

TOWN OF BEDFORD
May 2, 2023
BEDFORD FACILITIES INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Bedford Facilities Information & Communications Subcommittee was held on Tuesday, May 2, 2023 at the Police Training Conference Room, Safety Complex, 55 Constitution Drive, Bedford, NH. Present were: Robert Buxton, Joseph Hoebeke, Bill Jennings, Sue Mullen, and Dave Quick (via Zoom). Also present: Dave Gilbert (Town Council Rep), Sue Thomas (Town Council Rep), Rick Sawyer (Town Manager), Jeanne Walker (Assistant Town Manager), Coleen Richardson (BCTV, Asst. Station Manager), Bill Jean (Fulcrum Associates) and Scott Hunter (Fire Chief).

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 pm.

1. Approval of April 6, 2023 meeting minutes: Dave Quick had some concerns about items 5 and 8. Item 5 - He clarified that his concern was with keeping the current location of the fire station and renovating it. He believes that the current station should be moved to an area of town where it can have a more positive change on response times, especially in the western part of town but he doesn't necessarily have concerns regarding the location of the new station. He also has concerns about splitting manpower and it affecting service to the west since there is no direct route from South River Road to the western part of town. Item 8 -- The SAFER grant would increase staffing on each shift to 11 firefighters but would only require a minimum of 9 firefighters to be on duty.
2. The requested changes will be made to the minutes. Sue Mullen made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of April 6 as amended and Bill Jennings seconded. Minutes approved.
3. Chief Hunter presented some additional information to the committee. He explained that it is the Fire Chief's job to consider outcomes on health, wealth, security and quality of life. The approach taken by the Fire Department is a three-pronged approach and tries to balance the needs of apparatus/equipment, facilities and staffing to achieve their goals. The Department needs to properly balance each of these needs to achieve positive outcomes.
4. He continued that currently the department wants a minimum of 10 firefighters on duty at a time but can work properly as a 9-person shift. The Fire Department is currently receiving more than ten calls per day – with 3,800 calls received in 2022. Currently, there are issues with deployment and response times especially when back-to-back calls are received. On average, this occurs once per shift and then decisions must be made to try to meet the need for services. There is a need for additional staffing regardless of the proposed substation but currently, there is not enough room in the existing facility to add additional staff.

5. Some of underlying facts include the population growth of Bedford. Currently there are 7 people on duty serving 25,000 residents. The call volume has increased. The department has tripled in size and outgrown the current facility.
6. It was requested that Chief Hunter provide a fact sheet containing some of the information provided in his PowerPoint presentation for use of the committee.
7. Discussion moved to the history of the project. A memorandum providing key dates and milestones of the steps the Town has taken in regards to the Fire and Police need up to this point (see attached). There have been numerous attempts to move various options forward since 1990. A new fire station was detailed in the 1990 Master Plan, mentioned again in the 2000 Master Plan, and restated in the 2010 and 2021 Master Plans. The 2017-2018 All Town Facilities Space Needs Study detailed the need for a new 25,000 sf Police Station and was also included in the 2021 Master Plan.
8. The experience and lessons learned from the 2023 Warrant Article for a new Police Station/Fire Substation in Exeter, NH was then reviewed. The information was presented at the deliberative session, there was a good website created, and the newspaper covered the issue. Despite these avenues for information, it was easy to avoid becoming informed – there was no word on the street, meaning people were not talking about it. There were no lawn signs supporting it, no neighborhood meetings and no direct mailers.
9. It was asked what was the actual result from the Exeter election. (Editor note: 891 votes yes, 669 votes no. 3/5 ballot required, so needed 936 yes, article failed).
10. The Committee discussed the need to create a “word of mouth” communication to various groups like the Lions Club, Rotary, School Groups/Parents, etc. It is important to remember that that this option is what the Committee has been provided by the Town Council as the option being pursued and this is our starting point. The group is running a campaign to have the warrant article passed. Dave Quick reminded people that he was hoping that the committee would bring forth pros and cons and that the group is not trying to sell something. Rob Buxton explained that the mission of this group is to put together a communications plan to get the facility built. The Council has previously decided what is to be done.
11. There was request to clarify impacts of “electioneering laws” via a Legal opinion.
12. The committee began reviewing the process for creating a strategic communications plan. The first steps include understanding the audience (there is more than one), creating messaging, and deciding on delivery methods. A strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis is a starting point. This is to help identify where people get their information from and to create messaging aimed at those avenues. Worksheet handouts (attached) were distributed. It was decided that filling out these documents would be “homework” for all committee members to complete and return to Jeanne Walker by May 23.
13. The next meeting should focus on the Communications plan. One important piece of information to voters will be the tax rate implication of the project – this is still being determined.

