



POLICE COMMISSION

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MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING
BETHEL POLICE COMMISSION
THURSDAY, JUL 23 2015
MUNICIPAL CENTER 1 SCHOOL ST, GENERAL PURPOSE ROOM

HEAD TABLE: POLICE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN MIKE DUFF
POLICE CHIEF JEFFREY FINCH

ATTENDING: COMMISSIONER RICHARD KOLWICZ

Chairman Duff called the hearing to order at 7:05 p.m.

Chairman Duff read from a prepared statement as follows:

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for being here tonight. I would like to establish a common point of reference for tonight's public hearing. First of all it is the opinion of the Public Site and Building Committee and that of the Police Commission that the present police station is functionally obsolescent and is built on an unacceptable site. We feel that the new Bethel police station should be built on good solid ground which gives us effective access to the community and internal functionality that meets our present needs of those of the foreseeable future. We believe the selected location off of Judd Ave meets all our site requirements and has the financial advantage of being Town owned property. We believe the architectural concept that was presented to us is exactly what we need that this proposed building should serve us for decades without the need to refurbish or expand.

After many hours of reviewing the line items which would establish the anticipated cost of the new building it has been ascertained that a sum of \$13,188,000 would be the cost for a new police station. This figure of course will be addressed by the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance.

We will endeavor to answer every question asked tonight and those questions for which we do not have an answer, we will get those answers and publish them. It is anticipated that we will have at least one more informational meeting prior to a Town meeting and I would like to point out that if evidence or compelling argument is presented to the Police Commission indicating that corrective action to our agenda is needed, it is the responsibility of the Police Commission and all those involved to review and adjust it if need be.

The floor is now open to public comment.

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TOWN OF BETHEL
TOWN CLERK

Dominick Ippolito, 33 Linda La

Mr Ippolito asked if the varying outside veneer proposals can be visually presented as artist renditions.

Chairman Duff stated that the front would still be in brick while the portion the public does not see from the road would be in another material still to be decided which would be cheaper than brick. Since that material is still being considered an artist rendition cannot be done at this time. Overall the intent was to cut costs in areas which would maintain the durability and functionality of the structure

Larry Crabas, 15 Kellog St

Mr Crabas stated that cuts should be of a nature which would not necessitate replacement in a short period of time. He related his experience with school building proposal cuts resulting in cheaper alternatives which required expensive replacement within a few years such as the boiler at Berry School and the roof at Middle School. He encouraged concentrating not just on aesthetics but also on internal components so the Town can get as many years out of the structure as possible.

Chairman Duff commented that the community has historically designed great structures that were subsequently cost trimmed before referendum to the point that problems soon developed after construction resulting in expensive replacement far beyond the dollar amounts originally trimmed. He sees this building as designed serving us for a century. Replacing or refurbishing the existing structure on the present flood plain site will cost far more than the proposed structure on the Judd site.

Regina Epolito, 33 Linda La

Ms Epolito asked about the origin of the architectural standards used in the design. Chairman Duff stated that the architect employed specializes in the construction of police buildings having designed two dozen or more. The Building Committee hired the architect to design a building to specifications put forth by the Police Commission. Chief Finch detailed the difference between a normal industrial style building and the needs of a police building such as the uselessness of sheet rock in prisoner areas and the need to direct foot traffic of people entering and leaving.

Ms Epolito also asked about the level of security "in light of the times". Security will be "subliminal" but "substantial" according to Chairman Duff. The intent is to make the public feel "at ease" entering the building creating a harmony so people feel the police officer is "part of the community" in doing his job. This is a new era in law enforcement according to the Chairman with the traditional crime still in place but also the added factor of electronic, cybercrime.

Dominick Ippolito, 33 Linda La

Mr Ippolito asked if a list of reduction line items can be made available. Chairman Duff stated that there will not be a line item discussion but rather a breakdown of how dollars are to be spent will be provided before the Town meeting. Selection of the numbers for the bottom line resulting in the overall \$800,000 lower number came from the Building

Committee in sitting down with the Police Commission. The Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance will be the ultimate referee.

Commissioner Duff summarized by using the present building as a classic how not-to-do example in the location and design of a police building. The goal is to build a structure on which no work needs to be done for at least the next 20 years.

At 7:28 Chairman Duff closed the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ferd Miller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "F" and "M".

Ferdinand Miller Jr
Secretary

