. Raw materials have also increased. There are two contingency funds. \$791,000 for construction contingency and \$1.5 million for owner contingency. If these two contingency funds are not used, this money could be returned. The buildings would be made from brick to last the next fifty years. In March of 2022, \$3 million of the initial \$28 million project budget had been allocated to purchasing the land on Spring Street, engineering/drawings, and testing on the land. Harrington explained that if we pivot and scrap the project, we would have burned \$3 million dollars and wasted a lot of time. If this additional money gets unlocked, breaking ground starts in January. The total project would take 14-16 months to complete.
- b. Resident Russ Sulk (*76 Oakridge Drive*) asked about the cost for clearing the land in 2020. Has the cost gone up? How is the \$4.7 million dollars going to get paid?
- c. First Selectman Paul Harrington responded that the bid came in at \$3 million for the site work. He did not know what the cost for sitework would have been in 2020 because the project had not yet been sent out to bid. Harrington suggested it was up to the Board of Finance on how they want to pay for the \$4.7 million increase and if they would like to bond additional monies. He didn't know if there

- will be a tax increase because we don't know future revenues. \$28 million was already borrowed while interest rates were lower.
- d. Resident Douglas Glazier (*167 Taft Lane*) encouraged passing this proposed \$4.7 million increase. He suggested taking \$4 million from our "rainy day fund". The fund is currently at \$13 million and if we draw from this reserve fund, we would still have \$9 million remaining. In his past research, he found that most towns have a reserve fund of \$8-12 million.
 - e. First Selectman Paul Harrington stated that both projects rely on each other. The Senior Center Project budget bought the land while the Police Headquarters Project budget bought the fire suppression system. If both buildings do not pass, we would need to go back to the drawing board and need additional monies for re designing and drawings.
 - f. **Public Hearing Recessed at 7:29PM for Town Meeting**
 - g. **Public Hearing Reconvened at 7:37PM.**
 - h. Resident Mark Whitten (*31 Acorn Drive*) stated that the cost is a "not to exceed cost" and no more price increase.
 - i. First Selectman Paul Harrington responded that there is a guaranteed maximum price by our construction manager, Downes Construction.
 - j. Resident Russ Sulk (*76 Oakridge Drive*) is concerned about how to find out about these meetings?
 - k. First Selectman Paul Harrington shared that there is a "stay informed" section of the town's website and urged residents to sign up for these notifications. Also, this meeting was published in the Journal Inquirer by law.

III. Adjournment

First Selectman Paul Harrington adjourned the Public Hearing at 7:48PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Christopher Latournes
Windsor Locks Town Clerk