

Harbor Committee Meeting

Tuesday-November 28, 2017

Meeting was called to order at 6:13pm.

Members present were Chairman/Dan Morris, William Mroz, Peter Henderson, Ben Norton, and Richard Vermeulen. Also present were Town manager/Tim Polky, Finance Director/Elizabeth Curtis, Selectboard Liaison/Randy Elwell, and recording secretary Patty St Clair.

Chairman Dan Morris stated tonight our biggest project at this point is to prepare something for Town manager/Tim Polky and Administration to take to Town Meeting in May. So for Town Meeting we are looking for a finished plan as possible for review on where we want to go with this. Town Manager/Polky stated the committee needs to have a complete plan showing costs and figures so we can have a couple of public meetings with the public to review. Need to get this information out to the people to see how they feel about it. Dan brought tonight with him the blue print of the plan which Noel Musson drew up for us.

Town Manager/Tim Polky said we need to have a public meeting first. If you are going to have a referendum vote on this plan then we have to a public hearing before we vote. This is what you have to decide; either have it on the floor at Town Meeting or do a referendum vote. A project this size should be a ballot vote.

Ben Norton asked do we then tweak our plan with the feedback we get from the public meeting?

Town Manager/Tim Polky said you can, it may be a situation where the Harbor Committee feels that what you got there is fine the tweaks weren't big enough to make changes. What I have heard so far there is a lot of people who are in favor of it they just want to know what is going to happen to the property.

Ben Norton replied he had a conversation with a guy who felt we shouldn't have bought it.

Bill Mroz asked if by the end of day in May do we need a couple of community meetings and then at Town meeting is there a presentation or does that happen head of time?

Town Manager/Tim Polky suggested a public meeting before Town meeting would be the time to do your presentation.

Bill Mroz said then if there is a vote have it be a referendum.

Ben Norton asked so the facilitator for the presentation would be Noel Musson?

Town Manager/Tim Polky replied he is the best person who knows the project.

Dan Morris stated part of what we have to get done is in Noel's lap. In terms of actually putting on paper the plan then I am happy with this plan as it is. But the engineering is on him, the cost estimates obviously is a big issue is on him, and he gave us a little bit of a figure last time that looked like a lot of money and then permitting obviously is in his arena, and then granting. The thing I worry about the most is a lot of people in Town were upset on spending money for this piece of property was a waste of Town's money. What are they going to say when we say we need 2million more to make it into what we want it to be; that's what I worry about. But it is only 2million, if we are paying for all of it and to me the granting process or other sources of money are going to be very important to whether or not the Town go forward with this. The other part you mentioned about

maybe bonding it versus just coming up with all the money. Do you think the Town will think about that? You know when we bought the property the average price per taxpayer was approximately \$25 dollars a year for 10 years. So to the average tax payer that sounded like a pretty good deal to acquire this piece of property, if we could pay whatever the cost to the Town to repair the facility and make it what we want it to be in those same terms. I think it would be a much easier sell then saying we need 2 million more dollars and we are going to have 3 million into this piece of property before it is said and done; that's a lot of money to a lot of people.

Town Manager/Tim Polky said it is, but I will tell you this, I sat in on a meeting 13-15 years ago about updating the Transfer Station and we were talking about bonding 8million. We didn't think the people would go for it, we went to them once and it was approved. So I think as long as you explain what you are doing and why you are doing it the people will understand.

Selectboard/Randy Elwell mentioned Noel said even if we bond it we could still get the grant money and apply for those grant monies to go towards that.

Ben Norton asked would bonding be a long term thing?

Town Manager/Tim Polky stated you could write the bond for any length of time you want 10 years, 20 years whatever you want.

Selectboard/Randy Elwell said my in own opinion if you try to piece meal it, you will lose there --- somewhere, the committee changes. I think you should go for the whole thing and get it done. If you go for it all now, it might take stages, but yet you are already going forward on the goal.

Chairman/Dan Morris said that is the same decision to be consistence we decided to try to get it all approved and not approve this in phases. We can always file for extensions if we need them.

