

TOWN OF CHESTER
BUILDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES

March 17, 2020

Committee Members in Attendance: Kirby Putnam, Matt Wilson, Dan Cook, Rick Cloud and Lee Gustafson.

Others Present: Cathy Hasbrouck, Recording Secretary.

Citizens Present: Craig Jennings, Kevin Racek via telephone, and Julie Hance.

Agenda Item 1 Approve minutes from 2/25/2020 meeting

Matt Wilson moved to accept the 2/25/2020 meeting minutes. Rick Cloud seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the minutes were accepted as written.

Agenda Item 2 Citizen Comments

There were no comments from any citizens.

Agenda Item 3 Continued Design Review

Craig Jennings of Russell Construction passed out a cost estimate for the Emergency Services Building portion of the project with two columns on it. The first was the cost estimate made from the 50% Schematic Design documents on 9/6/19, prepared for the Bond vote. The second column was the estimate made from the Design/Development documents on 3/16/2020. Julie Hance asked what the cost put in the contract for the Emergency Services Building had been. Craig said it was \$3,990,996, which included professional fees, owners' soft costs and construction costs.

Craig Jennings said the project estimate was still under the budget, but the balance of the contingency fund is \$9,407. He said the drawings have been firmed up. The project has not been put out to bid yet. The site work and concrete work would be put out to bid before the rest of the project (likely mid-April) so the site work can get started in May. The rest of the project (final trades such as mechanical, electrical and finishes) will be put out to bid as soon as the architectural firm, Centerline, has finished the specifications, probably in the middle of May. The step after the Design Development documents are the bid documents and construction documents. At present Kevin Racek, the architect, is working with his consultants to refine the Design Development documents and produce complete specifications for bidding. The bid list of sub-contractors will be created and passed to the town for review. The town may add or remove subcontractors to the bid list. Once the bids are received and the subcontractors chosen, the cost estimate will be much firmer.

Craig Jennings went over the list of costs he had distributed and discussed the reasons the costs increased or decreased between the 50% Schematic design and the Design Development phases. Craig began with the General Conditions item and explained what it was at Lee Gustafson's request. General Conditions are costs that aren't associated with the actual building trades. It includes the full-time on-site superintendent, whose only job is running the project. The superintendent runs the field staff, handles the sub-contractors, organizes and schedules the

project from the site. He or she works with the project manager at the construction company home office, who does all the billing, and deals with the consultants, owners, architect and changes, and handles all the financial details. The project manager visits the site a couple of times a week. Lee Gustafson asked who would be interfacing with the town. Craig said the project manager would be the primary interface, but the superintendent would have owner's meetings at the job site. Other items included in General Conditions are the job trailer, dumpsters, and temporary power.

Craig Jennings moved to the next item, Sitework. He said Mike O'Neil had looked at the site and helped him figure costs for this category, with the full understanding that he would still have to bid for the job if he wanted it. Craig noted that the sitework cost had dropped a bit. He said the cost figure included cost for fill at market prices. There was an entry on the Value Engineering list for using fill from the town's gravel pit. This could reduce the site work cost by thousands of dollars.

The next items, paving and site concrete have been reduced. The exterior stairs were deleted and sidewalks were changed. The cost for concrete rose because the early drawings were not complete enough to give an accurate cost. Craig said he still had hopes the bids will come in below the current \$304,420 estimate. It depended on the marketplace, which is very busy at present. Lee Gustafson asked if the cost changed because the scope of the project had changed. Craig said the early estimate didn't have accurate footing and wall sizes. The current estimate includes the impact of removing the retaining wall and the engineer's decision that an 8-inch slab is needed in the apparatus bay instead of a 6-inch slab. He said the decision to change the back wall and substitute fill and a stepped foundation for the massive wall has shifted costs. Craig, Lee and Kevin Racek discussed substituting steel for concrete in the basement wall that has the door to the mechanicals room. Kevin will look into the possibility, but the wall is much smaller now and it may not be a savings.