14. Claudia Barrett has stepped down from the committee. Committee members suggested that someone associated with the schools be considered as a replacement.
15. The next meeting will be based upon the results of a Doodle poll and will target the first week in June, on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne Walker, Assistant Town Manager

Town of Bedford
Public Safety Building
Facilities Information and Communications Committee
May 2, 2023, 5:00 pm

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Approval of April 6, 2023 meeting minutes
- 3) Update from Fire Chief Hunter
- 4) History of Project – How did we get here?
 - a) Lessons Learned
 - b) Case Study - Exeter
- 5) Communication Plan and potential sub-committees
 - a) Social Media
 - b) In-person
 - Logistics/coordination
 - c) BCTV
 - d) Website
- 6) Communications Plan Schedule
- 7) Committee Meeting Schedule

Target Dates

- a) October 2023 Submittal of Town Manager's Budget
- b) January 2024 Budget Hearing
- c) March 2024 Warrant

May 2, 2023

Facilities Information and Communications Committee Meeting

Please sign in:

Initials	Name	Phone Number	Email
<i>RB</i>	Rob Buxton	(603) 396-6110	RobertBuxton@msn.com
	Kevin Glenn	(925) 326-0334	poboxjm@hotmail.com
<i>JH</i>	Joseph Hoebeke	(603) 765-1595	Jhoebeke@hollisnh.org
<i>BJ</i>	Bill Jennings	(603) 661-3258	bjennings@bedfordnh.org
	Ray Lessard	(603) 494-5107	Ray.Lessard@comcast.net
<i>SM</i>	Sue Mullen	(603) 315-8615	suemullennh@gmail.com
<i>Attended via Zoom</i>	Dave Quick <i>via Zoom</i>	(603) 264-3887	DavidQuick@comcast.net
	Peter Stillman	(603) 493-0659	dhsinc@att.net
<i>DG</i>	Dave Gilbert	(603) 714-4073	dgilbert@bedfordnh.org
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<i>CR</i>	Coleen Richardson	(603) 792-1399	crichardson@bedfordnh.org
<i>BJ</i>	Bill Jean	(603) 289-7105	<u>bjean@fulcrum-nh.com</u>
	Bob Robicsek	(603) 935-4210	Robert.Robicsek@lbpa.com
	Kathleen Porter	(603) 365-2771	Kathleen.Porter@LBPA.com
-	<i>Scott Hunter</i>		

MEMORANDUM



To: Facilities Communications Committee
From: Rick Sawyer, Town Manager
Date: May 2, 2023
Re: **Historical Timeline**

As background information I was asked to provide you with the key dates and milestones of the steps the Town has taken in regards to our Fire and Police needs up to this point. This is not meant to be a full history of each item.

