

MILFORD CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
September 1, 2010

A Meeting of the Police Committee of Milford City Council was held in the Joseph Ronnie Rogers Council Chambers of Milford City Hall, 201 South Walnut Street, Milford, Delaware on Wednesday, September 1, 2010.

PRESIDING: Committee Member Councilwoman Katrina Wilson

IN ATTENDANCE: Committee Members Councilman S. Allen Pikus

ALSO: Chief E. Keith Hudson and City Clerk Terri Hudson

In the absence of Chairman Doug Morrow, Committee Member Wilson called the Police Committee meeting to order at 5:07 p.m.

As has been the case for several years, Chief Hudson advised the current police department is showing signs of age and dysfunction and has police personnel crammed into disorganized spaces. In addition, there are concerns about water and flooding because of its location on the banks of the Mispillion River.

As a result, Chief Hudson has visited several architect and engineering firms that specialize in police facility construction during the past several IACP (International Association of Chiefs of Police) Conferences.

Attending various informational and training sessions through the IACP, he has learned there are a number of advantages of hiring a firm who specializes in law enforcement and public safety designs. The process for planning, funding and constructing a police department today is very complex. There are a number of issues that must be addressed including security, survivability, community acceptance and technology. He said the building must also be able to respond to growth and changes over a long period of time.

It was through IACP that Chief Hudson became associated with Daniel Redstone of the Redstone Architectural firm; Mr. Redstone has more than thirty years of experience in the field of law enforcement and public safety architecture. He has served as the principal-in-charge on a variety of law enforcement, justice, public safety and government buildings. During one of their initial conversations, Mr. Redstone informed Chief Hudson he is associated with a local firm, French and Ryan of Georgetown.

Chief Hudson recalled attending a training session in Utah for planning and designing police facilities sponsored by IACP noting one of the main objectives today is building and parking security. He said this can go as far as placing some sort of objects in front of the building to prevent such things as the potential for a vehicle to drive into the department, the placement of employee parking in relation to public parking, etc. Many of those things did not have to be considered when the current police department was built thirty plus years ago.

Delaware Architects of Milford has also been in contact with Chief Hudson after they were informed the department had budgeted for a feasibility study to be done this fiscal year. During their initial conversation, Chief Hudson informed them that he had been working with Redstone for the past several years noting their expertise and experience in police facilities. However, he has met with both firms to discuss their ideas and proposals.

Chief Hudson then provided copies of the packets submitted from both French and Ryan and Delaware Architects, Incorporated.

It is the chief's recommendation that French and Ryan be hired due to their experience in public safety as well as their affiliation with Redstone Architects. He noted that Redstone's portfolio included a number of architectural firms with experience in law enforcement or justice projects throughout the United States and French and Ryan

in Georgetown was first on their list.

He explained their initial plan is to provide the front-end services which include the feasibility study, needs assessments and preliminary design services. Also, included would be a site selection analysis.

Chief Hudson advised that once that phase is completed, they would present their findings and proposal to city council.

He reiterated that not only will they provide an estimate of how big the new facility should be to accommodate existing staff, but a projection will be made based on population growth of the Milford area.

Overall, a comprehensive analysis will be performed which will include the planning, funding, design and construction of the new department.

When asked if any grants are available, the chief advised that French and Ryan is familiar with government funding sources and will work with the department to obtain any applicable grants that may be available. Locally, French and Ryan have recently designed and oversaw the construction of the Delaware State Police Troop 5 Facility in Bridgeville and the South Bethany City Hall/Police Department.

Chief Hudson reminded the committee that \$50,000 has been allotted for a needs and feasibility study; however, this proposal goes above and beyond the study. As part of the process, Mr. Redstone will come in for several days to observe the community, review potential sites and interview employees to determine their needs as well. Sometime next year, they will come back before council and present their plan which will include the proposed costs and funding possibilities.

The chief said he appreciates the effort and time of Delaware Architects, but is unsure they have the experience and background needed for this project and is very comfortable with the specific items that French and Ryan addressed both in conversations and in their proposal.

Potential sites were then discussed by the committee. Mr. Pikus favors the land across from the police department that runs to Pierce Street noting it is extremely high ground so there would not be any problems with flooding. His preference is the police department remain in the downtown area, if at all possible, though he understands a large tract of land is needed. He is unsure how many acres are there though it does cover the entire block.

When asked if Chief Hudson has found any potential sites, he indicated he has looked for a couple of years though has not found any one particular area that would meet all of their needs. A number of people, including some council members, had recommended the city's business park. Chief Hudson explained the downfall is its location on the northwestern part of town and he prefers a more centralized area because of response time. He questions the amount of time and traffic an officer would encounter when responding to a complaint on the southeast side of Milford, for example. Mr. Pikus agreed the department should be accessible to all aspects of the town. Right now, the focus on growth is in the southeastern area of Milford with minimal growth west of Milford. He believes the center or heart of Milford is where the department should be located.

Chief Hudson advised that after the site evaluations are performed, three sites would be proposed for councils' consideration. French and Ryan would gather all the information needed to provide council with the cost estimate falling within the budgeted amount.

Mr. Pikus recommended Chief Hudson continue to informally look for potential sites. He added that typically, when the city becomes interested in any land, the price doubles. However, an appraisal would be required with the city paying no more than that appraisal. He does suggest we seriously pursue a site at this time with land prices being historically low because of the current economy.

When asked for Chairman Morrow's opinion, Chief Hudson advised he has reviewed the proposals with him and after a careful review, also agreed that French and Ryan was the appropriate choice based on their expertise.

Mr. Pikus moved to recommend that French and Ryan be hired to do the comprehensive analysis for the new Milford Police Department, in association with Redstone Architects, because of their expertise in the police facility design and needs area. Motion seconded by Ms. Wilson. Motion carried.

With no further business, Ms. Wilson adjourned the Police Committee Meeting at 5:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Terri K. Hudson".

Terri K. Hudson, CMC
City Clerk