

**Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire**  
**Municipal Facilities Review Committee (MFRC)**  
**Meeting Minutes – August 10, 2015**

**Call to Order:**

The regular meeting of the Municipal Facilities Review Committee was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chairman Don Skiba.

**Committee Members Present:** Chair Skiba, Charlie Sheaff, Wally Smith, Glenn Page, Scott Self, Steve Bittel, Keith Thibault and Director of Planning and Community Development Sara Carbonneau.

**Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Resident Rebecca Hays

**Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes:** Minutes of July 13, 2015 were considered. Bittel **moved** to accept the minutes of July 13, 2015. Seconded by Smith and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

**DISCUSSION**

**Fire Station**

Skiba spoke about a fire station design that arose from conversation with Fire Chief Skantzé consisting of a 10,000 square foot building (80 X 125) feet. Skiba said that the roof would be high enough to accommodate a mezzanine for storage and later be built upon for future needs. Skiba mentioned the general quality of the construction of the Dollar General store which was constructed by Torphy Construction. He noted that while there are no offices on the design but offices could be added to fit behind the showers. A discussion continued about the architectural drawings for such a building. Page suggested that stock plans might be readily available.

Sheaff mentioned that radiant heat was suggested in the past. He mentioned specifications from the Fire Chief about heating the floors so that the floors stay warm when the doors are open during cold weather. Hot air would not be very efficient. Sheaff also noted that costing needs to include equipment in the decontamination room. Skiba said he referred to Skantzé for ideas, but contractors would provide details for a fire station.

Bittel asked about protocols for bidding. It was noted that sealed bids are specific and that the Selectmen receive sealed bids. What is being done by the MFRC does not require a sealed bid. This is preliminary work. This group acquires cost estimates and is not negotiating a contract at this time, but Carbonneau noted it is good to provide as much detail as possible to contractors. Skiba said it would be the best idea to go with a contractor with experience with fire stations. It was noted that Skantzé has a list of contractors who have built fire stations.

Design/build was discussed. Self noted it might be worth inviting local contractors to meet with the MFRC to discuss details. Smith suggested that Chief Skantzé select some contractors to invite to meet with the Committee. Bittel suggested that Page and Skiba talk to some contractors first. Self suggested tapping some local talent before going to other contractors. Page suggested looking at a portfolio of fire stations that are stock plans. Smith liked the idea of talking to a local contractor to get some ideas – he said getting local people involved might help voters to be positive about the project. Carbonneau mentioned that the lowest bid will be the winner, whether local people are involved or not.

## **Town Hall**

Thibault and Self were asked to discuss Town Hall ideas. Self spoke about the time frame involved. He said that given it will take time to build a fire station and remove the fire department from Town Hall before you can begin to make renovations, any costs today would be irrelevant in a few years. He proposed a phased approach starting with working on the trusses to begin with, and phasing in additional renovations as funds allow until the fire station has been removed. Self said he isn't convinced that the Town Hall needs to expand with a lot of space. Bittel said that record storage must be accounted for. Carbonneau stressed the records do need to be kept in hard copy form. Skiba pointed out ADA compliance needs to be addressed. Carbonneau said General Assistance needs a private place to meet and Page pointed out that the cubical used now is in violation of State of New Hampshire law.

Skiba pointed out that the Committee needs to present something to the BOS that will address Town Hall for the next several years. Bittel said he agreed with Self on a phased-in approach to the issues with Town Hall and that perhaps expanded space at Town Hall is not needed, but he also said that a plan over time would be good to present to the Board of Selectmen.

Thibault referred to the engineering report from a few years ago. The estimates were from \$400,000 to \$500,000 for all work that needed to be done and \$25,000 – 30,000 to fix the roof trusses. Thibault said he agreed to an approach of taking the tasks to be done in chunks. Carbonneau noted the \$500,000 was to bring Town Hall into code compliance for life/safety codes and she also noted that assumed the Fire Department would be gone from Town Hall. Carbonneau said it is important for the voters to know the big picture – for 5 to 10 years down the road. Smith also agreed with the phased-in approach. He said the Town could take care of the roof and the outside of the building like replacing siding and windows as Phase I. Bittel emphasized providing costs for subsequent phases as well.

