

CANDIA SAFETY FACILITY COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES OF
August 7, 2024
UNAPPROVED

SFC Members Present: Brien Brock (BOS), Russ Dann (BOS), Tom Severino, Ed Domings (FD), Jim, Joe Flanagan, Josh Reap, Jake Robie, Captain Michael Kelley Via Zoom, Police Chief Chad Shevlin and Andria Hansen (TA).

Absent: Dennis Hebert, Jeff Wuebbolt, Chief Mike McGillen (PD), Mark Chalbeck (PB), Rick Langlois (PD), Jim Wilson (FD).

5:00 pm B. Brock called the public meeting to order immediately followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Brock presented a thank you card to T. Severino for all of his efforts in assisting the Committee with creating plans to find out if building an addition to the Town Hall for the PD was a possible option.

B. Brock introduced Candia's new Police Chief Chad Shevlin to the Committee.

B. Brock said Joshua Reap from Candia's Budget Committee is interested in joining their Committee. The Committee welcomed him aboard.

B. Brock said in their last meeting J. Flanagan was asked to find out more information about the HUD Grant. J. Flanagan said the Grant is called the Congressional Directed Spending. WMUR TV has confirmed U.S. Senator Maggie Hassan recently had a large bill and New Boston was the N.H. Town that received over \$2 million dollars for a new FD facility. He indicated that U.S. Senators Jeanne Shaheen and Maggie Hassan assist in government funding for building infrastructures. He asked Fire Chief D. Young if he wanted a new Fire Station, and if they want the PD and FD as a Safety Complex so they can do this all together, and at one time. They will need to present this to their Senators as a proposal and indicate they have the property, infrastructure, plans and will need everyone to be on the same page. If they could incorporate all the deficiencies of both departments and have everything together along with a unified training facility (EOC) it would be beneficial to the town. B. Brock asked if there is any criteria to receiving the Grant, and if it needs to be approved by the Town. J. Flanagan answered no. This Committee would need to approve it and then present it to the Senators for the Congressional Directed Spending. We can find out more when our Committee starts talking to the people at the Congressional Direct Spending. The Grant amount we would receive is based on the project. The Town of New Boston had a new FD Facility built with everything they wanted and received a \$2 million Grant.

B. Brock said in their last meeting our Committee agreed that there seems to be more grant money available for Fire Departments. J. Flanagan said the information he is looking at applies to either and if they combined both together, they could do that. The original plan they made has not changed much.

J. Reap asked if the Grant money from the U.S. Senators are matching funds or if it is 80/20 ratio. J. Flanagan said as far as he knows it is 100%. J. Flanagan said they will need to talk to Senator Shaheen and Senator Hassan to find out which one of them is more supportive. T. Severino read information that was disclosed about the Grants available under the matching requirements. *Several Federal Programs eligible for Community Project Funding requests require a state or local match for projects either by statute or according to long standing policy. The Committee will not waive these matching requirements for Community Project Funding Requests, so it is important that member offices discuss what their state and local officials the ability to meet matching requirements prior to requesting a project.*

B. Brock said if it is a matching project then this would need to go to the Town according to what T. Severino has read. If it is matching funds and the project is \$6 million dollars, and the Town receives

\$3 million, then that would mean the Town will need to come up with \$3 million to match. Therefore, they are still in the same situation as before.

Fire Chief D. Young said we all know what the Taxpayers are going to pass in this Town. The Vote at the last election to build the Police Station was 489 against the 294. He believes they should stay the course. He has talked to T. Severino about rectifying the mistakes that were made with their first presentation a year ago and should try to redo the PD in realizing that they already know that a lot of people will flip flop on a vote. You are talking about \$3 million dollars for it. There are a lot of old people in this town, and \$1 million dollars is unbelievable, and they cannot even fathom that amount of money, and to be asking them for that, they are not going to vote for it. The younger people may be different, because their pay is different. They will need the votes from all of these people, and he does not think they will get it. He believes the best thing is to work on the Police Station at the land site that was purchased and to see what they can do to convince people to vote for it. If they try to add the Fire Station into the plans it would be more than \$3 million dollars. He thinks the Committee needs to go the route they think will pass with the voters. He had a conversation with the Grant Writer for their Fire Department, and he indicated there is no money out there for Fire Stations and buildings. He will be writing a grant for a new fire truck which is a 2 for 1 grant, in meaning if you get rid of 2 and you will get 1. There is money for a new fire truck, however there is no money for a Fire Station. If they submit a Grant and there is any type of errors, it will be thrown away in the trash, as that is how they eliminate them. He said it is unbelievably difficult to receive a grant.

