

**Town of Richmond
Town Center and Library Committee
Minutes – April 1, 2021**

Present: Committee Members: Josh Arneson, Christine Werneke, Laurie Dana, Jeff Forward, Dave Healy, Linda Parent, Jake Marin; guests John Johnson (JJ) (Breadloaf) and Rob Favall (New England Air), Martha Nye

Additions or Deletions to Agenda: None

Discussion of Library HVAC Project:

The Committee was reminded that a project to provide new heating system for the first floor to replace the failing radiant floor heat AND to add AC and ventilation to the first floor (which does not currently exist) was proposed last year. Breadloaf scoped the work and obtained estimates and New England Air was chosen as the HVAC contractor. In the meantime, the committee learned of issues with funding, and the full project was put on hold pending the March vote. In order to at least replace the failing heat system, the Selectboard approved funding from unassigned funds (\$40,000) and Library Reserve (\$10,000)

In a site visit at the library, New England Air made a revised proposal for the Library HVAC work which would reduce the cost of this work from around \$120,000 to around \$82,000 and would include AC and ventilation. The change primarily results from using the existing boiler on the 2nd floor, rather than adding additional furnaces. Rob and JJ reviewed this revised plan for the Committee.

There was some discussion about continuing to use the existing boiler. Rob feels that, with a good cleaning and proper maintenance it has some years of life in it. He recommended a maintenance contract for the boiler and the HVAC system and was asked to provide a cost estimate for this. He commented that filters in the furnaces were installed backwards, which reinforces the need for a maintenance contract. The current boiler also provides hot water for the 2nd floor restrooms and kitchen.

The changes mean that the 2 offices to the right of the parking lot entry do not have direct heating going into those areas due to construction challenges. Rob felt that there might not be any issues in that space and that going through a heating season with the new equipment would allow us to assess the needs. Since there is a future plan to move the vestibule into one of those spaces, the recommendation is to deal with that issue at that time.

The planned system will provide heat, AC (heat pump) and ventilation (which does not currently exist) in the first floor of the library. It also adds MERV 13 filters and UV in ducts which are new industry recommendations to deal with COVID-19. A new thermostat that will regulate temps for the 1st floor systems is included. New sump pumps in the basement are also included in this proposal.

Rob said that the design documents for the new system are complete and showed the Committee the basics of the system. After some questioning by Jake and Jeff, the committee felt confident that these changes would address all of the HVAC issues.

As the existing boiler and furnaces that provide heat and AC to the 2nd floor and mezzanine require replacement, the recommendation is to look at how to integrate all of the HVAC back into one system.

Rob & JJ both spoke to concerns about moving forward quickly to order equipment for the project as there are considerable supply chain issues and cost increases. A goal would be to have the equipment for the

project ordered as soon as funding is approved and to have work completed as soon as possible, definitely before the next heating season.

Moisture Mitigation Project

After some discussion, it became clear that the planned moisture mitigation work in the basement needs to be completed *before* the ductwork in the basement is installed. Once ducts are in the basement wall area in some parts of the basement will be inaccessible.

The planned moisture mitigation work includes removing existing degraded insulation from the walls, installing new rockwool insulation along the walls and adding a vapor barrier on the floor. NE Air's proposal already includes upgrading to commercial sump pumps with an alarm system.

While the committee had considered exterior moisture work (excavating around foundation and installing drains, etc.), the cost for this had seemed to outweigh the benefits. The committee discussed this and feels, that this opinion remains true.

Financing

The Selectboard will need to decide whether to use the approved \$50,000 from unassigned funds and Library reserve to help defray the cost of the project or whether to fund it entirely from the newly approved Town Building Fund.

Project Management

The original intention for this project, and the way the initial bids were structured, was that the Town of Richmond would contract with Breadloaf to supervise & manage NE Air's work as a subcontractor and they will also do the moisture mitigation and cutting floors in the library for heating ducts. The committee would like to continue with this plan.

Timing & Disruption

The Committee discussed the timing of the work and how much disruption of Library services and staff would occur – recognizing the uncertainty of when the Library can again open to patrons. Christine recognized the importance of the health & safety of staff and during the construction phase. Rob commented that much of their work will be in the basement, JJ said that there will be a dumpster and removal of existing insulation from the basement. This *will be* a construction site so noise could be an issue and there will be some incursion into the library stacks area to install floor vents. Laurie commented that this can be worked out with Rebecca even if the library has to be closed for a short time. Dave mentioned that the Library is also not open for 8 hours a day every day.

Recommendation to Selectboard

The Committee will ask the Selectboard for approval to contract with Breadloaf Construction for the HVAC and moisture mitigation projects for the Library building. Josh will alert the Selectboard that this ask is coming and give them a ballpark figure, JJ will have a final cost to present at Monday's meeting for approval. If this is approved, NE Air will be authorized to purchase the needed equipment and, if necessary, will store it until needed on site. This is to help mitigate supply chain and cost increase issues.

The remainder of the agenda was tabled until next meeting and the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

The next meeting of the Town Center & Library Building Committee is Thursday, April 15 at 7 p.m.