Craig Jennings said the masonry in the list is for the Police Department holding cell area is new because he didn't know masonry walls were required when he did the 50% Schematic Design. He discussed the issue with Rick Cloud. Craig said there was a Value Engineering entry that limited the masonry walls to the holding cells only and replaced others walls with plywood and sheetrock. Kevin Racek asked Rick if limiting masonry walls to the holding cell was acceptable. Rick said he thought it was. He said people wouldn't be held in the cells for more than a few hours. Julie Hance asked why masonry was needed, for aesthetics, durability or safety? Kevin and Rick agreed that it was for safety. Craig agreed to look at how much money substituting plywood and sheetrock in some areas would save.

The next item was structural steel. Craig said the cost was higher because the estimate is primarily based on square footage, and the equipment bay is 7 feet longer than it was for the 50% schematic design. He also said his suppliers have told him their prices are going up. Craig said he needs to put the work out to bid before he will have firm numbers to work with. Craig said the structural steel category includes the metal deck, structural steel frame, the mechanical room ceiling, the beams and columns, the roof deck, basement floor decking and canopies.

Craig Jennings said the miscellaneous metal category went down because the exterior staircase is gone and the railings are not needed. He couldn't recall the reason for the change in rough carpentry. Matt Wilson and Julie Hance said they have an offer from Vermont Hardwoods to supply trim for the finish carpentry work. It was noted that finish carpentry had gone up by

\$5,000. Craig said there were wood ceilings in the canopies now and around the doors in the front of the building. The possible donation of material from Vermont Hardwoods would be very helpful.

Craig Jennings discussed the changes to costs resulting from changing the wall system from the originally proposed insulated metal panels. The new wall system does not have a finished interior side. The interior wall must be framed, insulated, covered with plywood and finally with sheetrock. Lee Gustafson asked why the change was made. Craig said it made a better envelope and meets the new higher standards of the September 2020 commercial building code. Kevin Racek said the structure of the building was changed to accommodate the new wall system after discussions with the structural engineer, because the new wall system was simpler and fit into the larger building better. The new wall system will allow exterior panels to be replaced if they are dented or damaged, instead of having to take the entire wall apart to replace a dented panel in the insulated metal panel wall system. Though the cost of insulation and sheet rock is higher, the cost of the siding in the new wall system is lower. The changes net to a small increase in cost for a more flexible and durable system

Craig Jennings continued down the list. He pointed out a Value Engineering option for the overhead doors, where fewer panels are clear glass. Craig said more VE options may come as a result of the bid process. The cost for the next item, the store front, was up because the size of the storefront had increased. Reducing the size of the storefront was also a Value Engineering possibility.

Craig said the skylights could be taken out and not affect the overall building, saving \$9,000. There are some parts of the building that will require a 2-hour fire rating in the walls and that also added to the increase in the cost of drywall / metal framing. The ceramic tiles have been removed from the design, saving \$12,880. Craig said he increased the Acoustical Tile Ceilings cost to accommodate some changes Kevin proposed for the long hallways to break them up. Lee Gustafson verified that the offices will all have acoustical ceiling tiles. Craig said they would, but storage areas will not, and the evidence area will have a hard ceiling. Craig asked Rick Cloud if the hard ceiling was required in the evidence room and Rick said it would not be required as long as the walls went all the way up to the roof deck, which they do.

Craig discussed the changes to the flooring made since the schematic design was made. He said there was less carpet tile and more polished concrete. Craig said he recalled that there might be flooring donations available. Matt Wilson said the original e-mail was to the Fire Department and Tom Knockenhauer offered to provide flooring. It wasn't clear whether Tom was offering flooring for the Fire Department or the whole building. Lee Gustafson asked what flooring would be in the Police Department. Craig said there was carpet in the offices, polished concrete in all other areas except for Marmoleum in certain wet areas. Craig asked if there was a need for flooring in the storage areas. If not, that would be a savings. Lee said flooring was unnecessary as long as there wasn't a big bump between the level of the storage floors and the rest of the buildings.

