

**MINUTES – SPECIAL BUILDING COMMITTEE MEETING
TOWN OF BARNET, VERMONT
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2016**

Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room of the Town Clerk's Office.

Committee members present: Chair William Graves, Dylan Ford, Benjamin Heisholt, Stanley Robinson, Laurajean Stewart, David Warden, and Dana Young.

Others present: Dennis McLam

1. Consideration of minutes of special meeting held October 13, 2016

Mr. Warden moved to approve as presented the minutes of the special meeting held October 13, 2016. Seconded by Ms. Ford and approved by voice vote.

2. Update on status of Building Committee's goal for new municipal office space and reports on meetings with Selectboard and with Northeastern Vermont Development Association representative

Various discussion was had, as summarized below:

- Mr. Graves discussed his meeting with the Selectboard on October 24, 2016:
 - The Committee had proposed that Selectboard expend funds on both a grant project for a feasibility study on the McIndoe Falls Academy and an engineer's study on new construction at the Town Garage parcel.
 - Mr. Graves presented the above-described proposals to the Selectboard, and the Selectboard discussed both.
 - The Selectboard consensus was to pursue the McIndoe Falls Academy option, and agreed to assign \$7,500 from the Municipal Buildings Fund for a feasibility project.
 - The Selectboard agreed to not pursue the Town Garage parcel as a potential site for new construction. The Selectboard agreed that the parcel was not large enough to accommodate a town office building while allowing enough space for Highway Department operations and future expansion.
 - The Selectboard requested that Mr. Graves prepare a detailed analysis and estimate for construction of a new facility without regard to site-specifics, and that he submit a suitable invoice for this service.
- Ms. Ford discussed her activity in pursuit of grant application for a feasibility study on the renovation of the McIndoe Falls Academy since Selectboard meeting held October 24, 2016:
 - The Building Committee had intended on applying for a federal grant through the Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP).
 - Ms. Ford contacted Nathan Cleveland of the VCDP. Mr. Cleveland questioned whether the VCDP grant was the best option of the Building Committee's purposes. He suggested that Ms. Ford contact Alison Low of Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA).
 - After discussing different options with Ms. Low, Ms. Ford and Mr. Graves determined that the VCDP option was not the most suitable grant opportunity. Ms. Low recommended that the Committee instead apply for a Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) through the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development. This is a State grant for \$20,000, which requires a Town match of \$7,500.
 - Ms. Low assisted Ms. Ford and Mr. Graves with completing the application.

- The grant application was due October 31, 2016, and was submitted via NVDA on the due date. The application required a resolution signed by the Selectboard appointing Ms. Ford as the Authorizing Official and Jeremy Roberts as the Alternate Authorizing Official on the application. A special meeting of the Selectboard was held on October 31, 2016 to accomplish this.
- The grant application will be reviewed in December 2016; the Committee will learn the result some time afterwards.
- Based on her discussions with Ms. Low, Ms. Ford believes that funding for the MPG is from State sources, not from Federal sources.
- Other grant opportunities, besides the VCDP and MPG, are also available, in case the Committee does not obtain the MPG.

3. Progress report

Various discussion was had, as summarized below:

- Mr. Graves suggested that the Committee take advantage of professional resources, such as NVDA, whenever possible in the course of the project.
- The Committee agreed not to pursue further action on the McIndoe Falls Academy until it receives an answer regarding the MPG.
- There may be some difficulty in timing with regard to forming a concrete proposal or presentation for the voters at Town Meeting in March 2017. The Committee agreed that it will be important to develop a presentation that explains the process and progress of the Committee to date.
- Ms. Ford stated that it will be important to draw in community involvement at all stages of the project. This will aid the Committee and provide valuable feedback; it is also required for in-kind matches on all grant applications.
- There was Committee consensus that hiring a firm to perform a feasibility study on new construction would be preferable to assigning this task to Mr. Graves, but the Committee agreed to table discussion pending the results of the MPG application.
- Possible sites for new construction among the Town's current real estate assets other than the Town Garage parcel were further considered. No consensus was formed about a suitable site.

4. Other business

a. Status of Town Hall. Discussion was had regarding the current and future status and function of the Town Hall, given the Committee's decision to not recommend its renovation for municipal offices.

- Ms. Ford suggested that the Committee recommend that the Town Hall be restored for seasonal use and that a Recreation Committee be formed to oversee its care. The Recreation Committee could rent the space for functions to offset the cost of maintenance. This model has seen success in other Vermont towns. Discussion ensued.
 - Ms. Stewart moved that the Committee recommend that the Selectboard actively pursue necessary maintenance on the historic Town Hall building. Seconded by Ms. Ford. Discussion ensued.
 - Mr. Young moved to amend the motion to the following: that the Committee recommend that the Selectboard actively pursue necessary maintenance on the historic Town Hall building by preventing further deterioration, painting, roofing, repairing the brick foundation, and demolishing the unnecessary attached masonry building, and that the Selectboard appropriate a budget of \$35,000 in 2017, and \$7,500 per year in 2018 through 2021 for this purpose. Seconded by Mr. Warden.
 - Mr. Young's motion to amend passed by voice vote.
 - The amended motion passed by voice vote.

b. Next Committee meeting. The Committee agreed to table decision on a date for its next meeting until results on the Municipal Planning Grant application are known.

5. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

A true copy.

Attest: _____
Town Clerk