

TOWN HALL BUILDING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

March 20, 2019

Members Present: Jay Butler, Jean-Pierre Minois, Tim Olson, Jeff Hubbard, Mike Twomey, and Patrick Reffett

Members Absent: Allison Jenkins

Others Present: Owner Project Manager (OPM), Lee Sollenberger, and John Sayre-Scibona of Design Technique (DTI); FINCOM Liaison, Phil Stearns; Designer/Architect, Mallory Demty of Lerner, Ladds, Bartels Architects (LLB)

The Town Hall Building Committee (THBC) meeting was called to order by Mike Twomey at 5:03 PM in the Memorial Room at Hamilton Town Hall.

Past Meeting Minutes

Jay made a motion to accept the minutes from the March 6, 2019 meeting, after correcting the date of the meeting, and Jean-Pierre seconded the motion. The amended minutes were then approved unanimously.

Town Meeting Warrant Article

Tim announced that the Town Manager and Selectmen recently agreed on a \$75K DPW capital ask for the Town Hall Renovations, in addition to the \$150K CPC grant. Jean Pierre asked if this money would get us through the Design and Development (DD) phase of the project, and further asked where we were with our spending on the past \$75K CPC grant and \$100K DPW capital money. Tim replied that we were close to spending all of the \$75K grant and were now spending the \$100K. He offered that the combination of funds being asked at Town Meeting that will be available on July 1st, and our remaining funds will get through the Schematic Design (SD) and Design and Development (DD) Phases by the Fall 2019 Town Meeting. The following phases will be the Construction Document (CD) and Bid Phases that will start after Fall 2019 Town Meeting. The various design contingencies will be reduced as we proceed. Jean Pierre questioned the timing in several questions. Tim and John offered that we will need to ask for money at the Fall Town Meeting for the CD and Bid Phases and then the total remaining project ask including construction will be done at the Spring 2020 Town Meeting. A discussion then ensued amongst Tim, Mike, Mallory, John, and Jean Pierre where it was agreed that the time allowed between the Fall 2019 Town Meeting and Spring 2020 Town Meeting was adequate for the project whereas the CD phase will take about 4 months and the Bid Phase about 6 weeks.

Mike then noted that we needed to allow a milestone for the committee to red line the drawings at some point in the CD phase. John noted that we will have the ability to review drawings at the 75% point. Mike suggested that there were some architects in town who want to review the drawings as well so we will need to make that point in time public.

Jean Pierre questioned how we will be able to solicit contractor bids relatively soon after the Spring 2020 Town Meeting since money approved at that Town Meeting will not be available until July 1, 2010. Both John and Tim assured him that it was all right to do that.

Mike then asked for a vote to endorse the Selectmen's decision to ask for \$75K in capital to support the project. Jay made the motion and Patrick seconded and it was voted unanimously.

Draft Presentation to the Public on March 27, 2019

Mallory presented LLB's thoughts on the planned March 27, 2019 presentation via several power point slides. A discussion then ensued amongst the committee on some of the information presented.

Much discussion ensued regarding how the project purpose should be stated. Some of the reasons suggested in addition to those presented were: more efficient meeting spaces; improved health and safety of employees; more efficient working environment for employee interactions with customers; and an inefficient heating system. Mike cautioned about saying the heating system was dying as it is only 10 years old. Mallory questioned how to promote historic preservation given that our recommended option removes the grand staircase. Tim suggested we just mention the exterior renovation and preservation details. Jay mentioned that we should make sure we should mention verbally, in passing, that we are taking out the stairs but that there was another only recently discarded option that would keep the stairs but require a more expensive addition to the building for the elevator. John asked what we should be calling the basement, i.e., lower level. Patrick suggested garden level. Jay asked about naming rights and was told it might be possible. Patrick suggested some name changes on departments. Jean Pierre questioned mentioning the finding of lead paint throughout the building since it is not thought to be a real concern, but only a worker safety issue to be routinely dealt with by the contractors. He further noted that many details are alright for the March 27 meeting but should probably be left out of the Town Meeting presentation. Jay had concerns over several slides that had information that could not be read and suggested either eliminating such info or providing a handout for people to follow. Tim and Patrick suggested a handout could be provided.

Mike noted that the presentation that we were critiquing was the one for the March 27th meeting and not the one for Town Meeting that would necessarily need to be more concise. Tim mentioned that the March 27th presentation could be put out on social media before Town Meeting. Mike felt that we will get many questions at Town Meeting and felt that we need to do a good job presenting all relevant info. Tim asked if we needed DTI and LLB present at Town Meeting, since he and Mike will make the presentation. Mike will present with Tim available to answer technical questions. Mike's presentation will likely consist of bullet points and he

estimated much less than the planned 15 minutes he foresaw for March 27th. Jean Pierre expressed concern of the number of slides being considered for both presentations.