- **1990 Police Station Space Needs Analysis** - Calls for an addition to the existing station at 24 North Amherst Road or a new station of 8,800 SF on Route 101.
- **1990 Master Plan** – Calls for a new central fire station on South River Road with renovations to the existing station at 10 Meetinghouse Road. A third unmanned station at the corner of Joppa Hill Road and Golden Drive was proposed for the future (10 years).
- **1990** – Town acquired land at the corner of South River Road & Hawthorne Drive for a fire station as part of a private development proposal. Later sold to Daniel Webster Animal Hospital and used for a highway widening/turning lane project.
- **1991** – Town Council adds a \$1.5M CIP project for a Route 3 fire station (not funded).
- **1992** – Hilltop Mutual Aid Fire District is formed as a joint effort of Bedford, New Boston, and Amherst and operates out of the station located at the Air Force Tracking Station (now Space Station).
- **1992** – Safety Building Committee formed.
- **1993 Bond Article** – The Safety Complex \$2M warrant article passed.
- **1994** – The current Safety Complex became operational. 24,000 SF of office space and 13,900 SF apparatus bay addition for a total of 38,000 SF.
- **2000 Master Plan** - Fire Chief reissues the need to address calls to South River Road. Consideration is given to a joint daytime substation with Merrimack. The Joppa Hill station is again cited as needed even though the Hilltop station was seeing relatively low calls for service.
- **2004** – Town acquired land in front of Target as part of the private development for a fire substation. (never utilized, determined not suitable)
- **2005 Fire Substation Needs Study** – The Town Manager and Fire Chief complete a report calling for further study of a substation on South River Road.
- **2005 MRI Study** – Calls for a 2-bay fire substation to be built in the South River Road area that will minimize response times to the statistically largest response volume area. OSHA, NFPA, & ISO Standards cited. Calls for Hilltop Station to be staffed with neighboring communities as in the past.
- **2010 Master Plan** – Restates that needs the identified in the 2000 Master Plan and calls for the Fire Substation to be constructed as soon as possible.

- **2011 Infrastructure Bond** – A safety substation on South River Road was included at \$1.5M in the \$13.2M bond. Passed with 69% of the vote. (\$1.2M of the station funds later reallocated)
- **2013 Site Selection Process** – Brickstone Land Use Consultants, Scully Architects & Mitchell Associates hired to recommend a site on South River Road. 25 sites reviewed and 6 viable sites had concepts developed. 5 were recommended.
- **2013** – New Boston agreement renewed, better coverage for west Bedford.
- **2014 Bond Question on the Ballot** – Article 4 sought \$3.8M for purchase of property and construction of a Safety Substation on South River Road. No location was identified. Received 56% of the vote but needed 66.7%.
- **2014 Site Acquired** – The former Napa Auto Parts store was purchased at 4 Sunset Lane for \$885K.
- **2015 Preliminary Design** – Several concepts for 4 Sunset Lane are developed for a Fire Substation by Scully Architects. \$2.2M & \$2.7M options considered, but the Council decides to not put the project forward to the voters and adds staff instead.
- **2015 Safety Complex Space Needs Assessment** – H.L. Turner Group hired to look at options for Police expansion and adding the radio station, Planning and Assessing departments.
- **2017-2018 All Town Facilities Space Needs Plan** – Harriman Associates was hired to review the space needs of all departments and recommend a comprehensive plan. A new 25,000 SF Police Station was recommended at 47 Constitution Drive and the construction of the Fire Substation at 4 Sunset Lane was again recommended.
- **2018-2022** – The Council Facilities Subcommittee reviews numerous sites for combined and standalone Police Stations and Fire Substations. Lease and purchase options are considered for several sites. They and the Council determine that combined site is preferred in the South River Road Corridor.
- **2021 Master Plan** – Restates that needs identified in the earlier Master Plans and calls for the Fire Substation at 4 Sunset Lane or other land on South River Road and a new Police Station at 47 Constitution Drive.
- **2021** - \$2M Capital Reserve Account established for the acquisition of land and the construction of facilities.
- **2022** – Fulcrum Associates is hired as the Construction Management lead with Lavallee Brensinger Architects and VHB Engineers as the design team for a new Police Station combined with a Fire Substation, a remodeled Safety Complex that now also included the Planning Department, and a remodeled Town Office Building.
- **2022** – 4 Sunset Lane is sold for \$1.5M as it is determined not to be large enough for the combined complex. (money added to the Capital Reserve Account in 2023 now at \$3.5M)
- **2023** – Town obtains a P&S for 12 acres of land known as 300 South River Road for \$2.445M with a closing scheduled for May 15, 2023.

