

**CANDIA SAFETY FACILITY COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES OF
April 2nd, 2024**

APPROVED

SFC Members Present: Chair Brien Brock (BOS), Chief Mike McGillen (PD), Mark Chalbeck (PB), Russ Dann (BOS), Rick Langlois (PD), Tom Severino, Ed Domings (FD), Joe Flanagan, and Andria Hansen (TA).
Absent: Dennis Hebert, Jeff Wuebbolt,

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

Warrant Article:

B. Brock said everyone knows that their warrant article failed in March. Therefore, the purpose of this meeting is to have a discussion on where the committee wants to go from here. He has no definite thoughts other than if they continue on this path that it will cost more next time. He mentioned that years ago when they built the Town Hall, it went to vote 3 times before it was approved. No matter where you go, it is not unusual that it does not pass the first time. At this point he is unsure of what they can do, as they have already reduced the building down to the Police Department's very basic necessities. The town of Exeter has created a flyer that was done very well, and it was added to their website and Facebook. They included an interest rate on the warrant article for their bond, however it was not an exact amount, it was only an estimate that they could give at that time. He commented that Candia did not add in the amount of what the interest rate would be in dollars on their warrant article.

T. Severino said there were a few things the committee did incorrectly, however it was definitely not that they did not try hard enough. In the end we had searched for rates. However, we could not get them, and we should have done more because that is what the people voiced. He does not want to have to sell it to the people, we are only there as the liaison. The residents do not want to spend 3 million dollars, and it does not matter if the committee lowers it to 2.5 million, as they do not want to spend that amount of money to get this accomplished. Maybe we need to regroup and to find another way to take care of the Police Department's needs for now. He emphasized that everything they have done in the past was not a waste of time.

B. Brock said the Budget Committee did not support it and he does not know how much weight they carried to the voters, but it would have been nice if it was positive. It was also not voted unanimously by the Board of Selectmen and that hurt the voting also. If everyone on the Board of Selectmen was behind it, he believes voting would have been a little better. One of the things that was brought up at the last Board of Selectmen meeting, was to ask our committee about the possibility of using the older section of the Moore School building for the Police Department or Town Hall Employees and not to have a new building constructed. It has been brought to his attention before, but it is not a violable option, because the older section of Moore School is occupied. The other factor is that it would be too close to the school in regard to the people that have a criminal record and legally are not allowed to be near children, if they would need to do any business at that location.

M. Chalbeck stated SAU 15 will be talking to Town Council for a legal response from the School Board to give the Safety Facility Committee. There would not be a way to separate the sex offenders from the children within a certain distance or a way to isolate the building properly if they moved to the older section of Moore School. He pointed out an important factor is our Police Officers need a facility to accommodate them in the event they come into contact with hazardous chemicals or other instances that would require them to shower.

Selectman Dann said in doing that, all they would be doing is putting a band aid on this problem and to say the school population will not grow. What would happen if the school did need more room in the future, then what would they do? They should be going forward to plan for a facility that will last for 50 years. He feels they will need more meetings to inform the public and need additional input. T. Severino said they will

need to win the people who were not in favor of the warrant article. R. Dann pointed out that one of the things they did not share with the public is that the Police Station would be constructed by local contractors.

M. McGillen said he was disheartened from the town vote. The Committee spent money for the plans, and the demo, so now do they go forward with less money or other options? He heard about the residents that want to add on to the Town Hall, however it would need to be similar plans that they designed with for the new building. Currently there are 29 parking spots at the Town Hall and if they are to come up with a new plan, it would need to accommodate them as they did for the new building plans.

M. Chalbeck questioned the deed for Moore Park in saying that he did not think they are allowed to build an addition on the property. B. Brock said, they can build there. R. Dann said he believes they would need to do additional researching regarding that. M. Chalbeck said if they decided to build an addition to the Town Hall, they would need to have enough room for parking and then what would they do with the skate park? T. Severino said they could eliminate the road between the parking lot and skate park. B. Brock said he does not think there would be enough space.