J. Flanagan said they would not be the ones that submit the grant. Our Committee would submit a request to the Senators people who will write the grant and will be the ones who take care of it. The Committee will need to disclose that they have the property, plans and everything except the money to build and communicate to them what they want to do. His question is, will they be including the FD with the PD building.

R. Dann said when we are talking about writing a grant, we are going to find someone that writes grants. They are not going to just throw something out there, we are going to work on this continuously, because this needs to be done and we are talking about a building for 50 years or more. Fire Chief D. Young you had said that your Fire Station was good for 10 years, and that was over 6 years ago.

M. Kelley via Zoom said he believes more people would support a Fire and Police Safety Complex. He has talked to many people that had voted no, including himself for the Police Station, because the Town deserves a Safety Complex. Their Fire Station is over 86 years old and there needs to be some better accommodations. He feels there are a lot of people in town that voted no, because they wanted a Safety Complex that would include a Fire Department and not just a Police Station.

R. Dann said, Chief Young you had said that your Fire Station was good for another 10 years, and that was over 6 years ago, so you only have another 4 years by saying that. By the time this Committee puts this together that FD will be more obsolete than it is today. He understands that everything is questionable, but there are people who will or will not support it. It is the job of this Committee to feed this information to the townspeople, to find out what they want and let them say yes or no. It is at that point do we bring it totally forward for our vote or not, and that is what this Committee is for.

Fire Chief D. Young said if you present a plan for a Safety Complex costing \$6-8 million dollars for a total package without a grant, he will guarantee you that it will fail so miserably it will be worse than that. Remember that you need a 3/5's majority vote, because it would be a bond. He thinks they are barking up the wrong tree. You might get more against it, because it will cost more money.

J. Reap said he thinks it would be helpful to find out from our Reps. Jeanne Shaheen or Chris Pappas' office, if there are avenues for Federal Assistance that do not require a match. He believes that will help direct this conversation more productively in a way that they can figure out if they want only the PD or if they want both the PD and FD Facility together. J. Flanagan asked the Committee if they want to add only the PD or to add the PD and FD together. J. Reap said he thinks they can ask the Representatives before getting to that step, as there is no harm in asking them about the mechanisms available is there. Do all of the Grants that are available require a match or is there a member item process. He thinks that will help them with the follow up conversation of what they want. J. Flanagan said this is on the infrastructure bill. J. Reap agreed that it is and

mentioned that while he was working in DC he had spoken to Pappas, and he heard that our PD had failed at Town Voting, and that he is looking into ways of helping us. Chair Brock asked J. Reap if he could look into this and to find out if anything is available as it would be very helpful. J. Reap volunteered to call their office as well as J. Flanagan.

J. Flanagan asked if they wanted to build a PD or PD & FD Safety Complex. R. Severino said he believes the answer to this is first to find out what kind of funding is available, then he would be able to answer his question.

R. Dann said what was proposed at the last voting was voted down. Do the people understand that construction costs can increase about 10% in a year? The same complex they wanted to build will now cost an additional \$300,000 next year. Every time that they put off monies like this, it has big numbers that you have to encumber, therefore educating the public is so important. This Committee had cut the design plans down to only the bare essentials needed, and in 10 years from now if we need to add on to it, what are we gaining? The most important thing is we want to take care of the community, we are talking about the PD, FD and safety for every one of us in Town.

