

Building Committee
Minutes
Meeting Tuesday, April 2, 2024

1:30 PM

Members Present

Lt. Justin Doty, PD

Lois DeYoung, Community Member

Eric Kelley, Community Member

Letty Bedard, Community Member

Jared Wright-Ward

Karen Clement, Town Administrator

Jenn Jonesifer Jones, Selectboard Representative

Richard (Dick) Chamberlain, Town Moderator

Andrew (Andy) Gray, Recreation Director

In Attendance

Kendra Brackett, PD Administrative Assistant

Not In Attendance

John Ventura, Chief of Police

Open: Lt. Doty asked the members if they had a chance to review the minutes from the previous meeting and made a motion to approve the minutes. Lois DeYoung seconded the motion.

Karen Clement signed the \$10,000 contract for Wesson and Sampson.

Justin Doty mentioned that Dan had some questions and answers. One of the questions was if the amount was out to bid or not. From previous experience, he didn't feel as though the lowest bid would be appropriate. His previous employer did that and they had a leaking ceiling within the first few weeks the project was complete. His chief has painted the walls himself.

Paul previously asked about the man hours that would be bought for the \$10,000. It's not per hour but \$10,000 worth of work. Lt. Doty asked Jared Wright-Ward if he remembered what they said the \$10,000 covered. Jared said all the things that were included in the presentation. I.e. the space needs, the building plan, the location space, and that stuff.

The Feasibility study would be the next step, from there making sure the space needs are met.

Lois DeYoung asked if there was a variable number for the total cost.

Jenn Jones responded, not really. There will be a ballpark figure until it's put out to bid. Lois DeYoung asked if there were comparison numbers for the town office staying here vs. what the renovation cost would be.

Eric Kelley agreed that the community should be given choices. Choice A, choice B, and choice C for the voters. So, they see that they have options and what those options would be. Previously they weren't looking at renovation costs.

Lois DeYoung mentioned the community may like to see what the cost would be for the PD without the town hall and then what the cost would be for renovations. They may like to see that renovations could be X amount of dollars per sq. ft. and new construction could be X amount of dollars per sq. ft. Then they could see the difference. Lois DeYoung has been in the business for 15 years and renovations generally always end up being more than you think they will be. Years ago, she was the chairman of the school board, and they renovated a junior high school, and the discussion was to renovate or build. It was 55 million for new construction or 52 million for renovations. When it comes down to the taxpayers and what it would cost them. It could be from \$5.00 to \$5.20.

Justin Doty mentioned that renovations are also not first-class materials.

There was discussion about where the current building came from. It was swamp land that was given to the town. Volunteers built the building with what they could do at the time. There was no longevity in the design. The basement was meant for storage, not for the Police Department.

Jenn Jones mentioned the community should be made aware of this.

Justin Doty said we have made the best of what we could with the space that we have in the PD. The space is not good enough for the pd which makes it not good enough for the town hall either. He agrees the renovation cost would be helpful. The space wouldn't be good for anyone, no wants mold and whatnot.

Leddy Bedard asked for a copy of the presentation to be sent to her.

Kip can document the money that was spent downstairs just to get things done.

Justin Doty mentioned that we can't move forward with things that we want to do as a police department in the current space. We want to be accredited and that's not possible downstairs because the specs don't match the criteria.

Jenn Jones stated a lot of the public think police or combo building. We need to factor in the construction project vs. the combo building. And what would be done with the downstairs space?

Dick Chamberlain asked if the upstairs was adequate for the space and the downstairs was inadequate? Upstairs has no room for growth.

Jenn Jones stated if the town office was to stay in this building and they used the downstairs for the extra space then they would need to figure out how to get upstairs without having to go outside. They would have to install an elevator or something.

The History of the town is that there never was a police station previously. The PD was never intended to be downstairs. It was just made for storage and the parking lot wasn't even there. It was swamp land.

Why are we ready for a change. When the town hall was renovated back in 2001. We had a population of 2500 give or take and now we have almost 5000. We didn't have the need back then. The planning board met once a month.