Julie Hance asked if hardwood flooring was possible any where and if so, where? She said there was a possibility of getting hardwood flooring donated. Kevin Racek said it could be put in the dayroom, offices and vestibule. The committee agreed that the cost of installation, maintenance and upkeep made hardwood impractical for the building. Kevin recapped the flooring in the rest

of the building saying there was carpet in the public areas including offices and the training room, Marmoleum in the day room and polished concrete elsewhere.

Craig discussed the painting cost which hadn't changed. He said there would be very little exterior painting, mainly sealing the wood around the doors in the front. There was a lot of interior wall to paint. The interior drywall would have one primer coat and two finish coats. Doors and trim will also be painted. Craig explained that the specialties item included items such as toilet accessories, and partitions, flagpoles and fire extinguishers. He said he had not been able to get a quote for signage so he left his original estimate the same. Painting and specialty costs were also not changed.

Craig said he left in the detention equipment. He asked Rick Cloud if he had acquired any of the equipment. Rick said he needed the equipment and had talked to Kevin about it. Craig said a bullet proof transaction window was included in the estimate and he had found one that was less expensive, so the estimate was lower. For appliances, Craig had budgeted for a range, dishwasher microwave and refrigerator. Matt Wilson said a dishwasher wasn't needed. Craig asked if a range was being provided. Matt said they had \$15,000 to be used only if it was needed for the kitchen area items such as a stove. Julie Hance had sent Craig some examples of ranges and cooktops. Craig said a four-burner stove was best. Craig said he had found a good ANSUL kitchen exhaust system with a make-up air feature for \$15,000. He said the shaft for the system will need a 2-hour fire rating. Lee Gustafson asked what the ceiling height was in the kitchen. Craig said he thought it was 12 feet. Kevin Racek said the apparatus bay ceiling height was 16 feet to the underside of the ceiling joists and 20 feet to the underside of the roof deck. Craig said the vent shaft for the exhaust hood can go straight out through the roof and will not pose any problems.

Craig discussed the mechanical / plumbing and electrical costs. He said he had asked a sub-contractor for help on the estimates. The contractor was conservative with the estimate. His numbers were higher than the estimate Craig had made for the 50% Schematics design.

Lee Gustafson asked if bidders would be pre-qualified. Craig Jennings said that could be done. He said he will put together a list of contractors with name, address and contact info and send it to the town. Those contractors would be financially capable of handling such a large job and have a good track record. The town may add more names to the list, but smaller contractors would need to be pre-qualified. Craig said documents for the site work and concrete will go out for bids soon. He would like to start work by June.

Julie Hance said that in the past asking for bids at this time of year didn't result in good results. Contractors already had full schedules and the bids were not competitive. She said she would rather wait to start the project than pay top dollar for the work because all the contractors were busy. Craig Jennings said he thought southern Vermont was not as busy as Chittenden County and the bids would be reasonable. He said he is getting calls from sub-contractors in southern Vermont looking for work. Although earlier in the spring would have been better, bids were reasonable between February and June. He said the fact that the project is 10 months long and many of the trades will not start until the fall makes the project more desirable for sub-contractors.

Several people asked about possible ways to manage the bidding process and save money. Each idea was discussed. Kevin Racek said he thought this was an excellent time for looking for bids.

Between the corona virus, the uncertain world economy, and the election, sub-contractors are looking for work.

Craig Jennings said there were some value engineering opportunities in the mechanicals and electrical costs. He said money could be saved on plumbing fixtures, lighting fixtures and building controls.

Craig Jennings passed out a list of value engineering opportunities. There was a list of actions, but he hadn't filled in any dollar figures yet. He read through the list. He said eliminating damp proofing should not be on the list. Most of the items on the list had already been discussed as part of the cost discussion. One item that hadn't been discussed was building controls. There was a possibility of putting in heat and light controls called DDC controls, that were overseen by a computer system offsite. When asked, Kevin said he had been pushing for simplicity and he felt standalone controls would be appropriate for the building. The expense of off-site monitoring and control was not reasonable. Kevin and Craig decided to discuss this with the consulting engineer. Matt Wilson objected to the possible monthly cost for DDC control monitoring.