Discussion occurred about needing structural engineering for the roof, but not needing an architect for the rest of the work that could be done. Thibault said he could work on estimates for roof, siding, and windows. Carbonneau noted files need to be accessible by the Tax Collector. Carbonneau also said that her office needs additional storage space. And she said there will need to add an ADA stairway and elevator in Town Hall.

Page spoke about parking having been considered a problem for Town Hall in the past. He noted another town has additional parking on the opposite side of a road from their public building with a culvert/passageway under the road for visitors to easily walk to the building.

Smith suggested Phase 1 be focused on the outside of the building, Phase 2 address code violations, Phase 3 the rest of the building. But Carbonneau said you can't do bits and pieces without dealing with code violations. Skiba suggested Self and Thibault sit down with Code Enforcement Officer Mike Jasmin to get a handle on code violations. He asked Thibault and Self to consult with Jasmin and come back with a phased approach.

Bittel asked how quickly a steel building fire station might be built. It was noted that the Dollar General building took only 3 months to build. Skiba said the buildings he explored took 3-4 months, after site work. It was suggested that a new fire station might take 6-8 months to build including site work.

## **Police**

Sheaff and Smith spoke about restructuring the insides of the building and extending the building a bit with a small addition. Smith suggested a local contractor could be utilized and anticipated the costs at a couple hundred dollars a square foot. Bittel said the police department facility can go back 20-30 feet without a huge cost. Sheaff said that they would come up with some costing for the next meeting and Bittel said he would review some spreadsheets as well to assist Sheaff.

#### **DPW**

Skiba said that Selectmen Bill Hutwelker mentioned moving the road a bit in order to combine the land for Recycling and DPW use. Self mentioned there would be a cost to move a road and he suggested minor fixes would be in order instead. There was a discussion regarding storage behind Whitcomb Hall currently being used and losing that storage. Discussion included referring to a clear-span building for storage. Skiba also mentioned ADA compliance and OSHA concerns and a prefab building to address those concerns. According to Bittel, DPW has enough money to build a salt shed. Bittel suggested raising \$50,000 as part of the capital reserve funds for next year. Self said this Committee can recommend that the capital reserve funds be utilized first. Bittel spoke about low interest rates and it might be cheaper to borrow money since the reserves are not earning much interest. He also noted that adding money to the capital reserve addresses future needs, which means that current tax payers pay for the benefit of future tax payers.

#### **Recycling**

Bittel said Recycling has plenty of money to pay for their repairs. The Committee would recommend that the work gets down using the funds already in place.

#### **CITIZEN CONCERNS**

Resident Hays asked about the plan that was reviewed, and she said she didn't see any offices or a gear room in the drawing. Page said these rooms aren't necessary for a sub-station and the drawing being considered could be reconfigured for additional needs. He mentioned the bays in the design and the possibility of the need for Town ambulance services if the current provider leaves the business or declines to contract with the Town. Page also said gear would be stored on the walls.

Hays asked for clarification on the training room. Bittel mentioned that the room would utilize folding tables and chairs, and not be an auditorium style room. She asked about radio dispatch. Page said it is done through mutual aid. He said the Town does not dispatch our own people. Mutual Aid has folks who work 24 hours x 7 days a week, communicating by radio. Carbonneau also mentioned Emergency Management not being in the current plan.

Hays asked about storage and about renting storage space. Carbonneau spoke about how the Town had explored the possibility of working with the City of Keene for storage. She said the former Town Administrator told her he learned that storage had to be kept within the Town limits. She also noted that files must be kept forever. Bittel informed the group that the Trustees of Trust Funds records may now be kept electronically. However, it is a huge task to convert paper to electronic media and is costly and time-consuming.

Hays asked if anyone is planning to approach the Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD) about land for parking. Bittel noted paved parking is costly but probably not needed as he noted that whenever he is in Town Hall there appears to be sufficient parking for citizens to conduct their business. Discussion continued about needing meeting space for voting and parking for voting and the impact of voting in a church.

Next Meeting: August 24, 2015. Carbonneau said she will not be able to be present.

**Adjournment:**

A **motion** to adjourn was made by Bittel with a second from Sheaff and all were in favor. Adjournment occurred at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Beverly Bernard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary