

SELINGROVE BOROUGH COUNCIL RECESSED MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2008 - 6:30 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Pres. C. Handlan, V. Pres. J. Herb, C/P D. Anderson, C/P M. Inch, C/P D. Mengel, C/P S. Hendricks and C/P E. Viker

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Solicitor R. Cravitz; Mgr. J. Bickhart; Mayor P. Carroll; Snyder County Libraries, Inc. Building Committee Representative Rick Savidge; Selingsrove Community Library Director Jennifer Johnson; Snyder County Libraries, Inc. Executive Director Pam Ross

OTHERS ABSENT: None

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Pres. Handlan called the recessed meeting of Tuesday, September 2 to order at 6:35 P.M. Mgr. Bickhart then called the roll.

At 6:36 P.M. the meeting **RECESSED** to a work session to interview firms regarding architectural services. Meeting **RECONVENED** at 8:37 P.M.

Pres. Handlan stated that after the interviews and presentations the choices have been narrowed down to two: EI Associates and Larson Design Group. She asked that Mgr. Bickhart open the monetary bids for the feasibility study at this time. The proposal from EI Associates is for \$9,500. The proposal from Larson Design Group is for \$8,500. Mgr. Bickhart noted that \$10,000 was budgeted. C/P Viker stated that if Council likes EI Associates better, then that is not a significant difference.

Pres. Handlan asked that the other proposals also be opened, just to satisfy everyone's curiosity. Mgr. Bickhart reported that the proposal from LeFevre Wilk is for \$12,500. The proposal from Wolfe Associates is for \$7,500. The proposal from R. A. Lack Architects is for \$11,250 for Step 1 and \$7,500 for Step 2. Mgr. Bickhart noted that in the scope of work he did not define a Step 1 or Step 2, so this proposal is a bit confusing. C/P Viker noted that whether \$11,000 or \$18,000 this proposal is too high.

Motion by C/P Anderson to award the feasibility study contract to EI Associates. Seconded by C/P Mengel.

Pres. Handlan noted for the record that the Library Board representatives present this evening – Rick Savidge, Pam Ross, Jennifer Johnson, and Carol Handlan – concur that they are in favor of the selection of EI Associates. Pres. Handlan then called for a vote on the motion, but C/P Viker asked for some discussion on the motion.

C/P Hendricks stated that he likes Larson Design Group because they are local, they know the people, and they have a vested interest in this project beyond the bottom line. He stated that is why he initially was leaning toward LeFevre and also Larson. C/P Mengel stated that while Larson is local, in listening to EI she felt that it might be good to have a fresh opinion of everything. C/P Hendricks stated he does not feel that Larson would be lacking in that, and he feels that perhaps Larson was not asked the right questions. He noted they have to be current with all certifications and green projects. He stated he is sure that expertise is in-house. C/P Viker noted that Larson is a pretty big firm and they presented as a little more down-home than three suits and an easel. He stated that in the work session he was on the fence, and he is still on the fence, but he would lean toward Larson because they are approachable and more the right size in their presentation. While EI Associates offered bells and whistles they seemed bigger than what was needed. Rick Savidge stated Larson Design does have 40 to 50 people. C/P Viker stated that he was referring to presentation style, in which EI Associates just felt bigger. He stated it felt

like more than what the tiny little building needs. He just felt that Larson was just a better fit; however, he would not be disappointed if the vote went to EI. He would not feel it is a bad choice, but he is leaning toward Larson as feeling like a better fit for what the Borough and the library are trying to accomplish. C/P Hendricks stated that he feels EI is a better fit for a Harrisburg customer, and Larson is a better fit for a Selinsgrove customer. C/P Anderson stated that she came in tonight ranking Larson at 1 and EI at 2, but she was persuaded by the presentation that EI was the better choice for now. She stated she would not be disappointed either way, but she was very impressed with the fact that EI has someone who would assist with the writing of grants. She stated she loves the web site because she has had experience in doing that with design projects before her retirement from SU, and it was a wonderful thing to have access to. C/P Hendricks noted that some of these items came up after they did not have the opportunity to pose those questions to Larson. Pres. Handlan stated that the questions were not asked of EI; they brought them up themselves during their presentation. C/P Anderson stated that Larson has the most detailed in-writing project approach. It is two pages with a timeline, and nowhere in what they put does it say tours. C/P Viker noted they all had 30 minutes to make their presentation, and Pres. Handlan noted they had the ability to work with this large group. She stated that it is interesting that each presenter brought three except for Larson. Pam Ross stated that Larson would be familiar with their employees and does come extremely well recommended. C/P Inch stated that EI seemed very interested in being involved with the project. C/P Viker mentioned EI's senior vice president. Pres. Handlan noted that we are not very far away.

C/P Viker asked if anyone has any sense of whether the relationship with either one of these firms should go beyond the feasibility study to hiring them to be the architect. He asked if anyone knows who is more expensive. Pres. Handlan stated that that really cannot be considered at this point in time. Mgr. Bickhart stated that the proposals did ask for salary schedules for the work that would go beyond the feasibility study so that Council could ask that question and have it answered. He stated the salary schedules do not match up perfectly well with job titles, but some titles that would be common to the work beyond that are equivalent across the board would be designer, the person who will do a lot of work after the feasibility study is done, project manager, and technician, the lowest category. The salary schedule for designer is \$95 for EI Associates, \$46 to \$86 for Larson Design Group, and \$65 for LeFevre Wilk Architects. C/P Viker noted that of the top two, it could be argued that fewer tax dollars would be spent if the Borough and library went with Larson. Mgr. Bickhart stated the salary schedule for project manager is \$120 for EI, \$87 to \$112 for Larson, and \$75 for LeFevre. The salary schedule for technician is \$56 for EI, \$34 to \$60 for Larson, and \$55 for LeFevre. Pres. Handlan stated that Council should keep in mind from the comments and the voice of experience that what is put on paper and what is encountered are different. Mgr. Bickhart stated that, as Jeff LeFevre stated, the cost for the next phase will be a percent of construction. This can be bid, it can go through a similar process to the feasibility study, or the Borough and library can continue on with the architect that is selected to do the feasibility study without going back. That is why salary schedules were requested. The best money would be to stay with one firm from beginning to end because they get to know the project and convert the concept more correctly to an actual design. Switching horses in midstream is possible but not at all common.

C/P Viker thanked Pres. Handlan for the opportunity to have discussion on the motion. Pres. Handlan called for a vote on the motion to award the feasibility study contract to EI Associates.

AYES: FOUR (4) – C/Ps Anderson, Handlan, Inch and Mengel
NAYS: THREE (3) – C/Ps Hendricks, Herb and Viker

MOTION CARRIED

C/P Herb stated he was persuaded by what C/Ps Hendricks and Viker said, but he stated he is not in the least bit unhappy that EI will be given the contract. C/Ps Viker and Hendricks agreed. C/P Herb stated it felt like splitting hairs, and he feels the Borough and library will be well served.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 P.M.

Attachments: None