Frequently Asked Questions

Medfield Public Works Facility

1. **Can't we just salvage the existing DPW building via additions and repairs? What sort of compromises in terms of safety, costs, and savings would this entail?**

   The existing building is near or past the end of life. The existing building does not meet current environmental or building codes. Major renovation would require the building to meet current codes. It is the opinion of the committee that the building is not salvageable.

2. **Materials: Why is the proposed building masonry? Would a metal or a combination masonry-and-metal building be more cost-effective in either the short- or long-term?**

   There would be approximately a $250,000 savings - by substituting metal construction for masonry. This is approximately 2.5% of the total project costs. Metal buildings deteriorate more rapidly over time and the salt used for snow and ice removal accelerates this process. It is the unanimous opinion of the building committee that the building be constructed of masonry.

3. **Women's Lockers: Do we need facilities for women if there are no female employees? Could this space be utilized more effectively for other purposes?**

   No the size and number of bathrooms and locker rooms are dictated by building codes. The building inspector will not issue a permit from construction if the building does not meet building codes. In addition, deviation from building codes leaves the town open to possible legal action from various parties.

4. **Heating: Why are the garages bays centrally heated? How much will this cost versus not heating the bays? Would it be more effective to use portable electric engine block heaters? Should the bays be heated at all if this may potentially damage the vehicles?**

   The garage bays will be heated to approximately 50 F and will require fresh air make up when the trucks are operating. Heating of the garage bays maximizes the use of the equipment by minimizing time for removal of snow/ice and minimizing potential maintenance issues surrounding the hydraulic systems and diesel engines in the equipment. The committee, along with the architectural/engineering firm, are investigating options for heating the garage bays that may be more cost effective in both initial cost and operational cost. Block heaters heat the engine blocks. They do not unfreeze the airbrakes or remove snow and frozen ice from the outside of snow removal equipment.

5. **Expertise: Have the plans for the garage been fully analyzed and confirmed by those who will be both constructing and actually using the garage? In other words, do those who are in fact "in the know" believe this is the appropriate, proper structure to build?**

   The building committee is comprised of six members with either architectural, construction management or engineering degrees and who are either involved in the

design/construction industry or have been involved with public building construction in Medfield. There is over 100 years of combined experience in the construction industry on our committee. The replacement of the public works building has been a recommendation of three different committees tasked with analyzing the town's building requirements over the past 10+ years.

6. **Size: The current garage is approximately 13,000 square foot. The proposed garage is approximately 45,000 square feet. Why such a big increase?**

The current garage building is inadequate to house all the existing equipment leaving the majority of the existing equipment to be stored outside, exposed to the elements. This expensive equipment's useful life is greatly reduced and thus exposes the town to more frequent replacement costs due to this decreased useful life. The new design would allow all major equipment to be stored inside and thus maximize the life of that equipment. When built in 1970, the Public Works Department had 14 vehicles and now own over 50. Also, the committee is exploring the possibility of reducing the project scope to approximately 40,000 square feet resulting in an estimated $725,000 savings.

7. **What is the cost of the Project**

We are working with the design firm to reduce the scope and to find some efficiency in the mechanical designs of the building. We expect the initial cost will be reduced from the amount requested at last year's town meeting.

a. Total cost (estimate as of 4/8/11)	$10,940,000
b. Total funds already appropriated:	$(1,194,686)
c. Additional cost to the tax rolls	$ 9,745,314
d. Potential cost savings items	
i. Reduce scope	$ (725,000)
ii. HVAC system	$ (200,000)
iii. Reduce emergency generator	$ (50,000)
e. Potential cost to the tax rolls	$ 8,770,314

9. **Do we really need three repair bays?**

There are two mechanics on staff. A third repair bay was designed since there are times when you cannot remove a vehicle while waiting for a repair part.

10. **Do snow plows need to be located inside?**

The current plan is for the snow plows to be located outside.

11. **Why can't the building have a center travel aisle with a single door on each end instead of the 40 roll-up doors? Won't this reduce cost?**

By adding an enclosed center aisle, the number of doors decreases, but that is offset by an increase in steel, concrete, roofing, insulation, masonry. In addition, due to the increase in the enclosed volume of space the ventilation and lighting systems increase. This leads to more initial cost as well as more operational cost by powering more lights

and more mechanical systems to accommodate the additional volume of enclosed space. Lastly, due to site constraints on the existing property, this larger building enclosure would be difficult to achieve.

12. Why now? Is this the best time for this?

Timing construction projects is always a double edged sword. During a down economy, construction pricing and borrowing costs are low, but taxpayers may be stretched and less favorable to approving the expenditures. During a good economy, taxpayers may be more amenable, but construction costs and borrowing costs increase significantly. It is our position that now is an excellent time to build as borrowing costs are at record lows and construction labor and materials costs remain relatively low compared to recent history. It is at this time that the town and its taxpayers receive the best value for their tax dollars.