

COA/Library Community Building Committee
Senior Center 277 Chace Street, East Freetown
Wednesday, April 12, 2023

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Meets approved by consensus with the correction that Amanda Barlow was not at the last meeting.

Present: Jeffrey Amaral, Amanda Barlow, Nicole Davignon, Wayne Jaye, Robin Kendrick
Norman Landreville, Paul Lubin, Tom Matthews, Michael McCue, Paul Sadeck

Absent: Carlos Lopes, Kent Wilkins,

Also Present: Sonny Barros, Mary Braney, Ross Edminster, Linda Fournier, Ruth Furland, Brenda Motta,
Deb Pettey, Beverly Sadeck, Amy Sypher

Mike McCue began the meeting at 5:17 pm

Robin Kendrick – “COA Seniors are not for the new building, leaning toward the PODS”

Amy Sypher – How are you collecting your information from the town seniors?

Robin Kendrick – We are asking/talking to the seniors when they are coming in and their first questions is? How many people use the library and not many of us use the library.

Mike McCue – Please clarify, the seniors are saying they don’t want to support the library or new building at all.

Robin Kendrick – They just assume not have a new building and library together. Their main question is how many people use the library? They know they need more space in the senior center.

Wayne Jaye – I recall a petition that was signed by numerous seniors that was actually in support of the new building, not an expansion to this building and documented as such. Not unanimous, how we proceed, however, that board took a vote and its vote, in my opinion was to move forward and invite library subcommittee, together to discuss a join project and both committees voted to proceed in that direction. When you say the board is not in support of a new building, I am not in the opinion that, that necessarily represents the opinion of all seniors.

Robin Kendrick – We had a board meeting this afternoon and we asked the board how they felt, 3 were on board 2 undecided. I am still undecided and not sold.

Deb Pettey – Clarification – this is not pods vs new building, we are moving forward with the pods. The pods are going on the warrant town meeting to purchase the pod, which is a short-term fix. Both need to go forward, so we can get the short-term needs of the COA. The senior building is a 5-year project. Second is that the building, although the building will house library and COA they will be various areas that are separate. What will be shared, the septic, heating system, elevator the big components. The senior will also have a separate bathroom. My intent, goal and vision are not raising taxes. The grant we are working on is the library, which is substantial, if we get it. We are optimistic if we can get it, it will help us financially get us where we need it to be to get the whole building. We have capital stabilization that will be used for this purpose if the towns people vote for this. This has to be approved at the town meeting.

Robin Kendrick— That answers some questions, I can go back to the seniors and tell them this is what was presented to us. Their biggest question is are we getting the pods?

Deb Petty – This is not pods vs new building. If we can get the town meeting vote. Working to reclassifying the money from existing money to pay for POD. Carl, the new building inspector was going out to look at pods today and the guys cancelled. He is actively working on logistics and maybe can report to the COA within the next few weeks.

Mike McCue – Building Committee meets on April 25th. One of the topics will be the POD.

Nicole Davignon— Including off site library about 700 people per month visit the libraries.

Mike McCue – Any other concerns about joint building or the pod?

Ruth Furland— Voiced concerns that there is not enough room in the senior center and she feels we cannot wait 5 years. Feels the senior are suffering because the lack of room. We cannot procrastinate any longer.

Mike – The pods are going to happen faster. Rules and regulations are what takes time.

Mike McCue – June 5th is the town meeting at the High School @ 7:00 pm

Deb Petty – We need town meeting votes for the pods, that is special town meeting. Which means the money will be availability right after the meeting. There is last we checked a 9 months lead time to getting the Pods. Even once approved it could take a year to get them physically here and up and running.

Mike McCue – Once the new building is built, the pods can be repurposed.

Deb Petty - Waiting for Carl the new building inspector to check the pods with logistics. Then meet with the COA to design what they want. Size of pod 24 by 60. Also, when we are ready to purchase, I have to put it out for bid, by government regulation. When I put it out to bid, I will have the logistics of the COA. I may even be able to get that paperwork ready to go, so as soon as we get approval for funding we can send out.

Robin Kendrick— Seniors are not totally against the new building. Issues are stairs and we need everything on one floor and consider handicap. Can the senior afford it?

Wayne Jaye - Only way to success is one unified effort to move forward. If there is distention, then you will not be able see this project to fruition.

Brenda Motta- Feels there is missed information out there and if we send out the same information to everyone it will help everyone make a decision.

Wayne Jaye— Our job being on the committee is to see what is needed and identify what we all need. This is a multifunctional center, for our town for everyone.

Mike McCue – Open discussion ended, encourages anybody interested to come to the building committee meeting on April 25. It will be in town hall and zoom. Public invited to either location, it will be about 30 minutes at 5:15 pm to 5:45 pm.

Wayne Jaye – COA, library subcommittee meeting, we talked about pod, not really our charge, we have not discussed names, future agenda, when is the next meeting?

Mike McCue - Second Wednesday in May.

Wayne Jaye- Can the documents circulated from the last meeting, be emailed to the people who attended by zoom?

Deb Pettey– I will send it out.

Mike McCue – A draft of the study of the land of both sides of Memorial Drive. As the draft sits right now there is considerable more wet land on both sides of Memorial Drive than thought before. We need to wait for the final version, we don't necessarily have as much land as we currently thought. On the other side of Memorial Drive is the school, police station and highway department which shares one 50-acre parcel. The school has about 15 and there are 35 between the police and highway. A lot in the middle is wet and what is on this side of Memorial Drive what is not occupied by baseball field, senior center, or fire station is essentially wet. Old police station, does it stay or go?

