

Town of Westerlo  
Town Board Workshop  
Meeting of  
Tuesday, November 17, 2015

The Town of Westerlo Town Board held a Workshop meeting on Tue., 11/17/2015 at Westerlo Town Hall located at 933 CR 401, Westerlo, NY. Supervisor Richard H. Rapp called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ATTENDING WERE: Supervisor Richard H. Rapp  
Councilman Alfred L. Field  
Councilman Anthony W. Sherman  
Councilman Theodore S. Lounsbury III  
Councilman William F. Bichteman Jr.

Also attending were: Town Highway Superintendent Keith Wright Sr., Deputy Highway Superintendent Jody Ostrander, Fred Grober of Delaware Engineering, Zoning Board members John Sefcik & Amie Burnside, Deputy Town Clerk II Karla Weaver, Town Clerk Kathleen Spinnato and approximately eight residents.

Supervisor Rapp asked Fred Grober of Delaware Engineering (DE) to speak to the Town Board. Mr. Grober advised at the last regular Town Board meeting he had provided the Town Board with a Revised Scope & Project Budgets document for proposed Town Hall renovation/Highway Garage replacement to see where maybe they could cut costs. Copies of that document were available for public review. He advised DE was able to make cuts on both the proposed Town Hall renovation and Highway Garage replacement projects. The items cut would likely need to be done at some particular point of time, namely the delay of a roof replacement at the Town Hall may be able to wait a few years. Mr. Grober advised the original scope of the proposed projects were basic and non-extravagant as directed by the building committee /Town Board, so there weren't a lot of areas which could be cut.

Mr. Grober informed of specific areas of the proposed projects which cannot be cut i.e.; ADA compliance, Energy compliance. Prevailing wage rates need to be met for trades such as carpenters, masons, etc. Cutting cost from a labor standpoint is extremely difficult because that depends on the efficiency of the contractor and also how the project is prioritized and laid out. The idea was to initially do both projects at the same time in steps to utilize a contractor instead of multiple contractors. He discussed the NYS Wicks Law, and then reviewed in general; contract costs, plans, specs, contractors and the bidding process. Councilman Field advised while on the subject of prevailing wages, minority contractors are a requirement on a proposed project of this size.

Mr. Grober advised the proposed project is in a conceptual phase at this time and it is difficult to budget numbers. Costs may have come in lower once moved to a design stage. When budgeting they take into account square footage in general RS Means and also consider the past three or four projects completed by DE which are similar to this one. This is how they arrive at their cost estimates. There are a lot of variables based on fluctuation in materials, when a project is bid, labor costs, and how a project is done.

Councilman Bichteman asked him to explain RS Means to the audience. He advised RS Means is basically an estimating corporation that takes into account not only all Town Halls that have been bid within the last year or two, each year they update the cost estimate in RS Means. They take the sq. footage costs into account from the lowest projects to the more elaborate projects/renovations per sq. ft. He reported on town hall /highway garage projects that DE has completed for other Towns over the past 44Yrs including but not limited to renovations to Greenville Library, Windham Highway Garage and Ashland Town Hall/Highway Garage to name a few.

Mr. Grober reviewed the potential of building a pole barn a type 2 structure instead of a rigid frame construction a type 4 structure for the Highway Garage. Pole Barn longevity approx. 40-50 yrs., banks generally finance no more than 20 yrs., doesn't meet code classification of essential building. The longevity of a rigid frame building averages 50 to 100yrs. when maintained, financing can be lengthened to generally 30 yrs., code classification of essential structure, weathers storm conditions better and the payback over the long run is better. He reported on current situation of heat loss from two uninsulated Highway structures where vehicles are stored during winter. Those vehicles could be stored in new facility saving on heating costs this is why they had as many bays as originally depicted. DE had originally tried to maximize cost savings over the longevity of proposed building.

The public commented on the need for an alternative plan acceptable to the taxpayers and felt it necessary to consider sources competitive to Delaware Engineering, or for other persons within the Town, to come up with an affordable alternative. Discussions followed between the Town Board and the public.

Some suggestions made by the public included 100% assessment, sharing court facilities with another town, possibility of not having a Court, the phasing of the projects into segments the public could then compare the difference in cost to original proposed projects. The Board advised of the impact of 100% assessment to land owners with large properties, NYS Office of Court Administration requirements when it comes to the Court, the revenue the Court generates. Councilman Bichteman advised of his opinion on a phased plan. He suggested if DE could segment or phase the renovations into components and plan each with their own budget. Mr. Grober confirmed they could do that.

Discussion followed between a resident and Councilman Bichteman regarding bids and RFP's.

Councilman Bichteman made a motion to adjourn the workshop, seconded by Councilman Field the motion unanimously carried. Workshop adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Spinnato