Lee Gustafson asked if the contractor will be allowed to suggest different equipment than the specifications list. Craig Jennings said they would consider substitutions. Lee said he felt the roof equipment should be from the same manufacturer. Craig agreed. Not using radiant heat in the bathrooms was discarded as an option because it would require a second heat source which would cost more money. No one wanted to have a bottled water dispenser. A drinking fountain with a water bottle filler was sufficient. Julie Hance asked if the kitchen faucet could meet the requirement. Kevin said it could not.

The generator was discussed. Lee Gustafson said he had learned that power outages were rare in the area, but they lasted for days, since the outage usually involved a main transmission line. A generator for the building would not be needed often, but it would need to run for a long time. A propane generator that could run the entire building for a week was required.

Craig said he thought the value engineering items added up to about \$100,000 and he would fill in the costs as they received them. Craig said the cost estimate from Green Mountain Power for moving the utility pole was \$10,000 and he had estimated \$15,000. He had hopes that more bids will come in under his estimate.

Rick Cloud asked Craig about electronic locks. Craig said he had discussed them, but he wasn't sure if they were included in the estimate.

A general discussion of the project finances took place. Julie Hance said she was concerned about the small contingency fund. She asked what would happen if the construction drawings are complete and the cost was so high it used up the entire contingency. She said she couldn't take money from another department and she couldn't ask the voters for more money. Craig Jennings said that, since it was a new building, once the drawings were complete, and bids were in, there wasn't much need for a contingency. Lee Gustafson asked Craig if he would make a list of all the things that could happen and might be charged to the contingency fund for a building like this. He hoped that Craig's optimism was realistic, but he wondered what could happen. Craig said the contingency would not be for changes to the project. The contingency is for things like mistakes. Lee said that in his business he finds something ins forgotten in most projects and the contingency covers that.

Lee asked if anything could be pushed off as a future project as a cost saving measure. Craig Jennings suggested that one way to save money is to incorporate most of the value engineering items into the drawings now. The savings would become part of the bidding process immediately. He started listing items on the VE list that could be implemented immediately.

Matt Wilson asked why, if the Fire Department had said they could live with a 4% grade on the front apron of the building, the plans called for a 3% grade. Craig Jennings said the engineer was not comfortable with a 4% grade and compromised with a 3% grade.

Julie Hance asked if the savings on the VE list were real or just moving numbers around in a shell game. She was assured that the savings were real. Julie asked Kevin Racek what he thought about the small contingency fund. He said he thought incorporating the VE design changes in the plans now to increase the fund was a good idea. He pointed out that a month ago the corona virus was not a factor in the planning. He said he believes that the virus will drive prices down. He said the design team's goal is to make drawings that are "tight" and complete enough to yield accurate cost numbers. Matt Wilson asked whether items could be re-bid with changed requirements if the costs don't come in as expected. Craig Jennings said it was possible to do that, but it was an imposition on the sub-contractors and he didn't want to plan on it as a strategy.

Lee Gustafson proposed that Craig Jennings put numbers on the list of value engineering items. The members of the committee would go over the list and indicate what should be included in the plans now and what should not be considered. Craig said it was a good time to make changes while the design development was ongoing. Julie Hance asked how quickly the decisions need to be made. Craig said in the next week or so. He said he will e-mail figures for value engineering options and any other ideas he can come up with as soon as possible. Julie needed to be sure that decisions are being made quickly enough to keep the project on track. Craig said he was glad that the contingency issue had been brought up. He believed there should be a larger fund available and this course of action would provide it.

Agenda Item 4 Adjourn

The agenda being covered, the Matt Wilson moved to adjourn the meeting. Dan Cook seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the meeting was adjourned.