

Safety Services Building Committee

May 29, 2019

Members Present: Bruce Healey, Chair; Dick Wright; Bob Wilkonski; Jim Lord; John Dean; Ken Holmes; Lynn Wallace; Scott Wheeler, Pam Bryk, Members; Hank Thomas; Brad Wheeler, Ex-Officio Members.

Mr. Healey started the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Review of minutes from 5/22/2019 meeting. Mr. Wheeler made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. Mr. Lord seconded the motion. All in favor.

Mr. Healey said that Mrs. Wallace had requested at the last meeting that the Committee invite Stephanie Spaulding, as an abutter to the proposed Bald Sunapee/Camacho site, to speak with the Committee. Mrs. Spaulding said she was for a new fire station, that was why the property across the street from her house was purchased years ago. Mrs. Spaulding continued that she did not necessarily want a fire station across the street, but the fire station is a definite need for the Town. Mrs. Spaulding said that this was not about the Spaulding family but what the Town needs. Discussion followed.

Mr. Healey said the Committee was trying to wrap up some tasks and to get prepared for a public meeting and asked that public comment be limited to the topics the Committee was talking about.

Mr. Healey said he had a couple of administrative things he would like to talk about. Mr. Healey continued one of the things is to ask the Committee, either tonight or after the public meeting, to determine the Committee's real recommendations, Mr. Healey said the Committee has not voted or gotten a sense of Committee consensus on the list of Issues-Solutions. Mr. Holmes said that he thought the public meeting would report all the Committee discussion of issues and possible solutions and the Committee would be able to gather public feedback and after the public meeting the Committee would meet and wrap-up. Mr. Healey asked if the Committee agreed that the Committee would meet after the public meeting to determine its recommendations to the Selectboard. The Committee agreed.

Mr. Healey said that the final step of public relations is winding up to be very important. Mr. Healey continued that he was hoping that the Committee would have come up with some solutions to some issues, but honestly the Committee sits with the same location and building proposal as last year. Mr. Healey said that he believed there could be compromise in the building design and disappointed that he did not convince the Committee that that was possible. Mr. Healey said he feels that by boiling this all down to public relations, we are making a big financial bet. Mr. Healey continued that if a bond to fund construction of a new fire station fails next year, he feels that inflation alone will dictate compromise. Discussion followed.

Discussion of public relations

Mr. Healey asked who would like to start and what should we be doing to identify, educate and organize and do a better job of increasing the awareness of the need for a new fire station. Mr. Wright said a redistribution on a larger scale of flyers like last year. Mr. Healey asked if the flyer should be reprinted or redone. Mr. Holmes said to redo the flyer to add more information. Discussion followed. Committee agreed that the flyer should be redone. Chief Thomas will be responsible for drafting the new flyer with Mr. Holmes assistance. Mr. Healey will follow up with Dennis to get the flyer done professionally.

Ms. Bryk said that the Committee should use social media with a Safety Services Building page where questions can be asked and answered, and information can be shared. Discussion followed. Ms. Bryk will take responsibility for setting up a Facebook page.

Mr. Wheeler said that this shouldn't be done until after the public hearing. Mr. Holmes said that this should be done when the Selectboard has decided that they are moving forward with something probably after reading the Committee's recommendations. Mr. Holmes said he thought the flyers should be in conjunction with a door to door canvas by Committee members and volunteers to get the information out there and answer questions. Discussion followed. Ms. Bryk said that she thought that the use of social media and open houses of the fire department should be done before the public meeting in order to get the word out for the public meeting.

Mr. Wilkonski suggested that the flyer be rewritten in a clearer way without using verbiage that a lay person may not know, i.e. NFPA.

Mr. Holmes said that Warner had done a video that was put on YouTube while they were going for their new fire station and a Warner Selectperson thought the video very effective in getting the fire station. The video was an interview with both an EMS member and a firefighter that pointed out the problems of the existing station and what the new station would do for the Town. Discussion followed. Mr. Healey will follow-up on this for the Committee.

Mrs. Wallace asked if anyone contacted the firms that evaluate placement of fire stations. Ms. Bryk said that the Town has calls out to two firms- Emergency Service Consulting International and Center for Public Safety Management to see what they do and the cost. Mr. Holmes said that he did some googling and found Municipal Resources Inc. (MRI). Discussion followed. Mrs. Wallace said that having an outside body make recommendations would go a long way to help with the perception of the Committee make-up. Discussion followed.

Mr. Healey asked Chief Thomas about the likelihood of having open houses at the current fire station. Chief Thomas said that he would try. Mr. Holmes suggested having open houses at the time of the public meeting and one more a few months later. Discussion followed.

Mr. Healey said that we can email flyers out to the email group.

