

**Town of Richmond  
Town Center and Library Committee  
Minutes –February 10, 2022**

**Present: Committee Members:** Christine Werneke, Josh Arneson, Laurie Dana, Dave Healy, Jeff Forward, Linda Parent

**Employees:** Duncan Wardwell, Connie Bona, Pete Gosselin, Kendall Chamberlin, Ravi Venkataraman, Laurie Brisbin, Rebecca Mueller, Kyle Kapitanski, Gerry Levesque, Rich Dana

**I. Welcome & Public Comment – None**

**II. Additions or Deletions to Agenda**

**III. Items for Presentation or Discussion**

**a) Discussion of the Future of the Town Center building with Town Employees**

Christine welcomed town employees and briefly presented the information on where the Committee is at the moment and our anticipated next steps.

Jeff is trying to contact someone from the Post Office to discuss their needs.

She then invited comment and asked whether employees felt that town services needed to stay all on one floor. The consensus was that this was preferred both for the convenience of staff and of community members.

**Town Offices – Linda (Martha) & Connie**

- Improved air quality
- **\*\*A fire alarm system.** Currently the fire alarm sounds only when someone pulls the red handles, there are no wired smoke alarms or CO2 detectors that would sound for employees or call into a security company to alert to smoke when the building is empty. Christine flagged this as something that should be addressed, at least in part, immediately due to employee and tenant safety. An upgraded fire alarm system would be part of any renovation.
- New windows
- Key lock pads
- **\*\*ADA compliant push doors –** Christine mentioned this is in process now.
- Town Clerk office (due to location) becomes the gatekeeper for other offices and for police department—she ends up dealing with sometimes upset people looking for police
- More space
- **\*\*Asbestos assessment** (Josh responded that this has been done)
- Town Clerk office security—a way to prevent members of the public to come into the Town Clerk office space without being let in (this is often an issue if one employee on duty is providing oversight of a community member in the vault).
- Cold floors/insulation
- Better lighting – LED lights – current lighting is very uneven, hard to see or too bright. Motion detectors so lights are off in unoccupied spaces.
- **\*\*Stained or broken drop ceiling tiles –** Connie suggested this needs to be done soon for aesthetics and safety. She also mentioned some falling tiles.

**\*\* These items are either underway or noted as needing immediate attention.**

**Police Department – Kyle**

- SPACE is biggest concern

- Evidence room cannot be secured as per VCLT inspection because plumbing and power runs through the building so repair personnel need access, it is also being used for equipment storage. Too many people have access.
- Separate lobby/entrance for Police Dept. Kyle agrees Linda should not be the gatekeeper for Police. Safety issue for Linda.
- Space to process people in custody—space and access issues.
- Separate entrance for Police Department
- Recommended in redesign to work with a consultant in Police Dept. design (Dave recommended asking architects who are bidding on this project for experience with police department renovations).

### **Ravi – Planning & zoning**

- Air quality
- Better heat/weatherization, windows
- More space for files, particularly for storage of large plans (24x36”) that are required to be kept for grants and state/federal projects.
- Small space for staff and applicant to meet and fill out applications
- Smaller meeting room (5+) people, could be used by Zoning Administrator for meetings as well.
- Real walled offices

### **Pete Gosselin**

- Asked if building a new building was on the table. He used Town Garage as an example where they assessed 30/year future needs and built a new building to meet them (already outgrowing space).
- He thought Breadloaf assessment said that the costs were around the same.
- He observed renovation would mean relocating Town Staff and there is a cost to that.
- He feels that a brand new, 3-story building with no basement and which addresses police needs and provides them with a vehicle garage would be ideal.

Christine, Dave & Jeff responded to his. Christine said that the Committee is trying to collect information about what the Town needs now and for the next 50 years. Those needs should then guide us to whether a renovation or new build is the best option. So a new building is not off the table, however the committee does have concerns about this. There is an environmental cost to demolishing and landfilling an entire building. Dave mentioned that a renovation would include all of the various systems (HVAC, wiring, plumbing, weatherization, etc.) so that you would have the equivalent of a new building. The Breadloaf estimates were very rough and did not take into account all of the needs that need to be met. Depending on where new building was built, relocation of staff could be needed for that as well.

### **Rebecca Mueller**

- Feels the current building is not welcoming when you enter, it feels uncomfortable. She mentioned lighting, temperature and air quality.
- She also observed there is little or no good signage to direct first-time visitors. The combination of easels and paper signs are more confusing.
- Could foresee use of electronic directory that has a map, director and list of meetings and locations.
- She encouraged the committee to expand the definition of stakeholders, and mentioned Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.