Selectboard/Randy Elwell said once they get digging they are going to maybe run into some other problem they didn't know about. You are always going to find those little things and it will be better to just do it and get it over.

Bill Mroz said I think that about the presentation, the vision is strong, the planning has been great, we have been through a million options, you can go from just fixing the sinking part to where we are going, we had Town support when the property was initially purchased, it is really a straight forward presentation of the vision, the only thing is the money you can't fix that. So it is a bit of a business plan, this is what we are going to do, this is what we want to do, this is the cost, and this is where we will get to for the future. To me it has always been pretty linear on how we are getting to this point in time during the whole project.

Chairman/Dan Morris stated it would be really sweet if we could get somebody to give us some idea what the economic part to the positive would be if we had a facility like this down there. I don't know if it is possible to do if at the end of the bond we generated more than enough economic activity in the area to justify the spending it would help out an awful lot. To me a facility like this is going bring in a lot of people and all the money it generates will be in the summer time unless we can get the working waterfront part up and going which I hope we can do but we haven't had much success at it lately.

Bill Mroz said I think we need to be focused on the plan, if we start going down the same path of what are we going to do with it then we just get started on another five years of meetings. We are establishing the foundation for the future that is really what we are doing know. We can ipothasize about once this is set what it could be used for but our goal is to get this thing to a point and can be it to where it will be determined.

Chairman/Dan Morris stated having said that Bill, I can't agree with you more but with you(Tim) and Town meeting, do you see it as necessary to have a somewhat firmed up use plan or would you rather have us on the physical characteristics of the property?

Town Manager/Tim Polky said you just got to lay it all out, just say this is what we got planned between all the meetings we had, all the planning we did, this is our best plan.

Chairman/Dan Morris we developed this plan to be as flexible as possible as we can be we can move things around with a plan like this if we have to depending on how much activity we get on the recreational side or the commercial. We built in flexibility but to actually come out and say we think you should spend this much money because it will benefit specific groups or because we are going to allow these types of uses sounds like but I don't want to go down that road about the uses. We will get caught up in the details where we don't want to go; we have been there.

Bill Mroz stated again the story and the progression to where we are, I am certain that Noel will come up with funding options, so we have an option to bond it all the way to 50/50 grants, and all the things that attached to those grants that give you less flexibility so we can tell a pretty good story of what we want the town to decide and that we have a plan this is what it is going to cost.

Chairman/Dan Morris asked is everyone comfortable with this plan? I know that question has been asked more than once. Is there anything about this plan you have concerns about? Is this something as a Harbor Committee we can say what we want and be done with it? I believe a float plan is something we ought to agree on before we go to Town Meeting. We have to have a float plan especially if we are having one part of the dock for tying up skiffs.

Dick Vermeulen stated we have floats on the plan.

Chairman/Dan Morris said before we decide type of floats we want, do we want year round floats there for this facility and if so, my idea is concrete would be the heaviest float possible. There are ways to orinate the floats down there, you could have a minimal amount of floats there in the Winter and take some out or rotate them. Have a float system but have it serve as a breakwater on a southwest wind in the summer time and it would serve as a northwest break as long as you wanted to put boats on the other side in the winter time but that is something we can do. To me the issue with a long set of floats is you are going out into the harbor a long way to make an effective breakwater and some moorings will have to be moved; I know the Dave and the Town can make that happen. Do you want to do go that way? Or do you want to do a different type of float set up that wouldn't require you going out that far?

Selectboard/Randy Elwell said go with the simple you can always add to the float system later on.

Chairman/Dan Morris said this facility won't do anybody any good if there aren't floats attached to it.

Selectboard/Randy Elwell said basic breakwater type system can come later.

Bill Mroz said I am a big fan of ranges so give us the range something little to something big and again once we stop at the waters edge so the goal is to fill ,make the foundation set, and then that is 800 to million, maybe that is all we want to talk about this year. To me that's the bottom line fill and getting the pier set, then we can come with 3/4 different potential options for floats, because again if you start putting floats out they are going to cost several hundred dollars and who is going to use them.

