

**FIRE STATION EXPANSION PROJECT
PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSION
May 18, 2015**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Fire Station Expansion Project Public Information Session was called to order at 6:06 p.m. in the Jamestown Town Hall Rosamond A. Tefft Council Chambers at 93 Narragansett Avenue, Jamestown by Town Administrator Andrew E. Nota.

II. FIRE DEPARTMENT PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSION.

Town Administrator Nota referenced the Financial Town Meeting vote on Monday, June 1, 2015 at the Jamestown School, 55 Lawn Avenue at 7:00 p.m. listed on the Warrant as:

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 5
BORROWING FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT PURPOSES
THROUGH ISSUANCE OF BONDS**

A) Review/Discussion/Explanation

Town Administrator Nota explained the project and gave an overview of the total equipment evaluation, mapping of fire and rescue calls, frequently asked questions, planning and zoning process, design recommendation, and costs, which includes \$2,200,000 for renovations, addition and upgrades and \$300,000 for a new standard fire truck. Discussion continued.

JFD is a 501(c)3 corporation. Review of the project continued covering overall project with 8,000 sq. ft. expansion to 16,000 sq. ft. with 3700 sq. ft. of renovation, key components, existing property, what is JFD owned and Town owned, town funding, 2011 merger, map of the two buildings, two facilities into one, repurposing of EMS barn and other solutions were noted.

Review of the proposed renovation explained where vehicles would be housed, the cost of a custom truck v standard truck (two needed; one now one in near future) with potential \$500,000 savings, and need for two rescue vehicles at \$225,000 each. Discussion continued with explanation of why upgrades are needed, best location, consolidation of services, personnel, why the current location is the best, water supply, hydrants and insurance rates. Discussion ensued of the cost to build a new fire station (\$6,000,000-\$8,000,000) and budget increase and advanced care provided by ALS.

Schematic rendering of the proposed 2nd floor was displayed and explained, including the need for separate locker rooms, rest rooms, showers, and sleeping quarters. Schematic drawings of front and side elevation design matches the character of Jamestown.

Discussion ensued of the non-emergency vehicles to be housed on Grinnell Street and impact of residents noted.

Municipal projects are driven by community demographic information. Town Administrator Nota explained the Town's existing debt capacity, existing debt and projects, impact of a \$2,200,000 improvement project v. a new fire station over 20 years.

Mike Swistak of Narragansett Avenue commented on the impact of other town projects. Mr. Nota explained the Library project and why it is not expected to have a financial impact on the tax rate. Discussion ensued of the golf course project and the lease expiring in 2016 and recreation center project.

Ray Iannetta of North Road commented on debt for the fire station renovation and retiring debt and the debt service to remain the same even with the fire station project. The debt retiring in five years (2021-2022) was reviewed.

Mr. Nota explained extensive research done on response times based on a fire station located at the current location and next to the police station. A comparison of costs to purchase property and build a new fire station, current property values, property acquisition costs, and time required to move and build out a new station proceeded. The town owns the Grinnell property and the EMS Barn, which is valued at \$750,000, but does not own the entire fire station property. The cost for the current operation is approximately \$800,000 annually; estimated cost for a full time fire department is estimated at \$3,000,000 annually. Discussion ensued.

Jerry Scott of Walcott Avenue referenced Grinnell Street as an affordable housing unit lost through the proposed expansion.

Chief Bryer commented on the need for affordable housing, but the Grinnell Street property needs a great deal of work to be used as an affordable housing opportunity.

Mr. Nota referenced three local fire department expansion projects and related costs, with a cost of \$300 to \$400 per sq. ft., compared to the proposed JFD expansion and upgrade project at a cost of \$180 per sq. ft. The total cost of an upgraded, relocated fire alarm system would be seven figures. 2014 calls and 2015 calls are about the same. A breakdown of fire and EMS calls for the four districts proceeded, at 35% fire calls and 65% EMS calls. Review of JFD and EMS call statistics continued, including travel patterns. The Narragansett Avenue site has served the town well since the 1920's, and with no major population increase expected, renovating the current location would serve the town for at least another 30 years. What would be voted at the FTM is for Bonding authorization, giving the Council the opportunity to engage that debt, pending further review, proper notice, and Planning and Zoning approval.

III. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The Scout Leader asked about vehicle bays and any expansion on Grinnell Street. Chief Bryer noted the new trucks in the expanded bays meet the needs of the Town of Jamestown, as they carry more water, and safety is the No. 1 objective, the reason for the expansion. Discussion ensued of elimination of parking spaces on Grinnell Street to accommodate the new truck.

Chief Bryer stated maintaining the two entities under one roof is the goal. Having separate bunk rooms, bathrooms and shower facilities would improve services. Volunteers love their community, like the downtown location, and JFD has always been a central piece of this community. Any location other than Narragansett Avenue would provide less access. A new, standard truck carries 1200 gallons of water and would improve JFD capabilities, as opposed to a custom truck that carries only 750 gallons. We need both the new truck and the fire station to house it.

Discussion ensued of an additional facility at the north end of Town. 90% of all fire and rescue calls are answered in less than four minutes, which is excellent, and we will not gain any response time with a north end station.

President Trocki thanked the Boy Scouts for their attendance and asked if they had any additional questions. Chief Bryer invited them to the JFD Open House on May 23 and 24, and stated he is available to answer questions. Town Administrator Nota stated he is available by phone or email or to meet with citizens to answer questions, and invited the Boy Scouts to stay for the regular meeting that follows.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no more to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Attest:

Cheryl A. Fernstrom, CMC, Town Clerk

Copies to: Town Council
 Town Administrator
 Finance Director
 Town Solicitor