

To: Town of Richmond Town Center & Library Building Committee

From: Christine Werneke, Town Center & Library Building Committee member

Date: June 30, 2022

RE: References obtained for Black River Design

On behalf of the Town Center & Library Building Committee (hereinafter, "the Committee") I contacted three of the listed references for Black River Design (BRD). They were Jill Davies, Former Selectboard and Chair of the Building Committee, Woodstock Town Hall Theater Rejuvenation Project; Joel Cope, City Manager, Town of Brighton Vermont, and Carol Lyon, Assistant Headmaster for Business Services, St. Johnsbury Academy.

I spoke directly with Ms. Davies and Mr. Cope and have the following summary of feedback to share.

- BRD was great to work with overall.
- They work with a contingent of other contractors (eg. Experts) that they call in to provide insight and consult on the project. They do a good job of managing those additional people and it was not a problem or burden to the client team.
- They need a lot of your time. There really needs to be a single point of contact that they can work with to coordinate requests for information, questions, decisions, etc..
- John is a very good listener. He understands that a town has many stakeholders and therefore many opinions. He is the diplomat that need in a municipal project - good at handling the multiple inputs and somehow ties it all together.
- The budgeting process was different for each project. BRD worked on a fixed project cost for Woodstock and Ms. Davies felt strongly BRD spent more time than they estimated for the work. Mr. Cope said they figured out the cost of their work as went along the project – and largely had a budget in mind as to what they would willing to ask voters for.
- Mr. Cope shared that their project was finished with very high quality. There was no 'scrimping' and he feels like the work will last.
- Neither reference gave any concerns or weaknesses when asked.