

Barrington Public Library Building Project - Response to ABC Questions (10/31/23)

[Questions submitted via email from John Morris, 9/8/23]

Q: What is the purchase price of the building including all costs. P&S, closing costs, environmental studies, traffic studies as this is off 125, ect.?

A: List price is \$1.1 million. Negotiations are underway. The Town is exempt from transfer tax, so closing costs are limited to attorney's fees, title search/insurance, and recordings. There is no environmental study planned unless forthcoming inspections warrant additional review. There is no traffic study required or planned as this site will use an existing driveway off of Route 125.

Q: What is the estimated Warrant Article dollar value?

A: TBD – will include purchase of the building, construction and related costs, and also renovation of the existing library space into Rec offices and community center rooms.

Q: What is the loss of tax revenue associated with this becoming a town building as I assume HCA as a for-profit entity owns the building and currently pays taxes?

A: Taxes since the property was acquired by HCA are \$24,000 (approx.) per year. Previously, when owned by the non-profit Frisbie Hospital, a PILOT payment of half the property tax rate was paid to the Town. Given the new appraised tax valuation for 2024, the impact on the tax rate would be 1.3 cents per thousand.

Q: What are the intentions of the existing library if this were to pass? Sale? Additional town use? Potential costs of repurposing of this building?

A: As noted above, the intent is to repurpose the library space to serve as offices for the Rec department and community center meeting and program space. Cost to renovate the space is being estimated.

Q: What now happens with the existing land on Ramsdell Lane if the library is not located there?

A: The land will be used for recreation purposes and as a park.

Q: Will the proposed 2024 budget for the library include costs related to the new building that are outside of a normal budget?

A: There are no costs related to the new building in the 2024 library budget proposal. Costs related to the new site will be reflected in the 2025 budget, assuming the library would move to the new site in late spring or summer of 2025. Costs such as technology, phone system, moving expense, and security system will be included in the warrant article, not in the library operating budget.

Q: What are the values of cash on hand from donations? What are the additional funds that are pledged above the true cash on hand for the project?

A: The cash on hand held by the Library Foundation is approximately \$310,000 as of October 1. In addition, the Foundation holds pledges of \$162,653 including in-kind pledges (services) of \$28,000. The Foundation is launching a new round of fund-raising once the P&S is finalized, so the pledge numbers will likely increase.

Q: What is the proposed timeline for P&S, construction, and opening of the building?

A: The Town expects to complete the negotiations for purchase of the building this fall. Upon passage of the warrant article in March 2024, final design work will move forward, then the construction management firm will bid out the work, and construction should commence in fall 2024. We would expect to open by summer of 2025.

Q: What is the project bond duration and based on a non-favorable market, what type of rate are we looking at?

A: We anticipate a 20-year bond. The bond will likely be sold by the NH Municipal Bond Bank and in July 2023 their rates were:

*5 year: 3.26%
10 year: 2.99%
15 year: 3.35%
20 year: 3.65%
29 year: 4.09%*

Updated rates will be obtained prior to finalization of the warrant article.

Q: Projected additional cost per year to operate building? This would be a net total including additional staffing requests, materials as needed to fill shelves, savings from a building that might be potentially more efficient, etc?

A:

- *Custodial*
 - *The low end of the range cost per sq. ft. is \$0.05. That could be once per week or all the duties split so a fraction was completed each day. If the scope was weekly it would be about \$23,400. The current library custodial budget is \$11,167 (employing a part-time worker 11 hrs/week).*
- *Facilities Manager*
 - *The Town has about 40,000 sq. ft. of facilities which are used regularly (excluding some buildings at 224/226 Smoke Street). That makes the new library about a 20% increase. 20% of the Facilities Manager position is \$16,180.*
- *Winter Maintenance, Grounds Maintenance, and Utilities (reported by HCA)*
 - *Winter maintenance--HCA reported spending an average of \$5,400 per year for 2021-23. We anticipate that the town would handle snow removal for the Library.*
 - *Grounds maintenance—The property has mature landscaping and the Library does not plan to add or alter the landscaping. We anticipate the town will handle lawn mowing and raking of the property.*
 - *Data provided by HCA on recent utility bills vary widely from year to year. We are continuing to research these costs to provide a reliable estimate.*

- *Pavement*
 - *The Road Agent estimates that if the current parking lot is patched, cracks filled, sealed and repainted, it could last for another five years. The cost of that work would be approximately \$12-15,000 and is included in the project budget. Overlaying the present lot is not an option. If the current parking lot is replaced as part of the building renovation in 2024-25, it would need to be sealed and repainted periodically. The recent patching and sealcoating at the Public Safety Building cost about \$8,500.*
- *Staffing*
 - *No additional staffing is anticipated in 2025 or 2026, with the possible exception of increased janitorial (see above).*
 - *Depending on increased utilization of library services, it is possible an additional part-time children's librarian may be needed at some point in the future.*
- *Materials*
 - *The Library will continue to purchase new materials and weed older materials not circulating, but does not plan to increase the size of the collection.*

Q: Will this potentially conflict with a warrant article for upgrades and renovations to the Public Safety Building?

A: *The Public Safety Building construction project will not be on the 2024 ballot; instead a request for funds to undertake a full design during 2024 will be on the ballot in March 2024.*