

Minutes of the Municipal Building Committee

Whately Town Hall, June 29, 2015 5:00pm

Present were Chair Paul Newlin, Virginia Allis, Adelia Bardwell, Anita Husted, Judy Markland, Fred Orloski, Ed Sklepowicz, Darcy Tozier, and John Wroblewski. Also present were Mark Pruhenski and Dan Denehy.

Paul introduced the new members: Ed Sklepowicz and John Wroblewski. He also indicated a hope that someone else would volunteer to be chairman. No one volunteered and Virginia moved that he be nominated. Judy seconded and he was re-voted as chair.

Judy suggested that the committee ask the Select Board to request the Finance Committee to appoint a member to the committee. Paul agreed to take this request to the Board. She also suggested that a town employee sit in on a regular basis to represent the employees as long as town offices were being discussed. Mark agreed to serve in this role and to see that someone else attended during budget season and other busy periods for him.

Mark reported that town counsel is drafting a purchase and sale agreement for the WRMLS building and that he has a list of the furniture that can be left. It does not include the large conference room tables, which were gifts to the library system and which they wish to retain. The MLS board wants closure on the sale by October 5.

The library system is attempting to find other space to rent. It isn't known how soon they can move out, but they would like an option to rent space in the building for up to 90 days in case they can't find a location.

Fred indicated that the town employees should move into the building as soon as possible because voters are anxious to see some progress. He also noted that moving in quickly would allow combining the bids for town office and SCEMS construction. Judy agreed that there would be merit in combining the bids but queried the connection between that and the timing of the move.

Virginia is opposed to moving in before the rehab work is done because it would mean that employees would need to move twice, work in noisy conditions while the rehab is going on, and be far removed from the vault and town document storage. Judy commented that it would add to costs because it is more expensive to operate the WRMLS building. Adelia noted that it would mean operating three buildings rather than two, contrary to the goal of consolidating.

There was further discussion of the issues to be resolved before the town meeting vote to approved funding for the bid ready documents. The aim is for the special town meeting to be held in September or October. The RFP will have to go out well in advance of this, so that the cost will be known.

Mark noted that the SCEMS contract allows for any operating surplus to be saved and applied to capital needs, and that the Deerfield town administrator is hopeful that the existing surplus can be used for SCEMS rehab costs so borrowing will not be necessary. Members of the SCEMS board will be invited to future building committee meetings.

Mark reported that the Zoning Board of Appeals approved the application to rezone the WRMLS building for municipal use. However, the application for a special permit for rezoning Town Hall to serve as a community center was withdrawn without prejudice because there was concern about the lack of specificity of the uses in the application and also whether use of the building as a community center in fact constitutes a change of use. Mark has a request in to town counsel to opine on the latter question.

The minutes of the May 27 and June 1 meetings were approved as submitted. The minutes of the June 4 meeting were approved as amended.

The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for Tuesday, July 14 at 1:00pm at the WRMLS building, if there is space available at that time.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Markland