

NEW BUILDING COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 18, 2018

Draft

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Bruce Seely, Vice Chair.

Committee members present: Josh Maxham, Bruce Maxham, Nope Martin, Steve Tarleton and Nancy Robinson

Ralph Nimitz, NBF Architect Firm

In attendance were 37 voters of the Town of Bridgewater and 3 members of the community.

Christian Avard, VT Standard Reporter

Bruce thanked everyone for coming out this evening and Alice Paglia for the use of the Grange Hall. Bruce asked everyone to hold their questions until after the initial presentation.

Presented was a slide show beginning with who the committee is comprised of and how they were formed, the vote at the 2017 town meeting setting up funding to get a plan and cost estimates for a new community building to include a handicap accessible meeting room, fire station and rescue squad. Reviewed the need of a new community and fire station building.

Committee contracted NBF Architects of Rutland and Willis Engineering of Woodstock and obtained scaled blueprints and schematic plans for a new building, completed soil borings, property survey, geotechnical report, site plan including parking, water runoff, well location, sewer hook-up and a conceptual cost estimate. New building consists of 2,787 sq. ft. meeting room with handicap accessible restrooms, a large storage room and community kitchen. This new building be fully sprinkled as required by code, a generator to power the entire facility and space for potential community functions. The community room will be on a single level and be ADA compliant, energy efficient and will allow for a more efficient polling place. The emergency-rescue building will include 4 apparatus bays, small meeting room, gear and decontamination room, office space for the fire department and rescue squad and a work/storage area. Current fire house building is not large enough for all of the equipment, building is not structurally sound, roof is pitched toward doors which is unsafe and creates a time barrier when the firemen have to shovel the snow out of the way of the doors. The current building is too close to Route 4 creating traffic hazards. Parking for firemen is inadequate, cannot properly dry hoses, no ventilation, cannot store everyone's gear, cannot wash apparatus or equipment or repack hoses inside the building and cannot decontaminate gear, equipment and personnel.

Bruce and Josh took questions from the public- what is the cost – estimated cost which were arrived at by a hired construction estimator and using Castleton's cost as their building is similar in size and structure is 2.2 million. Discussion of need of community room on new building, can use meeting room in school. Cost of new building could be dropped by at least half a million if meeting room, kitchen, adjusted for heating, electrical etc. If town needs to build a community room onto the fire station in the future, expense could be more than one and a half times more. Concerns expressed that building is too expensive and extravagant, additional costs will be incurred by the town for building maintenance including utilities. Brief discussion of what if any reimbursement the fire department can recoup on calls. Per VT State Statutes town are required to provide emergency services.

If town did not have a fire department, town would have to contract with neighboring departments and homeowners would see an increase in their insurance due to distance from fire stations.

Jerry Oppenheimer spoke to the cost of the taxpayer. Worked on a tax table showing the amount a taxpayer would pay on different loan amounts. The average/median household value of \$150,000 would see an increase in their taxes of approx. \$100.00 on a 2-million-dollar loan.

Much discussion around the need of the community room. May be a duplication since the town already has a room in the school house. Selectboard will have to make the decision to move forward with the new building with or without the community room. Would need to work with architect to get accurate costs of removal of community room.

Suggestion was made to purchase the lot next to the school that is for sale and repurpose that building into the fire station. Same issues, too close to Route 4, not big enough, would need funding to purchase and then to re-model.

A straw vote was suggested to see how many wanted to move forward without the community building. A show of hands was taken – 15 people. Another suggestion to see who wanted to move forward with the building as presented. A show of hands was taken – more than 20 people.

Committee will discuss further with Selectboard and may come back with another meeting in January.

Bruce thanks everyone again for coming out this evening. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm

Next regular committee meeting is scheduled for January 8, 2019 at the Fire Station at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Robinson

Nancy Robinson,

Clerk

48 total in attendance