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C. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

What are our strengths?

What are our weaknesses?

What opportunities exist in the next 18 months?

What threats exist in the next 18 months?

D. Analyze Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

	Opportunities	Threats
Strengths		
Weaknesses		

Unique opportunity for the next six months:

-
-
-
-

Challenge to address in the next six months:

-

B. Audience Profile

Audience _____

1. Describe your audience: What are their concerns? What characteristics of your audience are important to your organization (e.g., their education levels, income levels; family size, health issues)?
2. Why are they important to you?
3. Why should your audience care about your organization and its issues?
4. What do you want from this audience?
5. How does this audience receive information?
6. Are there particular individuals who have credibility or power over the target audience? What are their names?
7. Are there other individuals that can help you better reach this target audience? Who?

C. Select Priority Audiences

Review the previous list and select five groups that you will focus on for your strategic communications plan. Indicate how they are important to your work and the desired action you would like them to take.

Audience	Why Are They Important to Us?	Desired Action
EXAMPLE: NPO	Provides coordination with similar projects around our mission. Identifies resource needs and develops standard language on our issue.	How to work together and when we can work alone.
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Step Three Communications Objectives

Remember that communications objectives focus on changing specific knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors in the audience. Communications objectives have action verbs (e.g., educate, teach, inform, provide, conduct, enlist, mobilize, discuss, promote, build consensus).

Communications Objective 1

Target Audience:

Select One: Inform Engage Motivate Maintain

Desired Action:

Target Date:

State Objective:

Communications Objective 2

Target Audience:

Select One: Inform Engage Motivate Maintain

Desired Action:

Target Date:

State Objective:

Apply the **SMART** test. Are your communications objectives:

Smart? Measurable? Appropriate? Realistic? Time-bound?

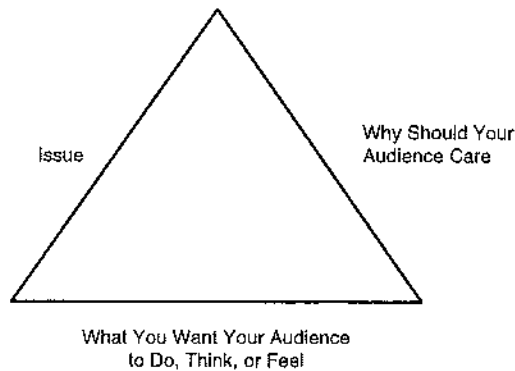
Step Four Tailor Messages

A. Persuasive Messages

Create a message for each of your priority audiences. It should have three parts. It should identify the issue and desired change, make it relevant to the audience, and provide an action step that the audience can take. Write your message as a complete sentence or two. Try to use the most persuasive language and use the word “you” at least once.

Target Audience: _____

Desired Change: _____



Part 1 (Issue)

Part 2 (Why Should Your Audience Care)

Part 3 (What You Want Your Audience to Do, Think, or Feel)

Now write a message combining all 3 parts as if you are talking to the audience.

194 Strategic Communications Plan Template

B. Put a Human Face on the Work

Select an anecdote that puts a “human face” on the work that you do.

Select a second anecdote that puts a “human face” on the work that you do.

What do these anecdotes say about the work that you do? What emotions are they likely to trigger with your target audience? Are there any privacy concerns or other issues that should be addressed before you use these anecdotes?

B. Evaluate Existing Vehicles and Strategies

- Step 1. List existing vehicles used by your organization.
- Step 2. Identify priority audiences that could benefit from these vehicles.
- Step 3. Verify that each vehicle carries the right message.
- Step 4. Verify that the vehicle is effectively reaching the audience.

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Vehicles we use	Primary audience	Conveys our message?	Effective at reaching the audience?
Face-to-Face			
Print			
Audio			
Video			
Web Site/E-mail			