

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Municipal Facilities Review Committee
Meeting Minutes – June 8, 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, Keith Thibault, Wally Smith, Glenn Page, Steve Bittel, and Scott Self.

Absent: Director of Planning and Community Development Sara Carbonneau.

Others Present: Residents Judy Gallauresi and Rebecca Hays. Gallauresi recorded the meeting.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: Minutes of May 11, 2015 were considered. Bittel **moved** to accept the minutes of May 11, 2015, seconded by Smith and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Discussion:

The Chair shared copies of a document from Rebecca Hays which was provided by the Selectmen to the members of the Committee.

Skiba said the objective is to learn the minimum need from the Department Heads. Skiba asked the members to volunteer to speak to the Department Heads. Skiba and Page and Bittel will talk to Recycling Manager Bob Osterhout and Public Works Director Lee Dunham; Skiba, Page, and Sheaff will speak to Fire Chief Norm Skantze. Smith and Sheaff will speak with Police Chief Tom DeAngelis at the Police Department. Thibault and Self will approach Town Hall staff. Skiba asked the members to report their findings at the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding the Town Hall building. Bittel referred to the Scully report – the windows have to be replaced and the trusses of the roof. Rebuilding the roof would require major renovation. Other concern is need for an elevator to get to the lower part of the building. Page said he has been up in the attic and examined the trusses. The said if the slate were to be replaced with a metal roof, much of the weight would be reduced. The attic was not designed to carry load. Page said he didn't think that re-trussing is necessary.

Page noted that one issue is what to do with staff if you have to gut Town Hall. Infrastructure was discussed – electrical codes – Self suggested it isn't necessarily required to replace all the wiring if there is proper amperage and protection. Page said the heating system is relatively new. Bittel said the septic system is a larger problem but that work would not disrupt staff at Town Hall. He also noted that while the heating system may be relatively new, there are still problems with heating and insulation since the bathrooms freeze in winter if the doors are not propped open at night.

There was a discussion about Dunham having to continually buy salt during the winter because he has no storage capability for enough salt to be delivered at the beginning of winter to last out the season. Skiba suggested a loop house could do the job for purchase of salt for the whole season, which might save the Town money.

Bittel suggested also planning for the future. Some issues can be put off for five or ten years but they still should be addressed.

Skiba suggested that the Fire Department could be moved to a place that is rented in order to get it out Town Hall. Discussion included references to possibly finding a building at the airport. Self said the Keene Tree truck bays are available but that would not solve the problem of having no fire station at the center or northern end of town.

Discussion occurred about the code violations of having the Fire Department housed in the same building as Town Hall without adequate separation. It was noted that the State Fire Marshall could condemn the station.

Bittel asked about the Homestead Woolen Mill – an auction will occur at Noon on Wednesday, June 10, 2015.

Discussion occurred about issues with the Police Department building, no place to lock up arrested persons and there is a mold/slime problem.

Bittel spoke about the Fire Station problem and said the critical need is three truck bays, and a plan needs to be in place for the long term. The detox washing of clothes could be done at West Swanzey. Perhaps the answer is to renovate West Swanzey since it has access to sewer, which would allow for washing of the clothes. Thibault suggested that a temporary situation for the Fire Department may urge the voters to move ahead with a permanent solution. Smith suggested that eventually voters might want to offset the cost of a rental by approving a bond. Bond interest rates are beginning to rise.

The Chair recognized the residents in attendance for comments during the last ten minutes of the meeting. Hays commented about renting a building for a Fire Station – the problem was the communication tower for dispatch – FAA didn't like the idea. The slime at the Police Station was caused by the downspout not draining properly. She suggested you could put in a set of stairs to access between first floor and second floor for Town Hall. There is only one egress downstairs at the moment – which is a major problem from an insurance point of view. Bittel suggested that premiums may be higher than they need to be because of the lack of multiple exits and this is a cost to the Town.

Hays suggested the committee review the engineering studies for Town Hall – and she spoke about the roof. She noted that the septic system might be okay if the Fire Department wasn't using it. She mentioned the CIP discussion about the fire station and the weight of the building on gravel, and spoke about Butler buildings that she had done research on. She offered notes on Butler buildings to the Committee with contact information, some of which referred to fire stations. She also offered a brochure on Butler buildings.

The Chair thanked Hays.

Gallauresi suggested that the Water Study Committee did a “mindless” study when it studied the West Swanzey Water Company. She said the West Swanzey Water Company has a 99 year deed which is associated with the Homestead Woolen Mill. She accused the members of “chasing their tails” and not really looking into details. She repeated that the water wells are deeded to the Woolen Mill on a 99-year lease. She asked that this committee do a better job than they did in the past.

Self pointed out that several wells were involved and questioned which one or ones she had in mind. Bittel pointed at the fact that the Homestead Woolen Mill is not currently being considered by this committee.

Next scheduled meeting: June 22, 2015

Adjournment:

A **motion** to adjourn was made by Page with a second from Sheaff and all were in favor. Adjournment occurred at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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

Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary