



TOWN OF ATLANTIC BEACH, NC

THE NEED FOR NEW TOWN HALL / POLICE / FIRE / EMS / PUBLIC SERVICES FACILITIES

Consolidated Staff Report

December 2010

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Items of thought from Admin/Finance staff regarding current Town Hall site and why we need replaced or renovated:

- Would like the customer friendliness of a drive-thru window for our citizens instead of just the lock box. This would add to their convenience level with the many drop-offs we have, especially during inclement weather.
- Would like the doors to be more customer-friendly. The front door, while it is ADA accessible with a ramp, is very hard to open normally, much less if you were in a wheelchair. The other option is the back door, but it stays locked from the outside due to safety concerns. Maybe a door-aid with push button access to open the door would help at the main entrance.
- Existing offices are cramped – two offices are already shared between 2 staff members each. While Cheryl (utility billing) sharing an office in lobby is handy for walk-ins setting up and changing utility accounts, she shouldn't be accepting the walk-in payments directly due to segregation of duties. Ideally it would be better if she were in an adjoining office where customers walking in wouldn't expect her to take the money purely because she's sitting there. Our part-time admin assistant (Laura) who is needed to fill the segregation of duties with bank statement purposes (completely neutral, no other financial ties to check requests, APs, payroll checks, journal postings, billings, posting payments, etc) and helpful for fill-in projects throughout the month (filing, reports, special projects, etc), doesn't necessarily need her own office since it is only for one day per week but it would be nice to have an office for that purpose.
- Lack of meeting space for departmental meetings and lack of office space for use by 3rd parties w/ access to wireless internet (auditors, bookkeepers, WC auditor, citizen space to view public records, etc).
- Lack of secured storage and secured vault. Most financial records required to be retained are currently stored in a non-climate controlled storage room attached to the back of PW building. Water financial records are stored upstairs in the PW building. If the PW building is relocated, where would we be able to store our records?
 - While some of these can be scanned into the document management system (Laserfiche), many of these types of paper records would still need to be kept in hard copy format until they could be destroyed under the retention schedule. However, they could be stored at a secured site off the island since they are not often accessed.
- Current and previous year boxed financial records, plus various fire-proof filing cabinets (currently located in vault) of personnel files, loan documents, vehicle titles/documents, workers comp claims, medical forms, etc would need to remain close to the finance/HR offices.
 - Also, with the heat build-up in the vault due to the servers and lack of adequate ventilation, the vault doors leading into the two adjoining offices remain opened at

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night. This eliminates the “vault” fire security where the permanent records (minute books) are required to be kept.

- Lack of dedicated IT storage room to allow for racks to maintain IT servers/hubs/switches, etc. Room would also need to have secured access, be air controlled, and prevent dust build-up.
- Lack of dedicated supply room, which could be a partition within a copy/postage meter room. Need a lockable location with shelves where cases of paper, toner, and general office supplies could be maintained and allow for usage to be tracked. Supplies, boxes of AP checks/privilege license forms/payroll checks/direct deposit stubs, and cases of copy paper are currently in the vault, with some small items stored in the lobby under the front counter for easy accessibility. A walk-in closet with shelves along one side would suffice.
- Poor electrical wiring in Town Hall/kitchen area. As an example, if the microwave is used at the same time as the toaster and coffee pot, the circuit blows and they all stop working. The women’s bathroom light at Town Hall is powered from the same circuit and so it goes off too.
- Antiquated phone system with parts no longer able to be serviced or replaced. Additionally, phone jack had to be replaced inside planner’s office due to corrosion.
- Front lobby floor along base of windows leak every time it rains.
- HVAC system in Town Hall seems to unevenly distribute hot/cool air along hallway. One thermostat controls the tax collector, finance/HR, clerk, and TM office. Air flow is strong in tax collector and finance/HR offices, but seems to fizzle out before reaching clerk and TM offices.
- Condensation from a/c units leak onto tiles and causes discoloration/mold/stains which are not replaced in a timely fashion. Examples can be seen in the lobby area above water billing desk, in hallway between bathrooms at Town Hall, and above copy machine in Inspections office.
- Old water stains in vault around light fixture directly above servers exist, not sure of how/when/why.
- Inadequate parking spaces leads to staff parking in hotel spaces multiple times each week. This is exacerbated when groups, like 911 Meetings or other classes, use the board room. Seems more of a problem also during the summer due to increased parking needs due to lifeguards and PRN staff for PD and FD.

