

CITY COUNCIL E-MAILS

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April 4, 2022 Council Meeting

ADDENDUM

New content:

Submitted on Fri, 04/01/2022 - 07:44

Full Name

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Email

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Subject

Proposed \$1.4 million bond issue

Address

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Message

When I first read of the proposal for the City to float a \$1.4million bond to fund a feasibility study to determine the need for and design of a new police station, two questions came to mind.

The first was why do we need to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars to an outside firm to tell us what we already know, that we need a new police station? Lets face it, there have been numerous problems with the existing station from the start ,attempts to fix those problems have failed and we don't need to pay for a feasibility study to tell us that.

I did some research on feasibility studies and here is what I found.

According to Investment.com, a feasibility study is an assessment of a proposed plan or project which analyzes the viability of a proposed project. Its purpose is also to determine if the proposed use of a particular piece of land is viable ,but the City hasn't identified a site for a new police station. The same article also suggests doing due diligence before undertaking a feasibility study.In this case due diligence would consist of first identifying a proposed site. We have a number of commercial real estate firms in the City. Why not retain one of them to locate a proposed site ,then enter into a purchase and sales agreement ,contingent upon the completion of a 90-120 day due diligence period by the city, some of which could be done in house , but with some money set aside in next year's the budget to pay for outside assistance, if needed , to determine if this parcel will meet the City's needs.?

Doing so, could eliminate the need for, or reduce the amount of, any bond.

Approving the bond issue before determining the site is putting the cart before the horse.

The next question I asked myself was whether anyone had ever designed a police station before such that we have to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars to an outside firm to do so ?

I went on line and googled communities near Portsmouth,N.H. that have recently built a new police station.

I came up with Portsmouth, R.I.,population around 18,000 that broke ground for a new police station in 2017 and completed it in 2019.

Rather than bonding hundreds of thousands to dollars for the design of a new police station, why not ask the City Manager to contact her counterpart in Portsmouth, R.I. ,pick his brain as to the process they went through, find out who designed their police station and contact that firm to see the design they used could be used for the City, perhaps with some modifications, but presumably at a reduced cost ?

Again, such a process could also eliminate the need for or reduce the amount of the bond.

As you know, a bond issue is a debt that has to be repaid by the taxpayers with interest.To approve this measure at the same time that we are told that our taxes will increase because of the revaluation and the major portion of that increase will fall on the residential property owner would be fiscally irresponsible.

In conclusion, to approve this bond issue on Monday night would be premature. I urge you to table the measure and take the time to complete your due diligence by considering the measures I have proposed as well as others you may come up with , and then revisit the issue of a bond, the goal being to achieve the most efficient and least expensive process.

I know you can do better and I urge you to do so.

Thank you for your consideration.

Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes