

Budget Work Session Notes

9/17/2024

In attendance:

Board of Supervisors: Jennifer Herring, Chairman, Barbara N. Lyons, Vice-chairman, Judy Dixon, Member, Nancy Santacecilia, member, and Dan Wood, member.

Finance Committee: Michael Ivici, Christina Maida, Eric Cornwell, Jason Showmaker

Others in attendance included: Township Manager, Stephanie Mason, Assistant Township Manager, Andrea Mergner, Finance Director, Ken Wallace, Assistant Finance Director, Anne Marie Dobson, Director of Operations, Dave Tomko, Director of Parks & Recreation, Karen Sweeney, Township Budget Analyst, Ed Ebenbach, and Lt. Charles Zeigler.

Ms. Herring welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Mr. Tomko presented an update on the Parks and Recreation Bathrooms/Comfort Cottage project, outlining key features and options now that quotes have been obtained. The bathrooms will be located within the Community Recreation Center (CRC) and Park Improvement Project area and will include six individual ADA-compliant restrooms. Each restroom will be equipped with baby changing tables, automatic locking hardware, hand dryers, exhaust fans, and toilet paper dispensers. The structure will have exterior soffit lighting, heat-only climate control, and a covered front area with a freestanding water fountain that includes a bottle filler. The site will have ADA-compliant access, with the goal to complete the project and open the bathrooms on or before June 1, 2025. Two options and their associated costs were presented, both aiming to make the restrooms as maintenance-free as possible.

The prefabricated and stick-built options, featuring split-face concrete blocks, were explained, and photos were presented to provide a visual representation. The procurement cost options were also shared. The Board discussed the pros and cons of each option. Mr. Tomko highlighted the cost differences between both options, including engineering, site work, and manufacturing expenses. Mr. Tomko noted that if the Board selects the stick-built option, the Township will need to cover the design costs, which could be submitted to Skepton as a change order to be added to the CRC project.

Ms. Lyons noted that the conduit was exposed in the prefabricated option and expressed concerns that this could pose a liability. Mr. Tomko stated that the stick build would not show conduit.

Mr. Wood asked if there was ventilation in the absence of a window, and it was confirmed that ventilation is provided in accordance with the building code.

Ms. Santacecilia expressed her desire to have the interior walls of the bathrooms painted at least on the bottom half. She also inquired about the possibility of adding board and batten to the

exterior wall. Dave responded that they could implement any façade design desired but noted that it would be made of concrete.

Ms. Lyons asked if it would be cheaper to construct four bathrooms instead of six. Dave confirmed that while it would be less expensive, we currently have six porta potties and do not want to limit our options for the future.

Mr. Showmaker asked if there are fewer variables in the prefabricated option and if there were any other issues that should be considered. Mr. Tomko stated that he believes there would be fewer variables.

Ms. Santacecilia asked about the time frame difference. Mr. Tomko replied that the time frames are essentially the same. However, the perception is that the prefabricated option will be quicker because the components are manufactured off-site.

Ms. Santacecilia stated that these bathrooms are going to feed a lot of needs.

Mr. Wood expressed concern about the potential costs associated with the stick-built option compared to the prefabricated one, noting that the stick-built option can better conceal utilities, which may justify the additional expense.

Mr. Wood asked whether this plan includes a phone charging station, which had been discussed previously. Mr. Tomko replied that the current plan does not address that.

Ms. Dobson stated that the Board needs to discuss borrowing as it seems the Board has reached a consensus on the stick-built option, along with the additional costs for paint and stone, the finance department needs direction on whether the Board wants to include these expenses in the bond borrowing or the contingency fund as well as the refinancing of the 2023 loan.

Ms. Dobson provided a breakdown of the \$2.5 million needed to complete the CRC and Parks Improvement Projects. She summarized the funds on hand, which include bond proceeds, cell tower transfer, reserves, and donations to date, totaling \$8.7 million. Additionally, there are \$1.7 million in promised funds that can be drawn upon at any time. Ms. Dobson also noted that donations receivable, referring to pledged contributions, amount to \$1.8 million. Forecasted funds include \$100,000 in anticipated donations and \$1.5 million in grants. In total, the estimated income reaches \$11.1 million. However, the overall project cost is projected at \$12.9 million, resulting in a funding gap of \$1.7 million. Ms. Dobson stated that we need to take into consideration both the grants, pledges and donations that we have not received yet, so the recommendation is that the bond of \$2.5 million is needed.

Ms. Mason stated that the status of the RCAP grant, which accounts for the \$1.5 million noted in the breakdown, is currently unknown. Ms. Mason stated that the staff and Board remind the senator about available opportunities.

Ms. Dobson asked if the Board would like to add the costs of the painted stone, veneer, and any extra, the question is are the funds coming from the contingency or should it be incorporated into the bond amount. The Board reached a consensus to borrow \$2.578 million through the bond.

Ms. Dobson stated that during the last budget work session in April, the Board received an Excel spreadsheet listing unfunded capital projects. She mentioned that the finance department believes adding parks improvement capital to the borrowing will help relieve the unfunded capital in the 2025 budget.

Ms. Dobson summarized parks improvement capital sheet and stated when the memo was written, they believed the total amount needed for parks improvement project is \$1 million but not, they believe it is \$3 million with the updated capital sheets and stated they need direction if the Board wants to add any of the capital improvement projects to the borrowing.

The board discussed the different park improvement projects, that are categorized as beneficial, and the cost associated with them.

Ms. Mason stated that her and Ms. Lyons spoke with the Congressman to see if there was any federal funding available and the paving on central park may be a project that they consider.

Ms. Santacecilia asked if they can pave just the ADA spots and not the entire lot.

Ms. Sweeney noted that the current parking is not gravel, but grass, and emphasized that ADA accessibility is a legal requirement. She pointed out that while the park is close in proximity, it is not currently in compliance. Ms. Sweeney also mentioned that there is some overlap in parking between the dog park and field use.

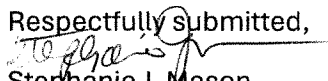
Ms. Dobson summarized that the Board expressed wanting to add the ADA dog park parking lot and paving of the Central Park loop, bringing the bond to \$3.1 million in the borrowing, which will be the number proposed to the Board at the Board of Supervisors meeting.

Mr. Wallace stated that the recommendation from the Pension Advisory Committee was to move the discount rate from 6 3/4% to 6% which will take effect 1/1/25 and will affect 2026 MMO. Mr. Wallace also stated that we are currently budgeting \$1.9 million as funding for the two pensions in 2025.

Ms. Dobson stated that the next Budget Work Session will be held on Tuesday, October 1, 2024, during which department heads will give their presentations, and the mileage plan will be reviewed.

The meeting adjourned at 6:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Stephanie J. Mason
Township Secretary