Date: November 15, 2010

To: Town Manager

From: Inspections Department

Re: Reasons for a New Town Hall Facility

- Out dated and hazardous electrical wiring which causes continual breaker tripping
- Outdated network wiring causes computer failures - which effect productivity on a constant basis. Missing e-mails, have to check (4) places to read every message. The TOAB site in two locations, Inbox & Bulk, then have to check Outlook in two locations – Inbox and Junk mail...that's a lot of time just to read one msg., things tend to get overlooked. We have to reboot system numerous times per day, document retrieval is challenging-not all computers have Word which takes a lot of time to convert – can't open things as simple as the Weekly Report without numerous steps to do so.
- Plumbing problems - at any time a back up will occur and flood the inspections department starting at Joey's office. The plumbing has no rhyme or reason as far as installation.
- This building does not meet Handicap Requirements-handicap people can not maneuver a wheel chair to meet with staff in any office.
- No meeting space for conference with developers, attorneys and/or contractors. No sound proof area. P & I need space for plan table in each office.
- No plan review area.
- Leaking roof which destroys documents and equipment
- This building is not energy efficient
- No storage space
- Phone system is outdated and stops working periodically, repairman here 3 times this year just for Jessica.
- Parking is a problem on a daily basis. Contractors make numerous trips due to lack of parking. Customers, town staff and town vehicles park in the street on S. Kinston and in motel parking lot throughout most days.
- Can not have properly equipped kitchen due to inmates.

- Allergins in building
- Side door is safety issue.
- Out dated Building which has been on the agenda dating back to the former Council. Former Council member Joe Tarascio's last statement was “to provide the employee’s a new town hall and if not that, put some money aside to enlarge the present one.”
- The previous council compiled a space study on this building and had planned to move ahead with building a new town hall. They too realized that this town need a new town hall to facilitate the daily business in which the citizen’s can be proud of.

Staff, Planning & Inspections Departments

WHY A NEW TOWN HALL IS NEEDED
TOWN HALL/POLICE DEPARTMENTS

Wires – Electric, Phone, Data – All are inadequate.

HVAC – Inadequate - It leaks.

Roof - Leaks.

Sewer line under the building is cast iron. It has bellies and it is corroded. It will need replacing.

Building – Space inadequate; storage inadequate; layout inadequate; general modernization.

Public Works – Safety Issue – Heavy equipment/Vehicles are in a residential neighborhood.

MS:pt

Officers feelings and comments about their Police Department Facility

- When people do come into our department for reasons other than being arrested, to be honest, it's quite embarrassing. This department is long overdue for a new facility.
- Police and Fire departments are open and in use 8,760 hours a year compared to other departments 2,080 hours a year.
- I would like to offer a tour for all interested in seeing the inside of our department to show firsthand the condition of our building. Our volunteers and employees are forced to share bathrooms with arrestees. We are forced share one small office between 12 patrol officers and supervisors.
- 2 Investigators are forced to share one office with the equipment room; this often causes interruptions while working cases, and is quite embarrassing.

Points of Interest for New Police Building

- No safe area for dealing with subjects who are under arrest, the current design was dictated by piece milled construction which has poor heating and air conditioning and does not provide a safe place to secure arrestees, who if escape have quick and direct access to other town civilian employees. (liability issue)
- A secure temporary holding area for multiple prisoners that allows separation of multiple suspects and those involved in domestic violence matters.
- There is stuff(?) growing in our ceilings and light fixtures.
- There is no storage for recovered, found property. (Currently using the old food lion which can be accessed by many, not very secure).
- Entrances are not designed for officer or arrestees safety or to provide protection from weather conditions.
- There is not sufficient room for interviews and interrogations if there is more than one suspect. Victims, complainants, citizens needing permits or fingerprints are being dealt with in the same location as prisoners. (liability issue)
- Bathrooms facilities are not adequate and must be shared between arrestee's and employees.
- Emergency Management during times of natural or manmade disasters require space for an emergency operations to include briefings and often training. We currently have no dedicated space adequate to provide these services which are safe for employees and council members.
- Inadequate parking for customers and officers.
- Current facilities have poor infrastructure which cause problems within and between departments for sharing information.
- Current phone system is out dated and cannot be updated without updating the IT infrastructure to include wiring replacement for all departments.
- Insufficient work space for current staffing levels, 12 employees (patrol div.) share same small office that doubles as an interview and locker room.
- Inadequate, storage for chemical/firearms ammunitions. (safety and security issue)
- No designated area for chemical processing of evidence.
- Kitchen facilities current have to be used to separate those in custody, this area provides many opportunities for arrestees to access things that could be used as weapons it also provides escape route through town hall. (liability issue)
- With E-911 consolidation the dispatch area needs major renovations for a reception area for those with police business.
- Currently we are utilizing the old Wicker shop for our fitness room. There are no facilities for employees to shower or change cloths. Fitness is paramount for officers who are regularly challenged on the street. Providing officers with a means to remain fit reduce injury probabilities. A fitness room with bathrooms, showers and lockers for town employees is recommended to be included in new facilities. During EOC activations officers are here for days at times and have no place to shower and change into a fresh uniform.
- The layout of the whole department is unorganized (due to a lack of space and poor design).
- At present the department is using the attic, investigations and community policing offices to store equipment. The storage area at public works is housing equipment and old records that need to be maintained is inadequate.