Tim told everyone that the presentation for Town Meeting needs to be submitted to the Town Manager the day following the March 27th meeting so it could be incorporated into the Town meeting master presentation.

In discussing the Option 8 design, Mallory noted that she needs to send us her latest iteration of the second floor design that now included a coffee station and copier station. She also mentioned that the size of the proposed 67 person meeting room was essentially the same size as the current Memorial Room. A discussion then ensued as to why that was so as the proposed layout suggested something larger. Several presenters noted the desk with coffee service, large display cabinet, large front tables, and rear door that effectively reduced usable space in the Memorial Room. Mike suggested that we need to show a front meeting table in the proposed design and take out both storage and the coffee and copier niches to get more usable meeting space. Mallory went on to say that her structural consultant has advised not using the mezzanine for any storage. However, the new stairs should be kept so that one could retrieve anything that wound up there due to the open ceiling above the meeting space. John then cautioned that the Building Inspector will likely require a sign to this effect and have the floor rated.

Mike asked if the Option 8 offices were smaller than present ones. Tim and Mallory said they were but that comparisons were difficult due to the shape, e.g., Patrick's current long skinny office. Tim asked if it were possible to develop a comparison table by department as to how much office space was allocated to each employee. Mallory demurred suggesting that different people had differing responsibilities and that the comparison would not be valid.

Mallory proposed a slide showing historical project costs and after concerns noted by Jay indicated that all info had been updated and that the info could be condensed and made more readable by taking out some info not important to the presentation.

At the next proposed slide, Mallory suggested that we need a debt service calculation showing the effect on the tax rate for the project cost that would be bonded. Mike asked if Phil could develop such a cost. Phil indicated that he could develop such a cost but that he was hesitant to provide it as it would not be official and would certainly be a "back of an envelope calculation", especially since such a calculation requires several assumptions including the expected term of the bond and the interest rate. Phil suggested contacting Marissa Batista for her inputs for such a calculation. Phil suggested mentioning the result of such a calculation only verbally to reinforce the informality of it. Mike and Phil agreed to get together and meet with Marissa.

Jeff asked how much the CPC could pay towards the project. Jay mentioned that in the past that the idea of floating a \$2M bond at 4% for either 10 or 20 years was possible. However, whatever grant size was proposed needed to be vetted for eligibility. Jeff suggested that in this case there was probably not a concern but Jay countered that the CPC would seek advice from the MA

CPA coalition. Jay went further and said that if one wants to go all in and put the CPC out of business for the duration of the bond that the CPC receives approximately \$550K in revenues per year. Jay wondered if perhaps a 30 year bond in the case of the building was appropriate. Lee questioned how much of the project could be considered historical preservation. John agreed to go back and look at that area. Phil asked about the possibility of getting some grants but Tim noted that many of those available were rather small and that others were need based

Tim asked a question about when would we expect construction to start. John suggested soliciting bids in April 2020 with construction to start in July/August 2020 for a period of 15 months. Relocation of Town Hall employees would need to occur in May/June. Tim asked that we get a realistic schedule, consistent with the availability of money. Jean Pierre suggested that we will need to ask for relocation costs at the Fall 2019 Town Meeting.

Mallory expressed concern over an advocate who will take over and put some heart into her draft presentation. Tim assured her that he will do so.

Mike brought up the subject of the past paperless initiative at Town Hall, especially since the proposed office spaces are smaller. Tim reminded all that while the office spaces were smaller, they were more efficient. Mike asked about the possibility of money for a paperless initiative and Tim mentioned some details on the failed initiative, previously voted down at Town Meeting. The past effort was not portrayed well and was expensive in the \$80K to \$100K range. Mallory suggested she could look at an initiative at Foxboro to see what it cost them. It was suggested that \$75K might suffice for such an effort and that it could be described in the cost estimate as consultant services. Lee and John will look into their portion of the total project cost to see if some money could be provided. John suggested that he will add \$75K to his budget that he had previously sent to Tim for review.

Mike brought up another topic from the last meeting – ideas for relocation of Town Hall employees during construction. Mike presented the following list: McCray's House; Patton Estate; barn next door to Town Hall; second floor above shopping mall where dance hall is located; empty office space along Willow Street; Gordon Conwell as Payment in Lieu of Taxes Option; Gordon College; miscellaneous large houses; vacant Railroad Ave. offices; Ricker buildings in Essex; St. Paul's church basement; Methodist church; space above Black Cow; Community House; Asbury Grove; Hamilton Wenham Schools Admin Building; Hamilton Wenham Library; and Hamilton Wenham Rec Center. Jean Pierre asked about how independent were various departments as regards the need to be co-located and also asked about communication needs. He mentioned using trailers but both John and Lee said that approach was very expensive. Jeff noted that most properties on Mike's list were not ADA accessible. Patrick noted many had no parking availability. As another, scheduled meeting was converging in the Memorial Room, the meeting adjourned at 7:53 PM.

Secretary
Jay Butler
Attested 3/21/19