

GOVERNMENT OF THE CITY OF SOUTH FULTON

Office of the City Manager


WILLIAM "BILL" EDWARDS
MAYOR



ODIE DONALD II
CITY MANAGER

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor William "Bill" Edwards & City Council Members

FROM: Odie Donald II 
City Manager

DATE: May 11, 2020

SUBJECT: Status Update - Public Safety Building

Background

This memo is delivered in response to recent inquiries shared by various members of Council to provide a comprehensive update on the current status of the Public Safety Building.

On September 19, 2019, the City of South Fulton executed a 10-year rental lease agreement with Jones Bridge and Associates for 32,000 square feet of space on Old National to serve as the Public Safety Facility building. The facility is intended to centralize functions related to Police, Municipal Court, Fire services, and City Council meetings (when applicable). Police currently operates out of locations with a monthly rental cost totaling approximately \$9k: \$7k for current Old National precinct, and \$2k for evidence functions. Courts currently leases space from the City of East Point to hold court sessions at approximately \$2k per month (\$200 per court session). Additionally, Courts partners with Fulton County to hold some court sessions at the Community Court facility at no cost to the City, while Fire's administrative personnel operate out of City Hall.

Under the terms of the agreement for the Public Safety facility, the monthly rental is \$18,666.67/month, and the Landlord committed to construct the separating walls as indicated on the Site Plan and deliver the Premises in a "white box" condition. The first payment was negotiated to commence in January 2020 or upon the Landlord's delivery of the white box, whichever occurred first. The City accepted delivery of the white box in March 2020 and was successful in securing the Landlord's agreement to credit the City \$120,000 for the unnecessary separating walls that were not constructed. Such savings lower the overall FY20 projected rental expenses substantially.

On November 26, 2019, Public Works proceeded with implementing the standard procedures for constructing Public Safety Buildings, which included conducting a Space Analysis and developing a Schematic Design (Phase I). In January 2020, the Space Analysis and Schematic Design were completed by Pieper O'Brien Architects (attached) at a cost of \$24,500. Due to Purchasing guidelines, the project had to be advertised for the Design (Phase II), following the City's approval of the schematic design (conceptual floor plan). The Design phase embellishes upon the schematic/conceptual floor plan to create a more thoroughly developed set of plans and architectural details to guide construction. The design includes more detailed information

such as partition types, doors, finishes, reflected ceiling plans as well as diagrams related to mechanical, plumbing and electrical systems.

Considering that the initial budget allocation that was approved by Council for the Public Safety building is \$1.4M, the Purchasing Department solicited bids from professional architects to assist with designing the facility for a total construction cost of \$1.4M. After receiving and reviewing the bids, it became evident that the budget of \$1.4M was not sufficient to construct the Public Safety facility per the exquisite desires of the various departments. Purchasing and an evaluation committee short listed two architectural firms for the design of the project. In March, Council approved to proceed with Pieper O'Brien Architects to design the Public Safety Building at a cost not to exceed \$100,000.

Due to the construction (Phase III) cost of the entire building estimated at more than \$1.4M, purchasing conducted additional interviews seeking a lower construction cost estimate from the two responsive consultants. Unfortunately, both firms determined that it was impossible to build the Public Safety Facility in its entirety per the Schematic Design for \$1.4M. Construction estimates range from \$3.5-5.0M. Neither Purchasing nor Public Works committed any consultant to design the building to any construction amount other than the Council approved amount of \$1.4M. The selected vendor has indicated that the required sections of the facility can be constructed for the \$1.4M that has been budgeted.

Building the entire Public Safety Facility would cost between \$3.2M or \$100/SF, excluding IT, Furniture, equipment, and other miscellaneous requested add-ons. Adding IT, equipment, furniture, and other requested add-ons could increase the cost to at least \$4.2M.

Taking the fiscal constraints into consideration and the goal of having Courts/City Council meetings up and running by January 2021, the next steps include commencing with the selected Architect in coordination with the Police Department, Courts, and the Information Technology Department to design an initial phase for construction, up to the budgeted \$1.4M. Such an investment would require adjustments from the 3 main functions that are planned to be housed at the Public Safety Building (i.e., Courts, Police and City Council meetings), with the understanding that IT infrastructure is necessary.

A second phase will be employed to design and complete construction of the remainder of the building. Realizing the fiscal challenges presented, Public Works is evaluating a potential request for additional funds in the FY21 budget to finance and complete a potential Phase II of construction based on the estimated cost of a final design for the Public Safety Building when/if appropriate.

Should you need further information regarding this correspondence, please contact Antonio Valenzuela at antonio.valenzuela@cityofsouthfultonga.gov.

Attachment: Schematic Design