Mary Braney– Consulting for libraries – the Massachusetts Board library commission does grants on cycles for construction projects. They announced a new one, the letter of intent is due in a couple of weeks. The full application will be due next May 2024. One of the things required for the grant is a Building Program. What is required Building program – a letter to architect that explains needs and requirements, parameter – population of town, demographic, measurement. What kind of building would be suitable for a particular town? What elements should go into it based on town, meeting space and the grant gets put together, we describe the town. Up until this time, Mass Boards did not like cooperative efforts. These grants have been given out about 15% of project cost of course furniture and landscaping not included. When joint effort, the grant would be prorated. Very specific parameter that cannot be shared with library. Parking must be enough. Requiring 2 potential locations for this grant. Centrally located. These plans need to be for 30 years, the library will be viable to the town for 30 years. Doing a population projection for 30 years, this can be tricky especially with the train coming and state requirement.

Mike McCue– 750 units of housing near the station. The Radius around the station that has to fit in is state forest.

Deb Pettey - We do not have the infrastructure to build the units. We have to project for something we cannot build.

Mary Braney -There are expectations, you currently have 9206 of space. Parameters based on the number of people in the town, percentage based on children, the need for seats for adults and children. When the building program is finished, it will be an informational piece which will help you with the decision making and moving on with the project. You can take it and if you want to do a joint project with the senior you will have the library needs. The building program will not identify library and senior jointly only library needs. If you choose not to work within the parameters, you are not eligible for the grant. Building program is the foundation for the grant application.

Deb Pettey – Parameter based on population, that has yielded large library needs.

Mary Braney– Sizes have decreased based on the need for space for book, multicopy, online services and interlibrary loan. Seating is looking for community space. Medium for a town of 10, 000 is about 12,000 square feet. It is adaptable based on need that you identify.

Deb Pettey – The Community wants space; do we need to tie it to the library? We are building a joint building that will have community space or does it specifically have to be part of the library side.

Mary Braney – Once the library defines space, you work with the joint needs and how to share the space. Let's say the library wants a meeting for 100, then you put it in a joint space then the library does not need to 100.

Deb Pettey– The town library needs only the basis, cannot do 12,000 square foot library.

Mary Braney – We define what the free-standing building is then work backward. The grant depends on meeting and identify needs.

Deb Pettey – 1,700 and 800 collectives 2,500 between both libraries. We do not need to go from 2,500 to 12,000. If we get a 6,000 or 7,000 square foot would be amazing but go from 2,500 to 12,000 does not seem reasonable.

Mary Braney -Decide what you would like in the library and meet AVA requirements.

Mike McCue – Goal for joint building overall – meeting room that could accommodate about 130 people but could be divided. Our police can only accommodate 75 and we need more space. If we went for 12,000 square foot building, if this room could hold 140 people and available both library and COA, how much would count for the space for the library?

Nicole Davignon – Grant requirement for shared space requires smaller programming space on their own.

Mike McCue– Say the library had a room that held 50 people and senior had the same. Then you had a room that held a large number of people, would that count? What we don't want to find out is 12,000 for the library and x thousand for the senior center and this 100-count room does not count.

Mary Braney – Once the needs get defined you work through it.

Mike McCue – We have space problems in other places, most town meetings are held in another town. We don't fit where we have Elections, there might be a fourth precinct because at the next census, we won't fit where we have the election.

Nicole Davignon – For the big room it will probably be prorated.

Wayne Jaye– Could the room have its own entrance so that it could be rented out?

Mary Braney– Trustee make that policy about renting out. Other issue Library priority first.

Deb Pettey– When will the report be done?

Mary Braney – 6 to 8 weeks. Once data gathered and writing gets done it goes to Library and trustee.

Deb Pettey – This information will give this committee direction and how this group goes forward. A decision will be made based on applying for the grant and go in the direction that you recommend or not based on information.

Mary Braney– You have plenty of time to make these decisions, grant not due for a year.

Deb Pettey– This information will dictate how this committee moves forward.

Mary Braney – Board of Library commission wants these projects to succeed. So, they will work hard to make sure everyone has the right information. This year is going to be more competitive but they work hard with the towns to make sure the town gets the support they need. Grants due May 2024 and takes a few months to make the awards. It will take about 3 years minimum.

Mike McCue – I know it was mentioned that we are not supposed to have a joint site. Is there any baring if we can only identify one spot? The town does not own any other spot, or would we have to consider buying?

Mary Braney- They may want you to consider buying land. You have a unique situation because of the wetland. The building should be centrally located. The shape of your town is different. It is important that the library is in the center of town on the main street and off the main highway where buses go. If there is no central space, is there land that could be purchased?

Mike McCue- There is land lock behind the railroad.

Nicole Davignon- The grant money could be used to purchase land.

Deb Pettey – This is the center location. There is a piece behind the ballfield off of Chace Road that is not wet. We are having a feasibly study done. The goal is show us what's available for future building in 6-8 weeks which will be on the plans and future building, parking will be.

Mike McCue - Any other questions, we are all set who would like to adjourn.

Paul Sadeck motioned to adjourn who Wayne Jaye second the motion.

Respectfully, Cheryl Quinlan Recording Clerk