

**Town Center and Library Committee  
Minutes August 17, 2023  
6:30-8 p.m.**

**Present:** Josh Arneson, Laurie Dana, Jeff Forward, Dave Healy, Jake Marin, Linda Parent, Amy Wardwell

**I. Welcome and Public Comment - None**

**II. Additions or Deletions to Agenda**

Next meeting of the Town Center & Library Committee will be at a special date & time—**Tuesday, August 22 at 6:30 p.m.** Josh will warn the change and the agenda items will be a) and b) below.

**III. Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present**

- a. Review cost estimates with architects – tabled until next meeting**
- b. Review assessment of post office roof – tabled until next meeting**
- c. Consider recommending repairs to the library windows**

We have a proposal from Jay Labare & Alex Tolstoi (Hunger Valley Construction) that restoration of the 5 historic windows on the towers of the building could be done this summer at a cost of \$10,000. This is part of the work that was included in the original Library RFP and that Alex bid on in his original bid. There were questions about what exactly this work would entail and Jay Labare was reached by phone to discuss. Questions included whether the sills and trim work around the windows was included or just the sashes and also whether the door would be included in this work. Jay will discuss these questions with Alex on Monday. Laurie moved that the Committee ask the Selectboard for \$10,000 from the Town Center Fund to restore the 5 historic windows, pending a review of a revised scope of work from Alex. Josh and Jeff will review the new scope and, make the recommendation to the Selectboard if they feel it is reasonable. The motion passed unanimously.

- d. Consider recommending an assessment of the library exterior/roof**

Jay also recommended that, while a lift-truck is on site, Alex do an inspection of the upper portion of the spire & tower and the roof. He feels this would cost around \$1,000. Since a close-up inspection of these items, and particularly the 150-year old slate roof has not been done, the Committee feels this is appropriate. Jake moved to ask the Selectboard for \$1,000 out of the Town Center Fund for an inspection, and photos, of the upper portions of the spire and tower and the slate roof. The motion passed unanimously.

- e. Planning for Community Outreach**

Laurie reported on her meeting with Martha Nye & Rich Roberge of the Community Senior Center and Karen Yaggy of the Richmond Historical Society asking them to host a gathering of their members to present the Town Center Renovation plans. They agreed that they would do so and tentatively selected a date of Sunday, September 17 from 2-3:30. They requested that the time start with a tour of the building & site and include the basement & Police Department spaces. Jeff felt that a tour of the Police Department would likely be problematic but a tour like the one offered at the Funders' Conference would be appropriate.

Laurie also reviewed some general building renovation comments. They felt that there was not enough meeting space included in the renovation. They commented that the break room should be labeled as a meeting space with kitchen items along one wall. They asked if there needed to be a wall sectioning off the break room. They discussed adding a closet in one portion of the current Historical Society space for the Community Senior Center.

They were very excited about the prospect of opening up at least the first stairwell to restore it to more of the original look.

There were many comments about what voters need to know about this project. They feel that there needs to be a clear story about what is needed, why it is needed and why we need to do

this now. There was also discussion about what happens if the bond vote doesn't pass? "Usually" this means that you reduce the amount and come back to the voters—is this the plan?

Committee members agreed that we need a document that tells the story of why this renovation is needed, what the plan is and why now. Jake commented that he finds if you point out that we have an amazing asset, then lay out the problems, and then talk about solutions that works pretty well. Laurie offered to start a draft of this document, looking back at Diane's document. Diane would also be a good resource to review the document. Jeff mentioned that previous chairs of the committee – Katie Mather, Christy Witters and Christine Werneke—would be good resources to review this document.

There was also discussion about whether a November vote was even possible. Linda mentioned that, legally, early voting has to start 30 days prior to voting day which would put the start of early voting in October. She stated, and the committee agreed, that there is not enough time to go to the voters and build support for the project. This may need to be an item on the March 2024 ballot and the Committee will discuss this at an upcoming meeting.

**a) Approval of August 3, 2023 meeting minutes**

The Committee unanimously approved the minutes from the August 3 meeting.

**b) Other business- None**

**c) Items for next agenda – August 22 meeting**

Review cost estimates with architects

Review assessment of post office roof

**8:30 PM IV. Adjourn**