

**MINUTES
TOWN OF BELMONT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
Wednesday, September 3, 2014
8:00 AM**

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

2014 OCT -1 AM 8:51

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Board was called to order in open session at 8:08 a.m. by Chair Rojas in the Selectmen's Meeting Room. Selectmen Baghdady and Paolillo were present. Town Administrator David Kale was present. Assistant Town Administrator P. Marshall attended at 8:15 a.m.

Chair Rojas reviewed the agenda, noting that the Underwood Pool Building Committee would report out on the status of the pool bid process.

QUESTIONS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS

[There were none.]

ACTION BY APPOINTMENT

Update: Underwood Pool Building Committee (UPBC)

Underwood Pool Building Committee members Ms. Anne Paulson, Mr. Adam Dash, Mr. Joel Mooney, Ms. Ellen Schrieber, Mr. David Kane, and Mr. Bob Phillips appeared before the Board to provide an update.

UPBC Chair Paulson began with a brief review of the UPBC's work over the past year. She noted that a debt exclusion passed in April and that, of the four bidders, one bid was within the Town of Belmont budget for a pool demolition and construction. However, the lowest bidder has withdrawn from the bidding process due to an error in the bid. The three remaining bids are over the allocated budget.

She then outlined three options as follows:

1. dissolve the project
2. request additional funding to complete the project by awarding the contract to the next lowest qualified bidder
3. redesign the pool to reduce project costs and rebid the project in January 2015

Mr. Mooney spoke about the "winter conditions" estimate included in the project costs, which causes the cost of the project to rise. Winter conditions may be able to be reduced, he offered, if the project is rebid and the construction starts next spring. The Board then discussed the low bid submitted by Seaver Construction and the technical reason the bid was withdrawn.

Regarding the construction schedule, Mr. Mooney stated that the only way to keep to the current schedule on track (i.e., with the construction beginning this fall and the new pool opening next

summer) is for more money to be allocated to the project. Otherwise, the bidding would occur in January and the schedule would change and a new pool would not be available next June, 2015.

Selectman Paolillo spoke about the process for appropriating additional funding. Town Meeting would need to approve additional funding by Special Town Meeting. Mr. Kale stated that in order to use the bids which are valid through September 26 convening a Special Town Meeting in time to award a contract on the current bid will now be very difficult to meet, given the Town Meeting scheduling process. He stated that alternative pool design plans will need to be considered for rebidding the project.

Selectman Paolillo stated that Town Meeting Members will need to understand all of the options, including appropriation of more funding.

Chair Rojas said he has had concerns about the amount of money allocated to the cost of contingency. If the contingency had been higher, he said, the pool project would be underway. He expressed his concern with the estimators. He expressed an opinion that said they should have questioned the amount of the contingency percentage.

The Board discussed the possibility that the result of rebidding the construction may be higher going forward. Chair Rojas stated that he had concerns that the Town will not be willing to spend more money to receive a pool as designed or see a smaller pool built for the funds approved by Town Meeting that was a different design. Mr. Mooney stated that the rebidding process will not allow the project to begin until April or May of 2015 – which will result in a lost pool season.

Selectman Paolillo suggested that the process will likely need to be re-bid with some modification on the design to control overall costs.

Mr. Mooney then reviewed the alternative design options outlined by BH&A: one option was to combine the two pools into one which would reduce the pool by one-third for estimated reduction of \$100,000; the second option would be to maintain two pools with one shared filtration system instead of one for each pool for an estimated reduction of \$50,000; the third option would be to make no change to landscaping and site work by deleting the drop off location, parking changes, fencing, green space on the slope behind the pool for an estimated reduction of between \$125,000 - \$150,000. Ms. Schreiber explained that one option of the options to consider was to keep the pool size would be the same, but the pools would be connected.

Chair Rojas noted that the current bids are all about \$400K over budget. The individual alternative design options on the table reduce the pool by about \$100K only. The delta is still significant.

Selectman Paolillo suggested that the Board consider fundraising from private sources instead of requesting that the total increase in project cost from Town funds appropriated by Town Meeting. Then the Board would explain to Town Meeting Members that reduced cost has been explored for rebidding the project as well as fundraising is proposed. Changes to the design would be understood by Town Meeting and the legislative body can make the determination of how to proceed with additional appropriation or no additional funds. Selectman Baghdady said that he would be hard pressed to ask Town Meeting for more money on the project. The new

design needs to fit within the approved budget, but he agrees that private fundraising would be helpful.

The Board discussed the position that costs need to be reduced instead of requesting additional funds for appropriation and use fundraising proceeds to add enhancements that had to be eliminated to stay within the appropriation. There is a concern about other requests of Town Meeting for projects that require improvement in addition to the pool and it was important to live within the appropriation as approved at Annual Town Meeting.

Mr. Peter Castanino, DPW Director, and Mr. Gerry Boyle, Facilities Director, approached the table. Mr. Castanino said that presenting options to Town Meeting makes sense. Timing of the project as bid was aggressive and summer is a difficult time to have bids due. Public bidding rules for municipalities do not allow the Town and Pool Building Committee to know whether changes are enough to stay within the appropriation. He added that there are a lot of variables to be considered to move forward on the new pool project, including reduction to the project scope to stay in budget while creating a new pool that meets the needs of the community, or possibly allocating more money to the contingency fund, etc.

Mr. Kale outlined potential next steps, which include: engage in a pool redesign process to stay within budget and then rebid the project in January, which will allow winter condition savings. However, if the bids are still too high, Town Meeting Members may need to get involved. Chair Rojas raised the issue of pursuing a state variance to keep the current pool open for one more season, given the extenuating circumstances. Although, he added, the new pool may actually be under construction next summer – it is impossible to know at this time.

Pool Building Committee Chair Paulson stated that creating a new design will require additional funding for design services. If more money is required, the Town may be supportive. The Board said it would support laying out the options to Town Meeting.

The Board then discussed ways in which to inform the community of potential options, going forward. Mr. Kale noted that there are several Precinct Meetings scheduled for the fall.

Chair Rojas requested that the UPBC keep the Board in the loop. He thanked the committee for its efforts and acknowledged that the current situation is difficult for all.

The UPBC adjourned its meeting at 9:26 p.m.

NEXT MEETINGS

Monday, September 8, 2014 at 6:00 PM Town Hall Auditorium

The Board moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:27 p.m.



Mr. David Kale, Town Administrator