

## **MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 8, 2024 SELECT BOARD MEETING**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Board Members Chair Mike Houghton, Vice Chair Allison Knab; Joe Anderson.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Town Administrator David Moore, Finance Administrator Christiane McAllister, Fire Chief Jeff Denton

Mr. Houghton stated the purpose of this special meeting would be to review the HVAC proposals and discuss personnel strategies with Fire Chief Denton.

Mr. Houghton directed attention to the HVAC proposal and next steps. Mr. Moore explained that this project would be 100% funded by ARPA. Mr. Houghton recused himself from the discussion. Mr. Moore recommended the Board vote to authorize the Town Administrator to enter into a contract with Dowling Corporation for the replacement and upgrade of heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems at the Police Department, Municipal Center, and Library as described in the proposal from Dowling Corporation dated August 6, 2024 submitted in response to RFP 05-24 for a total of \$160,798 and to further authorize the use of ARPA funds. This action will be revisited by the Select Board pending feedback from the Energy Commission at their meeting on Tuesday that would recommend alternation of the proposed equipment, scope or cost of the revised proposal. Mr. Moore reported that four firms expressed interest, but we only received one proposal and one late proposal; a total of three firms took advantage of the walk-throughs. The DPW Director has reviewed in detail including follow-up with the recommended proposer. Mr. Moore said that they worked with the Energy Commission on development of the RFP and review of the submission. Ms. Knab asked for clarification as to why they would make a motion in the manner Mr. Moore suggested. Mr. Moore indicated that it was a timing issue; he wanted the Energy Commission's feedback as a whole on the proposal, at this point, he only has the input of the lead contacts reviewing this work. Only if the Commission as a whole recommend changes would it come back to the board. Mr. Moore added that the Town has long relied on Dowling as the HVAC contractor successfully. We receive prompt service for issues, preventative attention to our systems and equipment, and the company is invested in Stratham and its success.

Mr. Anderson asked about the age of the HVAC equipment at the 3 different locations. Mr. Moore responded 2008, 2010 and 2015. Mr. Moore described how the late proposal was incomplete, did not include any cut sheets or specific mention of models and was incomplete in other ways as well. Mr. Anderson said he understood the nature of accepting a proposal by a company owned by a Select Board member may show favoritism on our part, but indicated the process was correct. He felt the RFP was partly unclear in that it requested projections be made into the future. However, the Dowling proposal is competitive. They have been our long term vendor provided good service over a long period.

Mr. Anderson asked if the proposal was all inclusive. Will we return in 2 years to replace equipment that will have increased in price? Mr. Moore said yes, in 5 – 7 years equipment will need to be replaced. We own buildings and outdated equipment will need to be replaced. By

doing it over successive years we can avoid excessive spikes. Ms. Knab motioned as referenced in the memo 8/8 from Tim Stevens. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

At 3:44 pm Mr. Houghton motioned to go into a non-public in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II (a) Personnel. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. Roll call: Houghton-yes; Knab-yes; Anderson-yes.

At 4:34 pm out of the non-public session and adjourn. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

During the non-public session, the Board met with the Fire Chief to discuss personnel. No actions were taken.

The Board Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:34 p.m.