T. Severino said he does not agree on reaching out to the individuals that had voted no. The first thing they will need to do is to talk to the Budget Committee and Selectboard to get the good word out for the plan they will decide on. The warrant articles that do pass are the ones that show that it was supported by core groups of people. They need to begin with that, as that is the foundation to winning these people over. He said it is their job and obligation to explore all options. Have they ever given the public the two options of either adding an addition on the Town Hall for \$1 million or for the Safety Facility to be built on the land purchased for \$3 million? Then we would receive their support because the people had a choice to vote and said what they wanted. He asked if that was legitimate to have those options, or has it ever been presented or voted on in that way? B. Brock said initially this Committee agreed they did not want to explore an addition to the Town Hall, because they wanted to concentrate on the piece of land they purchased and build it to accommodate them for several years into the future. Selectman Dann stressed that they need to make sure the Police receive all their needs into the Town Hall addition showing the same square footage as on the design plans they had drawn up for the land they purchased. T. Severino said they can explore it, as that is their obligation to do so.

J. Wuebbolt suggested asking the residents to take a survey for this Committee to find out what the people think about this or why they are against it. If we want to reach out the residents that go to vote, it will be the ones that will complete the survey. M. McGillen said he has seen this take place in another town and agrees with the idea.

Dean Young said if they were to present two different warrant articles for the people to vote on, he strongly believes the lowest priced one would win. That is why a lot of times he hesitated in the past to put a total amount and then say, if this fails let's put \$50,000 away to start with, because when people say we can put \$50,000 away they will be happy because it is not a million. He shared his opinions on why he believes the warrant article did not pass. One of the things that may have made the people upset is because the Committee should have thought or talked about an addition to the Town Hall. He strongly believes if they put an addition on the Town Hall costing 1 million, that it would pass, and he knows someone that would do their plans for free. The Officers will need a space that they are safe in as that is the biggest priority. It might not be everything they want, but what do they need to be safe. He feels if they add on to the Town Hall it will never be space wasted. It would be nice to have a new Police Station, but it is no going to happen. Discussion ensued on how the Town Hall was approved 35 years ago.

T. Severino said they would not have investigated to adding on to the Town Hall first. They had to give it a try by first looking into adding a facility on the land they purchased. If they would have tried adding an addition on to the Town Hall first, some people would have said, why did you do that when you had a piece of property you purchased. Now that the people have spoken, let us try delivering this under budget by adding an addition to the Town Hall. Maybe something in the future will come along for them to utilize the land that was purchased. B. Brock asked for a consensus from the Committee Members if they agree.

M. Chalbeck asked if they could look at the Deed for to find out if there are any restrictions. B. Brock said he does not think there is because Mr. Young has already investigated it. D. Young said, they had that wiped off years ago. He said many other Towns at voting time had their big items rejected, as money is such a big factor.

T. Severino said he would love to see the Police Department with a new building on the property that was purchased, but it is not about him and that he all is about having this situation fixed. B. Brock said now that we have the information and concepts of what the Police will need, they can take the plans that were designed to fit into an addition. He does not want to compromise on the parking, because they already know there is not enough there now. R. Severino said he will do the work by placing the need plans on for an addition, but eventually they will need an architect. B. Brock asked for a consensus from the Committee. M. McGillen said he feels they should explore all their options, but not to make a decision today to say they are going into this direction.

A. Hansen said, other towns that have added a warrant article for a Police Department building to be built were rejected many times before it was passed, but eventually they are approved. She does not think they should dismiss everything they have worked on, and to keep it in the back of their minds that they could possibly bring it back again to building on the property they purchased.

B. Brock said he is curious in finding out if their needs can be met with placing their plans for an addition to the Town Hall.

R. Dann said he would like to see it on paper where it reads they are allowed to take more space away from the park. T. Severino said Ron Severino had confirmed that it was cleared years ago. D. Young said there are some citizens in town that like the idea of having the Police at this location with the children at the park. M. Chalbeck mentioned adding in a warrant article of \$50,000 for the Police Department building maintenance.

B. Brock stated the Committee Members will meet in a month.

Approval of Minutes: Public Session Minutes for November 21st, 2023. None noted.

MOTION: R. Dann made a motion to accept the November 21st, 2023, public minutes, as presented. Seconded by M. McGillen. 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