

**Town Center and Library Committee**  
**Minutes January 25, 2024**  
**7-8:30 p.m.**

**Present:** Josh Arneson, Laurie Dana, Jeff Forward, Amy Wardwell

**Community Members:** Judy Bush

**I. Welcome and Public Comment –**

Judy Bush asked whether the Selectboard or Committee have had discussions with new Police Chief regarding the space in the renovation plan that has been designated for Police. Jeff explained that there are ongoing negotiations with Police Chief and Union and also with Hinesburg about shared resources. Richmond is in the process of hiring officers so there will still be a police presence in Richmond for the foreseeable future. He also stated that the new Chief has seen the plans. Jeff reiterated that, if the bond vote passes, the next step will be to finalize the definition of interior spaces in order to prepare construction drawings for bids. This will be a discussion that involves the Selectboard looking at all spaces including tenants and Police.

**II. Additions or Deletions to Agenda - None**

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

**a) Debrief on presentations and outreach to date.**

- The Friday Food Affair tabling events have gone well with many handouts distributed and many conversations.
- The tour & presentations on January 14 and January 21 each had about 6-8 attendees and went well.
- *Times Ink* is out with a full-page article on the vote, the history of how the project developed, the plan, costs, and highlights.

**b) Brainstorm new & upcoming outreach opportunities**

- February Friday Food Affair dates are 2/2 and 2/16 – based on January experiences, we will table at these 2. **Amy and Laurie** will attend the 2/2 event and we can discuss who would like to do the 2/16 at our next meeting.
- *Times Ink* “election” edition comes out at the end of February and we will have an ad (**Laurie to draft**) and possibly a shorter article as well. We should ask if it can be on color pages with floor plan included. Per Josh the ad cost can be covered by Town of Richmond (\$115).
- *Seven Days* and *VT Digger* – **Jeff** will send a press release to them in case they are doing articles on significant votes in towns around Vermont.
- **Laurie** will plan a display at the library and talk with Rebecca/Wendy about being at one or more Storytimes or Baby Laptimes to try and reach more voters with young families.
- **Laurie** will resend information to Community Senior Center, Radiate and Historical Society to promote February opportunities.
- *Front Porch Forum* – **Amy** will post the “highlights” information this week and **Laurie** will post the “Why not build new?” response the first week of February. We should plan additional posts at the Feb. 8 meeting.
- School ENewsletters – **Josh** will contact Elementary and Middle School principals about putting a link to our information and a brief item in the eNewsletters sent to parents.
- **Jeff** will reach out to Selectboard candidates Adam Wood and Matt Moultroupe to offer a tour and ask Adam to contact other fire fighters who might be interested.
- **Election Presentations** – The Town Attorney & Secretary of State have determined that the following can happen --
  - February 26 -- Budget & Australian Ballot information meeting. A presentation on the Town Center Renovation bond vote can be included at that evening meeting. Town Budget presentation will start at 7 p.m. Bond Vote and Conservation Fund are the 2 Australian Ballot items. **Jeff** feels that he can adapt the Power Point for this and the Committee feels that the presentation should be no longer than 10-15 minutes with Q&A after.

- March 5 – Voting Day -- The same presentation from 2/26 can occur at Town Meeting but we cannot table and hand out materials in the lobby.

**c) Discuss possible grant applications**

Grants that we are currently looking at include:

- **Clean Energy Development Fund** – Jeff will speak with Diane about potentially using the 15 hours of her time we have left. He feels that this grant (like the MERV Grant) may not be viable based on the fact that Richmond is not considered an “energy-burdened” town.
- **Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP) Grant**
- **FEMA Flood Mitigation Grant** – Jeff had an initial response that this project could qualify for this funding and he calculated that nearly \$1 million might qualify. Josh offered to speak further with his FEMA contact about whether it qualifies and how we would apply. Jeff commented that this is a complicated grant and we may need to hire someone to help complete it.
- **Better Places Grant** and **AARP Livable Communities Challenge Grant** – These would be perfect grants to fund the Pavillion (\$60,000 estimate) but they would need to be applied for closer to construction as they need to be spent in the same year they are received.

**d) Approval of 1/11/24 minutes**

Amy moved to approve the 1/11/24 minutes and Josh seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**e) Other business – Corrections to Information Packet Documents:**

- **FAQ Cost document** will be changed per suggestions from Dave and Josh on how to present the Tax Implications information. Bob Murphy also noted that “General Contracting” should be “General Conditions”. Laurie will make those changes and send to Josh.
- **FAQ Document** will be changed to remove “Recommendation” and to align references to floors so that 1<sup>st</sup> floor is Post Office, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor is Town Offices and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor is Police Department and Tenants. Laurie will make those changes and send to Josh.
- **Building Design** – Jeff will reach out to Andrew to ask that they relabel the drawings accordingly.

**f) Items for next agenda – February 8, 2024**

- Review results from tabling, FPF posts, Times Ink and other questions being asked
- Decide on further FPF posts, dates, topics and assignments
- Start to plan for 2/26 presentation
- Approve minutes from 1/14, 1/22 and 1/25 meetings

**Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.**