

**PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY COMMITTEE
LINEBROOK FIRE STATION
JULY 28, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair H. Schwartz called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. with the following members present: L. Alexson, R. Donahue, C. Surpitski, D. Morris, Chief A. Theriault, P. Dziadose, Chief P. Nikas, K. Carlson, T. Jones, and J. Emerson. Also attending were Deputy Chief L. Prentiss and Fire Union President J. Stone as well as several on-duty police and fire personnel. Absent were: J. Fay, R. Harb, and R. Weatherall.

CITIZEN QUERIES

With the number of individuals from the community who had joined the Committee, Harvey dispensed with the normal agenda and opened up the meeting to the group with their questions/comments. Attendees had praise for the “robo” call.

Ken Swenson asked about comparing Essex and Rowley facilities with Ipswich. Chief Nikas has compiled a matrix of ten newly built facilities—everything from single to combined facilities included. Ipswich also includes its other departments such as Emergency Management, Shellfish, etc. in its proposal. Tammy commented that Ipswich is well managed with a good bond rating for borrowing, but the longer the project is put off, the higher the cost.

Jim Engel asked about the Linebrook facility and was told that it will stay as it is for now with Rowley’s ambulance service and an auxiliary engine within its building. He asked what the strategy is for approval of this project first and was told that the TriBoard meeting on August 17 will discuss strategy planning and public safety only. Asking for help, Engel wondered if the State or Covid could provide funding. Chief Nikas replied that the State does not give money for public safety facilities and currently there is a question on “green incentive” with initial costs and opportunities.

Mike Johnson asked about the strategy for trying to sell the new facility. Rob answered that we are going geo-thermal and we must plan for female police/fire personnel. Paul added that the two departments have programming needs. Mike contributed that the electrical and geo-thermal components which will save the environment and the Town’s money. Tammy said that the current buildings cost substantial money every year trying to keep up the maintenance of the old buildings. Mike said that “net zero” is hard to attain, needing lots of solar panels, covered parking, etc. Others commented favorably in that regard.

To a question of the fate of the community garden at the Linebrook/Pine Swamp site, Linda and Tammy (Select Board) members will be bringing up the subject immediately in proposing a Reuse Committee to study the old Fire Station, the old Police Station, and a community garden for reuse/replacement. Chief Nikas said that less than four of the twelve acres will be developed on the new site. To a question of Elm St. as a possible site location,

committee members revealed that it is too tight a site, it is too wet, and it has traffic limitations for the engines which would be responding.

Kathy Arnold asked if there might be a boiler-plate architecture that Ipswich could use, Hamilton being her example. Rob explained that programming is different, topography is different. Sarah Player suggested showing varying versions of the architecture of the proposed facility (flat vs. gabled roof).

Harvey mentioned the TriBoard question: Will the residents of Ipswich be safer? There were several responses from the committee:

1. Response times for fire apparatus will be faster, especially in bad weather.
2. Space will be provided for all fire/police vehicles under cover from the weather.
3. Mental health benefits will be more effective because police work is different today and spaces will facilitate the work.
4. Community space will be available for emergencies, for meetings with staff, and for members of the community.

Sarah Player added: A promise to the fire and police personnel for their own personal safety.

Discussion shifted to advocacy, and in order to make progress for the future rather than just getting by, we must act.

- Save money because fire apparatus will be less expensive when it fits inside a new building.
- Receive savings with water, heat, exercise room, mechanical functions, computer systems, with a combined facility
- Get the word out: use a mailing for those who don't have email/social media
- Get advocacy from the School Committee
- Market the negativity of the current fire and police facilities.
- Increase the social media component
- Use a drone for illustration to the public

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chief Nikas moved, seconded by Tammy, to approve Minutes of July 20, 2021.

UNANIMOUS.

NEXT MEETINGS

August 10, PSFC

August 17, Tri Board Meeting, Room A

ADJOURNMENT

Charlie moved, seconded by Tammy, to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 p.m. UNANIMOUS.