Justification for New Fire Station Facilities

- Roof structure over business and living quarters is deteriorated from many years of enduring storms. Plywood sheathing is rotted, weakened or damaged in several places and shingles have been patched multiple times. Still continues to develop leaks.
- Upper deck roof structure over West bay is weak and plywood sheathing is damaged in multiple places. Continues to leak excessively causing damage to equipment, supplies and creating slip hazards and electrical hazards as water leaks onto electrical conduit, outlets, etc. Upper deck is not designed or rated for sustaining continuous live loads and has been repaired numerous times. Because of the lack of design and rating, this also poses problems for acceptable egress as this is our only second egress to the upper floor.
- Entire facility is not handicap accessible to the public (bathrooms, stairs, etc.).
- Underside of upper floors above truck bays are not insulated or covered and properly separated by a fire resistance barrier. This continuously exposes employees to dangerous exhaust fumes produced by the apparatus in addition to increased danger of fire spread. It also creates problems with efficient heating and cooling of the business and living quarters resulting in increased energy bills and LP Gas consumption.
- Bay heaters are old and continue to pose problems each season resulting in costly repair bills.
- Exterior windows and doors at bay floor level are in need of repair as they have deteriorated and are not properly sealed from wind and rain which creates ongoing problems with damage to the building, equipment and contributes to the inability to adequately control climate in the bays as required by NC DOI Fire Department Rating.
- Exterior siding on second floor is old, brittle and has been patched and repaired numerous times from damage sustained during storms.
- Rear bay door enclosure is rotted and damaged from weather and storms.
- Bay doors are old and motors continuously fail creating problems for getting apparatus in and out of the bay in a timely manner during emergencies. Additional problems have occasionally occurred from the motors being triggered by the keying of a mic on the apparatus causing bay doors to close on apparatus.
- There is not proper drainage of the entire site. During heavy rain or storms, excessive amounts of water and sand flood the bays and back of Police Department causing damage to apparatus, equipment and supplies throughout the station.

- Insufficient parking to accommodate for all employees and additional volunteer staff. Constantly receiving complaints from Hi-Lites owner over parking in the adjacent lot on the East side of the station as this is not Town property.
- Station is not physically large enough to house all equipment and apparatus. Currently we have a pick-up truck and jet-ski that have to stay outside in the elements. We also do not have anywhere for storage of equipment (records, turnout gear, uniforms, etc). Currently these items are being stored in the old Food Lion building and are being damaged by water from a leaking roof and ceiling tiles falling in. This is becoming costly as this equipment is not cheap.
- Personnel quarters are limited for daily operations due to size and space needs. We do not have adequate space to conduct meetings and training sessions or house needed or required training aids that are identified by NC DOI and would help retain or improve our insurance rating. The limited space in the day room only allows for 4 personnel. The station often becomes overcrowded with employees, recruits and volunteers either pulling station time or called in for emergencies such as hurricanes. The sleeping quarters are limited mainly the personnel on shift and does not adequately handle overflow. We also do not have adequate quarters for females (sleeping or restrooms).
- The bathroom has only one shower, one toilet and limited locker space. The bathroom was the only part of the station that was not renovated. Plumbing fixtures, walls and cabinetry are old and deteriorating. Shower stall had to recently be replaced. Flooring under bathroom and hallway is weak and spongy from years of travel and damage from leaks.
- Front ramp continues to settle and deteriorate from weight of apparatus and continuous exposure oils, grease and elements.
- General location poses significant risks to personnel and the public with apparatus leaving the station for emergencies and returning to quarters. Near miss incidents occur daily pulling out into traffic as we are located very close to the main intersection in the highest traffic location and there are no warning or emergency traffic lights to assist. Apparatus, generally by nature, have gotten much larger. Returning to the station poses significant problems in getting through the parking lot in front of Town Hall. Apparatus must pull out into the main highway into traffic in order to get backed into the station. Motorist tend to ignore the big red truck sitting in the middle of the street and pay no attention to the personnel directing traffic. We have had many incidents where either the apparatus or our personnel have nearly been hit by oncoming traffic. On numerous occasions, motorists will pull behind the apparatus and up onto the ramp to get around, disregarding personnel and making nice gestures.
- Along the same lines, the main entrance into the fire station is through the apparatus bays. This is very dangerous to the public when apparatus are pulling in and out of the station as personnel cannot always tell when someone is in the station around the trucks or approaching the bay from the front walk.
- Relocation to the Coral Bay site will not adversely affect our response rating. There may be some slight difference in the properties located at the far east end of the district, but more properties at the far west of the district will be affected for the better.