R. Severino said he is not on the same page as R. Dann and disagrees. The bottom line is the taxpayers can see only so much money. Let's say if they were able to get the grant for the PD, and we had started this mission with one big problem, there was no cell or anything. There is a Fire Chief that says he will get by, and he is making it work. Does it need to be address yes, but in phase 2 they started with a really needed PD Station. Let us say if they could get some money and now, they only had to come up with 1.5 million, we would be walking on a cloud and praised because we were coming in and asking for 1.5 million because we received a 1.5 million grant, and he could pour a foundation and get a PD Station built. That is one win at a time. It does not have to be that you get everything you want is a win. A win is to get that Police Station built that he knows where the addition is going on to put the meeting room on it to get a Police Station. Then they would all sit down as a committee and start planning the next 5 years to plan for the next grant. To him they need to go for a win and the minute they try to go for everything, we would only come up empty again and that is not a win.

R. Dann asked about the Fire Station's water and septic system and other things of concern that were mentioned at their last meeting. R. Severino said if every road that has a pothole and just needs an overlay and not a full depth reconstruction, we could spend millions everywhere. Right now, all he sees when he walks through that building is that the PD needs to be fixed. That was his task, but if it is going to go beyond that he would have to step aside, because he could not put the time and effort into something that he does not passionately feel like he would get a win out of it at the end of the day. It would be a different story if we received a grant, and they would ask us what we want.

B. Brock said they have already made this PD building smaller and to the bare minimum, therefore, the \$3 million number is very accurate. He agrees that they probably need to concentrate on that, and to find out if funds are available for only the PD. He agrees with R. Severino, that if they go back to the Town and tell them that they have matching funds and all we need is \$1.5 million dollars, it would be wonderful. J. Reap said they will need to find out what the feds have available that makes the most sense for them. Discussion ensued.

J. Reap confirmed he will contact Representatives Chris Pappas and Jeanne Shaheen tomorrow. B. Brock said if they need to get the Town's approval in order to receive those funds, then so be it.

B. Brock said that Fire Chief D. Young mentioned that our Committee made a lot of mistakes, but he does not think there was a lot, they made one, that if they could have included the interest rate in the equation better. R. Severino said that is okay, because we do not always win our first bid every time, and that it is part of the process. Discussion ensued.

C. Shevlin said they all have great ideas. One thing that he has seen in his career field is that it can take a few attempts to have something approved. He said there are Grant classes available for them to attend. He gave examples of the towns of Pelham, Sandown and Raymond that received Grants and said we could reach

out to them and find out what they did, of what worked or did not work. He reminded them that it is not always approved on the first try.

B. Brock said at this point they are in the process of rebuilding the PD internally and he thinks that is an added tough sell. They may have to put this aside for the year and bring it back in year 2026.

J. Robie said they have had some good discussions with a lot of different points of view. It would be nice to get it all done at one time, but he does not think that is the best course and in the way that they are going to be able to get this done. It would be great, but it is a big number. By reaching out to find out what funds are available is a great first step. He suggested having the same person or for the same 2 people to call the State Representatives together, so their questions and messages are answered. J. Reap and J. Flanagan agreed to work together.

R. Dann said the dates that are on the Grants will affect everything and that is something they will need to think about.

B. Brock asked if there was anything that was discussed at the last meeting that wants to talk about at this meeting. R. Dann said one thing that came up is the water situation at the FD. B. Brock said he is asking how the water quality is at the FD? Fire Chief D. Young said about the same quality as everyone else in this country, everybody drinks bottled water now. He still drinks water out of his well, because he refuses to not drink it. He never had it tested, it was flowing out of the top of the well, so he took a glass and held it up to the light and then drank it. Everyone for some reason is tuned into this, and that they have to have bottled water or that no one wants to drink well water anymore. They have water at the FD that they use to wash the trucks, and they have drinking water in bottles like a lot of people. It is not the best well recovery wise, but they had it fracked once to get a little more recovery, because if they use a lot of water it might run out, but it is not the end of the world. They have a great dug well at the FD that they can tap into if needed.