Chairman/Dan Morris asked Is there an agreement on the committee that we should have a way to land at this place year round?

Selectbaord/Randy Elwell replied I think you are going to have to.

Chairman/Dan Morris said so the very least we are talking about a basic set of floats that would be able ---one thing about the winter time most of the high winds that place gets is a northwest wind it does scream right down in there but not as bad as a hard southwest wind in the Summer but it is still coming off the land.

Town Manager/Tim Polky said you guys have to get the message to Noel on the whole thing. Get all the points of view in one place and talk at the next meeting scheduled.

Bill Mroz said the other idea as you said before again you want to get everything on paper because it's a lot less expensive to do it all at once then to piece meal it along. We need to say, by the next meeting, we have to have this in order for us to articulate this to the Town. We have to have granting and what are the things that hang on to the grant; it's time to get it all in place.

Chairman/Dan Morris asked the town manager when do you and the selectboard want to have all this information in one place?

Town Manager/Tim Polky said I can see having something in January 2018. Have a public hearing in January to say this is what we got and we need numbers before that say by the end of December for budget time.

Selectboard/Randy Elwell said when it comes to the budget don't beat around the bush. This is what we have and this is our plan and this is what it will cost.

Finance Director/Elizabeth Curtis said most of the negative right now is people notice there is nothing being done with the property that's the problem. Got to show the people we have moved forward with the plan and this is what we have come up with.

Selectboard/Randy Elwell stated you all have the business knowledge and answers to the questions that may be asked you just have to be able to sell it to the public. In the overall scheme the Town supports it, it's just a matter of showing them how.

Chairman/Dan Morris said it's not a big deal to tell the Town this is a big number we know that and this is how we got to that number. It has to be explained in a reasonable way how we got to this type of repair and upgrading, this is what it is going to cost, and to do it any other way is not efficient use of your tax dollars. We tried to be the most efficient with the Town's tax dollars and this is what we can buy.

Selectboard/Randy Elwell said this will be such a big improvement down there. Before this property was bought the Town didn't have much access to the water other than the two public landings. This is sad since the Town mostly relies on the ocean.

Peter Henderson said the vote to buy the property was more than 2 to 1, so that shows good investment. People made that vote knowing that it was an investment in buying the property and there was going to be development costs down the road how many people have there eyes open on this we have to justify the dollars.

Bill Mroz said On the action plan we have Dan and Dave calling Noel and here is our timeline
So ask Noel for a rough draft for December meeting

All the hard numbers on paper he can determine

Our target is a finalized plan by January 20

Good to have numbers for grants/bonds

First thing to come up is the price -2million dollars

Six granting agencies and of those six granting agencies if were we able to get them won't be filled out to such and such time we must be able to say we applied for "x" amount of dollars or we are about to apply for "x" amount of dollars in grants

We have to come with a decision on all of this whether we want to push bonding or not

Fianancing options 1) will be you are going to pay for it through your taxes and we can do whatever we want with the property 2)We have several different grants available to us however those come with strings. now we may get here but not have the answers yet we have to look like we talked about to have that answer in our pocket.

Noel should be able to produce a slide set or something by Jan 20 that tells us exactly what the breakdown is going to be.

So to reiterate, Bill Mroz said by Jan 20 we need a timeline for construction that would push us for when we have to ask for money, we need the grant process and potential funding, we need a detailed plan with costs, we will settle on everything by the Jan 20 as a committee; those are the marching orders. There still will be pieces that will be moving but we should have 90 percent of this.

Chairman/Dan Morris said The Town would be wise to setup a slush fund and hopefully there will be money generated from this project. The economic benefit to, it isn't something just about the Town, but economic activity. If there are an extra 100 people down there during the summer time and use this facility, the store, the shops, etc. will all benefit from it.

Chairman/Dan Morris asked do we have a plan? We are in pretty good shape.

All agreed we are ready to proceed.

A motion made by Dick Vermeulen, seconded by Dan Morris, to adjourn the meeting; so carried.
Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A St Clair
Recording secretary