

**Town Center and Library Committee  
Minutes August 22, 2023 (Revised)  
6:30-8 p.m.**

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

**Black River Design:** John Hemmelgarn, Andrew McCullough

**Community Members:** Judy Bush, Mary Houle, Karen Yaggy

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

**II. Additions or Deletions to Agenda**

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

a) **Review assessment of post office roof**

James from Engineering Ventures was able to inspect the construction of the Post Office roof. There are various issues stemming from undersized framing on the existing roof as well as the lack of insulation. John stated that the roof basically needs to be rebuilt and 7" of insulation added to bring it up to code. There would be changes to the structural support if we want to add solar panels to that roof. Jeff asked about building a "new roof" on top of the old one but John stated that would not work. He also said that the cost of the structural work needed was not as much as he expected. This addition was built as part of the school in 1953 and post office moved in in 1993.

b) **Review cost estimates with architects**

The bulk of the meeting was spent reviewing the cost estimates for the renovation and site work for the Town Center building. The general costs for the project are:

General contracting	\$532,650	
Sitework	\$1,222,413	
Building	\$3,187,032	
New stair tower	\$409,636	
Post Office	\$1,208,730	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>		<b>\$7,331,346</b>

In addition, there are hard costs, fees, typical miscellaneous costs, planned additional owner purchases and contingency & inflation fees. These were presented in an itemized table and discussed. These include:

+15% contingency	\$1,099,702	
+Fees (required fees, Clerk of the Works, bldg. envelope commissioning but no HVAC)	\$690,102	
+Misc. costs (bids, moving & storage, risk insurance)	\$106,500	
+Owner purchases (Solar, Signage, Furniture)	\$245,000	
+7.5 Inflation allowance	71,045	
<b>TOTAL PROJECT</b>		<b>\$10,183,098</b>

The architects also presented a sample list of possible cost-reduction suggestions and invited input from the Committee. There may be other options for cost-reductions to be discussed.

Concrete curbs (not granite)	- \$50,000
Story Pavilion	- \$60,000
Exterior signage allowance	- \$20,000
Post Office (cost of roof reinforcement needed for solar)	- \$67,200

Laurie asked if the estimate included both fire alarms and sprinklers. Both are included and we need to acknowledge that there are yearly maintenance costs associated with these systems. There had been some discussion about the elevator—whether it needs to go to the basement and replacing the current hydraulic one with a traction elevator that needs less maintenance and electricity. The bid maintains the current elevator and simply moves the elevator mechanicals out of the basement.

The estimate includes fees for a “Clerk of the Works” (or Owner’s Representative) to work with the building and a Commissioning fee for the building envelope. Jeff felt there should be a Commissioning fee for the HVAC system as well, Dave concurred.

In addition to a contingency fund of 15%, the estimate includes a 7.5% inflation allowance to cover increases attributable to inflation during the time between now and bond vote and the receipt of construction bids for the project.

John observed that these are recommendations based on current conditions and could be reduced in the final bond vote total.

Committee members agreed that there was a lot to digest in these numbers. Andrew will forward the itemized cost estimate and supporting documents to the committee (via Josh or Jeff) so that members can review. Questions about the estimates should be forward to Jeff no later than Monday, August 28 so that he can compile them and forward to Andrew. The questions and further discussion will be the agenda for the committee’s August 31 meeting.

Josh and Connie worked out what the tax cost for each \$1million of bond would be. For each \$100,000 property value, it would add about \$100 to the annual tax bill. For the average home value in Richmond of \$400,000 it would add \$400 to the owner’s tax bill. Josh observed that this would decrease over time.

The Committee also revisited the schedule for the Bond vote and agreed that a November vote would be unrealistic and that we are likely looking at adding the bond vote to the March, 2024 ballot.

The plan is still to do an update at the Selectboard meeting and content for that update will be part of the agenda for the August 31 meeting.

**c) Approval of August 17, 2023 meeting minutes**

Amy moved to approve Minutes from August 17 meeting, Josh seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously.

**d) Other business- None**

**e) Items for next agenda – August 31 meeting**

Continue cost estimate review & questions (Andrew)  
Discuss Selectboard presentation for Sept. 5

**8:30 PM IV. Adjourn**