

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
WORK SESSION MINUTES
Sept. 30, 2015**

PRESENT: SEAN P. MURPHY, CHAIRMAN, PRISCILLA R. LINDQUIST, SELECTMAN; CHAD BENNETT, SELECTMAN

Visitors: Chief Carrier and P. Williams (Tri Town News)

The Selectmen went into a work session on a voice vote. Purpose of Work Session was to meet with the top three bidders on the cell tower proposal

Work session went from 7:00 pm until 8:47 pm.

*Varsity Wireless
One NH Ave
Portsmouth, NH
Francis Parisi*

Mr. Parisi was present representing Varsity Wireless. He explained that they are a wireless infrastructure developer. They would design a structure that will accommodate the needs of the community. He did state that they are a 2 year old company but collectively the employees have many years of working with wireless carriers including a former FCC Chairman on their board.

Mr. Parisi said that their office is in Providence, RI, along with offices in Portsmouth and Boston as well. They have 40 sites under development including one that is not up in Stratham. They have worked with Jefferson, NH, and have placed one near the Mt. Washington. Chief Carrier asked Mr. Parisi how long the process would take until there was a user on board. Mr. Parisi replied that with extensive marketing he would predict 3-6 months. The challenge could be doing both towers at the same time. He explained their bid process and said that they looked at the proposals as two separate bids. He emphasized that the Kent Farm site is an ideal spot. The one at the Central Fire Station is close to the residents. He stated that they would need to do a couple of balloon tests over a couple of days to see how visible the various heights would be. They would be looking for a minimum of 75 feet for the one at the Central Fire Station. Chief Carrier said the higher the better and Mr. Parisi said that 100 to 120 feet would be good. He said that they would need to be above the tree line which makes it more visible and could be a hindrance in the residential area and with the school close by. Mrs. Theriault asked about the ability for the fire department to use the tower as a training tower. Mr. Parisi said they could discuss it. He would need to make sure it is securable.

Varsity Wireless likes to enter into 50 year agreements and the town is looking for a 30 year agreement, which they will agree to. There is a flat 3% escalator on the rent every year. He stated that as a real estate developer, they are looking to make money and work with the town. Once there is an anchor tenant they will build the tower and as more come on they share the revenue with the town at a flat \$400, which makes it easier for the towns to calculate the revenue annually. So the rent would be \$1,500 with a 3% adjustment annually and once the additional tenants are in place \$400 per tenant (starting with the second one). There are currently 4 telecommunication companies (AT & T, Verizon, Sprint and T-Mobile). They would design the tower to accommodate 4 or 5 carriers with the fire department equipment on the top of the tower.

Whereas the company didn't know what the Fire Department needed for equipment they proposed a flat \$25,000 fee for each site and the fire department could use the funds for a its own generator or whatever equipment it needed. They will relocate the current equipment to the towers as long as the move is done at the same time as they are working there. Chief Carrier emphasized the need for a backup power plan. Mrs. Theriault asked if the carriers own their own generators. Mr. Parisi responded that usually only Verizon wants a generator. He explained that in Stratham the pole is close to residences and they are restricted to one generator. Chairman Murphy asked about the maintenance costs of the generator and was told that the town would be responsible for its own maintenance. One of the tenants could be asked to allow the fire equipment to be hooked in. Chief Carrier said that they have their own generator and just wanted to be able to hook it into the new tower. Mr. Parisi asked about a utility building and said that normally that could house the equipment such as a generator and suggested that the fire department could use the \$25,000 to build a storage shed if needed.

Mr. Parisi was asked about the time line:

30-60 days to do the lease, then 60-90 days doing the survey, meeting the federal regulations and the environmental analysis. The time would be concurrent. The permit process (planning and ZBA) could take one meeting or could take a couple) also they estimate 6 months to get through that process (Stratham was 6 months). It would take 45-60 days for the foundation, building permit, inspection process. Overall they estimate 12-15 months for the whole process. He ended by stating that they have plenty of references and that the balloon test could be a superimposed structure on a picture to see what it will look like as a tower and to drive around the town to see the visibility.