R. Dann asked how the septic system is at the FD. Fire Chief D. Young said, what septic? He said the well, septic and ventilation and some other things were all going to be part of his project of putting an addition on the Fire Station. R. Dann asked when is that will be coming forward to the Town. Fire Chief D. Young said being the conservative person that he is, he has not asked for a ton of money every year from the taxpayers to make a minimal impact on the tax rate every year, so he did raise his amount this year to \$75,000. T. Severino can attest to the amount that it costs to do things are staggering numbers. B. Brock asked what the estimate is to put an addition on the FD. Fire Chief D. Young said back in the day he was hoping he could do it for \$500,000, but it is probably twice as much now to do everything. R. Severino said maybe that is something the grant could help with, because it is serving the FD and they can have their Police Station built, and also make improvements to the FD. There was a discussion about how much the FD has for funds.

R. Dann said they had their insurance company go through the PD to give them a building inspection report. He asked Fire Chief D. Young if he would allow their insurance company to go through the FD and elaborate on plus or any minus of it. Fire Chief D. Young said he thinks they have done that, he knows he was there one day with one guy. R. Dann said there is no report made on it. Fire Chief D. Young said, the guy had told him it is not as bad as he thought. He knows there are a lot of fire stations that are a lot worse than this. R. Dann said this is a safety facility and they are breathing diesel fuel, and we are talking about liability and that is what the Town is concerned about. Fire Chief D. Young said one good thing is the trucks are a lot cleaner now. He said that is a good point about the diesel fuel, but it was all part of his plan, and he did not think it was going to take this long. So, you play this game of how much do I ask for from the taxpayers, so that I know I will get it. The problem in the last few years is that they have been treading water. R. Dann said the treading water liability comes up too. Would you agree to having our insurance company go through to write a report on the FD building? Fire Chief D. Young said sure. Discussion ensued.

J. Robie said he knows they talked about how it all depends on the discussion they will have with our State Representatives for our next meeting. Therefore, he would like them to stay the course if possible and get this on the ballot in March, because it might not happen again next year, but the more it goes before the people the more traction it will get. He thinks if they take a year off it will lose traction, and that is why they need to keep it going forward. As far as the FD goes and for doing any renovations they would have to make

sure if we are going to go down that road and spend a lot of money on renovating it, that it would be good for 25-50 years otherwise it is a moot point to do renovations and they should use that money toward the 5 or 10 year plan to put the FD on the Safety Facility Complex. They should look at all options when it comes to those things. Fire Chief D. Young said to answer that, his idea was to build the Police Station and to pay for the note and then go back with the Fire Station so that the taxpayers will repay with another note to add on that part of it. That is why he wants to gain 10 years or whatever. He does not know how much the bond would be for. B. Brock said they went with 15 years. Therefore, if there is money available D. Young, we can cut that to \$1.5 million, then we could possibly shorten it to 5 or 10 years. Discussion ensued.

Fire Chief D. Young said whatever they do at the current FD and whenever it does get turned over into a community center it will only be better. It is not like we are throwing money away to buy them for 10 or 15 years. J. Robie said he is not saying that it is not a bad option, He is just saying we just need to consider all that, and if we could use those funds for something else. A. Hansen said maybe we should set up a Police Station Infrastructure CRF, because if they are going to build a new station, you could put it towards the Safety Facility/Police Station. It is just a thought. J. Robie said and could that be for matching funds to a grant as well. A. Hansen said, and how come they have not had a fund set up for the PD to help offset the cost of a new building.

The next SFC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 10th, 2024, 2 5:00pm.

Approval of Minutes: SFC Minutes for June 18th, 2024. None noted.

MOTION: J. Flanagan made a motion to accept the June 18th, 2024, SFC minutes as presented. Seconded by T. Severino. J. Robie and J. Reap abstained. All in favor. Motion passed.

5:51pm R. Dann made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by T. Severino. All in Favor. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Chandonnet