Public Input: Stephanie Spaulding asked what the process is for the Committee. Mr. Holmes said the Committee will have a public meeting and review what the Committee has done to date and then receive public input. Mr. Holmes continued then the Committee will meet again and put together a list of recommendations for the Selectboard. Discussion followed.

Mr. Healey said that he has been thinking about having an opinion poll at the public meeting, a survey to find out where people are.

Public Input: Diana Jones said that responses back to the email blast could be another source for public input.

Mr. Healey suggested writing article(s) for the InterTown Record and Kearsarge Shopper about the Committee's activities and/or determinations.

Mr. Healey talked about a table at Old Home Day at the Town Office about what the Committee has been doing.

Public Input: Ivor Freeman said that an effort should be made to find the "no" voters and talk with them about the reasons they are voting no. Discussion followed.

Public Input: Mike Bedard asked if it was possible to create a rideshare to get people to Town Meeting. Chief Thomas said that a rideshare was offered last year and phone calls made to let people know that polls were open for an hour on the fire station warrant if people did not want to sit through the whole

meeting. Mr. Healey asked Chief Thomas how the rideshare was advertised last year. Chief Thomas said by word of mouth. Mr. Holmes said that this year we could actually advertise in the papers. Chief Thomas pointed out that advertising cannot be sponsored by the Town, but by individual donations or the fire department.

Mr. Healey asked Chief Thomas if the signs that were put up last year close to Town Meeting saying "Vote yes on Article 4" helped and if signs were planned for this year. Chief Thomas said yes and suggestions for sign content would be appreciated. Mrs. Wallace said she thought it was better if the signs said "Don't forget to vote" so as not to spark controversy. Mr. Holmes said that the theory is by using "Vote yes on Article X" on the signs it generates public awareness and questions. Discussion followed.

Public Input: Alison Kinsman asked if the stairs at the location of Town Meeting deters people from coming to Town Meeting. Ms. Bryk said the Town was working with Mt. Sunapee to move to another Lodge that is larger and more easily accessible.

Mr. Lord asked about a speaker for the Town. Mr. Healey asked for suggestions for a Town wide respected spokesperson. Mr. Wright suggested Mr. Holmes. Mr. Holmes said his concern was that he was a lightning rod to some people. Ms. Bryk suggested Mr. Bibeau. Mr. Holmes said he thought it might be better if the spokesperson was not on the fire department. Discussion followed. The Committee will think about people who could be the spokesperson.

Public Input: Steph Spaulding suggested the younger generation of the fire department could represent, utilize the youth that will be in the future fire station. Discussion followed.

Mr. Healey suggested that the nonresident property owners represent a group of people that could be asked for donations and an opportunity to get more information out. Mr. Healey suggested that the Committee send this group a letter saying what the Committee is trying to accomplish and that the Committee would like to talk to them about the new fire station at the summer Town Meeting. Discussion followed.

Mr. Holmes suggested that the Committee go to other group meetings such as the Veterans' and NBC to give out information. Discussion followed.

Chief Thomas said that he would bring up the subject of open houses at the current fire station at the next monthly meeting and have a sign-up sheet for volunteers to potentially have open houses.

Public Input: Judy Healey suggested a representative of the Committee going to Newbury Heights. Chief Thomas said that you can not solicit in any fashion because it is federally funded.

Mr. Healey asked Chief Wheeler if the electronic message board could be reserved for 1 to 2 weeks leading up to Town Meeting. Chief Wheeler said yes.

Mr. Healey asked if the Committee was good with public relations. The Committee agreed.

Mr. Healey said that he has spent a lot of time thinking about what preparations are needed to get ready for the public meeting. Mr. Healey continued that one of the things he thought would help drive this process through was a Power Point presentation that gives the Committee the ability to talk about what they have done. Mr. Healey said that he feels that the creation of the Power Point-how it is put together and the pictures and graphics that are shown should not be left up to one person. Mr. Healey asked the Committee that a subcommittee be formed that would work together and build the Power Point. The Committee agreed to the subcommittee. The subcommittee will be Mr. Healey, Ms. Bryk, Mr. Holmes and Mr. Lord. Mr. Healey showed the Committee a sample Power Point presentation that he had started. Discussion followed. Sub Committee meeting scheduled for June 5th at 7 p.m. at the Town office.

Discussion followed. Committee public meeting scheduled for June 29th at 10:45 a.m. Discussion followed. The Committee agreed the public meeting will be noticed in the Shopper, InterTown, a message on the Town electronic sign, sent out to the email list, posted at the transfer station, Town office and post office and someplace in South Newbury and posted on Facebook. Discussion followed.

Ms. Bryk said that she thought the Committee should start the Facebook page sooner rather than later. The Committee agreed. Discussion followed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tiffany Favreau

Recording Secretary