Justin Doty said we want to have a building to provide a service to the town. Even as a business owner, you want a nice building with professional services.

Andy Gray said the combo building being moved to the recreation center will save the town money in the long run and maybe they should look at it that way. It will address needs at the recreation center also and the townspeople won't have to pay for it later. Having the presence over there helps with the security aspect of it.

Jared asked about the systems in the building and stated that they are past the life span.

There are no sprinklers, 4 different hearing zones which are always off. It would be more cost-effective to fix these issues.

Eric Kelley said the townspeople did the best they could with what they had.

Lois DeYoung can't remember the exact date of the town renovation, but it was approximately 40 years ago and cost about 20,000. There was no capital budget, we did the best with what we had. We are going to spend the money one way or another. The sooner the better because it will cost less. Costs are going to increase.

Eric Kelley states we can plan this project, so it is adaptable. We can leave some space unfinished for room for growth.

Lois DeYoung was asking what it would cost the people. She said we don't need to do everything at once. We have 3 big projects going on now and some things will have to wait.

Justin Doty stated we are not asking for a palace. We are asking for a feasible building.

Jenn Jones mentioned that the Solar panels have already been approved and the ample theater has already been paid for. So, she can't think of the major projects that Lois DeYoung is referring to.

Dick Chamberlain asked if there was a strong dissatisfaction from the community regarding the combination of the buildings. The response was no. He asked what are we saying strongly and publicly?

Justin Doty responded that we encourage people to come in and take a tour.

They mentioned there was a general acceptance to move the PD. Are we moving the town hall just because? We should tell the story of the history and why it makes sense. Financial sense. Does it make sense to move the PD and then move the town hall later. It could end up costing more.

Lois DeYoung states the community thinks that the town is fine. They work 3 ½ days a week and the upstairs space is fine for their needs. In reality, the downstairs is not. The response was there is no room for growth.

Lois DeYoung met with friends who are from the community earlier today and they were surprised the Lois DeYoung supported the New Building. She said of course she did, we were going to spend

the money one way or another and it's better to do it sooner than later. She thinks we should focus more on the PD. Originally there was no police department. There was one police chief who worked out of his home. Maybe one or two volunteers. We now have a department of 12 sworn officers. There is no more room for growth. The police department was never meant to be in the basement. Andy and other members agree that moving the police department and the town hall to the recreations center will address other needs of the recreation center that will end up saving the townspeople money. Anyone from the community that spends time after hours or on the weekends is aware of some of the issues with the recreation center. There are things that need to be done over there like the parking, the lighting, and more security.

Eric Kelley talked about the level of study and the contingencies going down the closer you get to the completion of the project. By the time it's done it should be at 5% instead of 40%, which is probably what it is in the beginning stages. The cost could be three million with a half million contingency as we learn things, that will change. The PD combined building may be this many million until the next phase of design. We need to determine the build shell and have it ready for renovations. Most importantly is the foundation, making sure it has adequate space. Even if we just had the second floor framed out and not finished until needed.

Lois DeYoung agrees that that is good business in her book.

Eric Kelley said the design should be adaptable. If we are able to sell the town hall for a million dollars, we need to prove that works. The site spot is off the table. The recreation center has a lot of mutual benefits like parking, lighting etc. We should set a footprint for everything plus adapted room for the next 30-40 years.

It was asked when the town hall building originated. The original town hall was built in 1979 and the addition was built in 2001. It went from being done on a porch to an actual structure, however this wasn't meant to be a long-term fix.

Kip Kaiser has already done test pits.

It was asked if they needed to follow up with the level of effort in hours that was being received with the contract. The members agreed that the contract is for the completed project. To learn the landscape and scope. We will be being billed for a lump sum.

Lois DeYoung asked about public information and keeping the community educated in the process. The members all agree that getting the information out there is important. When we get more information, we should share it. We can make videos and post them to our website. Post it on Facebook. The more we talk about it and inform people about it, the more support we will receive and that will be helpful.

The members asked about setting a date for the next meeting. The meeting will be held on Tuesday May 7th at 1330.

Justin Doty made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:15 pm. Lois DeYoung seconded the motion.