Mr. Parisi left at 7:30 pm

Bay Ring Communications
391 Oakland Street
Mansfield, MA
Jacqueline Murray

Ms. Murray gave a brief overview of her company. She explained the proposal they submitted that did not include the fire station. She explained that upon reviewing the sites they had no issue with the Kent Farm site but the proximity of the fire department site to residences was discerning to them. Ms. Murray explained that the Kent Farm site had a natural buffer and was a larger parcel of land. Chief Carrier asked if the issue with the fire station site was aesthetic or height. She responded that the zoning for the town was an issue. When she was told that the zoning had changed regarding cell towers on town property she still held that they didn't like going that close to residences.

She explained at Kent Farm they would look to have an 80 by 80 fence compound with a 6ft to 8 foot chain link fence (can be green slating if required). They would allocate a 10 by 20 foot area for the fire department equipment inside the compound. The height of the tower would be 165' monopole style designed to hold up to 5 carriers plus the fire department equipment. She explained that they are a developer and build to attract the carriers. They currently have no municipal contracts but do have other references from private placements. She provided a couple of different towers that they have installed. She talked about the ability to have an antenna inside of the tower. They prefer to have 1-12 antennae with 4 mounts on each corner with 10 feet of separation between each platform.

The rent proposed was \$1,500 per month with a 3% escalator. Once a carrier rents the a space the town would get 20% of the revenue and there is a 3% escalator on that as well.

Mrs. Theriault asked about moving the fire department equipment to the new tower. Ms. Murray responded that they were okay with moving it. She stated that the only issue they would not agree to was the conveyance to the town upon termination of lease. Chairman Murphy asked about generators and was told that Bay Ring does not install but that some of the carriers would bring in their own. If the town needs access this could be discussed. Chairman Murphy asked Ms. Murray if the fire department tower was completely off the table. She replied that if the town wanted to go that way they could discuss it but experience has shown issues being so close to residences even with the town backing the proposal. She also stated that they would need to show significant gap in coverage to have the tower allowed and if it is appealed by a resident it could be hard to show. She stated that the carriers will come in and do a test of the "gray" areas or breaks in coverage and then see how this fits into their plans. The timeline for Bay Communications would be about 2 years 9 months.

She left at 8:00 pm

*J. George-Blue Sky Towers
352 Park Street, Suite 106
N. Reading, MA
James George*

Mr. George summarized his proposal. He said that he was interested in the 2 site proposal and has put a lot of research into the need for both towers in the area and the propagation issues. Each tower would be viable for carrier to be on both. Chief Carrier asked if they would build one tower and then wait to see if there was interest on the second one. Mr. George said that there is no building until there is a tenant on board. Chief Carrier asked if each tower would be on its own timeline or a combined one. Mr. George said that his research shows the need for both towers. Kent Farm would be about a 165-180 foot pole and that it would cost about \$300,000 to build. He estimates that he could get an average of \$2200 per month rent. The town would receive 25% of each tenant after the anchor. He also noted that there was a 3% inflator which is standard in the industry although he has heard that the carriers are trying to get this down to 2%. He explained that his company will pay \$30,000 toward the cost of a generator for the fire department equipment per site. Fire department would go to the top space on the tower and leave the rest for the carriers. Chief Carrier asked about training on the tower and told Mr. George it was critical to be able to do so. Mr. George said that as long as it was OSHA safe and the liability was covered.

Mr. George said that Blue Sky will own the towers and pay any applicable sales tax. He also said that there will be a bond given to cover any potential cost to remove the tower down the road. It is called a "removal bond". For the town to own the tower, it would have to be through a cancellation of the lease agreement which could only end by lack of funding. If the tenants on the tower merge then the rent on the collocator also will down They talked about the generator and that some of the carriers prefer gas powered generators then diesel. Chief Carrier said that he would like to see 180 feet on the Kent Farm tower to help propagate his frequency.

The time line for Blue Sky is estimated to be less than a year. Mr. George believes that he can get a commitment for an anchor by 1st quarter 2016.

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Discussion

The Selectmen were asked by Mrs. Theriault if they wanted time to digest the information. They discussed each of the companies.

Bay Communications not interested in the Fire Station as a location

Blue Sky presented the overall better package

Chief Carrier suggested that they scrap the idea of the tower being used for training. He stated that it was not critical and it was a liability issue.

Selectman Lindquist motioned to move forward with James George of Blue Sky Technology. The motion was seconded by Chairman Murphy. The motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Theriault will notify them tomorrow. Mrs. Williams suggested that the Board of Selectmen involve the residents of Little's Lane as much as possible with things such as design etc.

The meeting adjourned at 8:47 pm

A True Record.



Tina Harrington, Recording Secretary