

Final Meeting Minutes, February 15, 2023

Called to Order at 6:30 pm

Attendees:

Bill McKinney
John Arico
Lorri Hayes
Sheila Sturm
Howard Brown - Selectboard Representative
Frank Weber
Kim Roberge
Tim Berry
Joan Cleary

Absent:

George Torres- School Board Representative
Sean Mamone

Attendees

Paul Lavertu and Eileen Neighbor were online.

Ben Crosby, DPW
Amy White
Jane King
JoAnn Kitchel
Lou Springer
Allyson Miller
Beth Springer
Anne Dowd
Cindy Raspiller
Spencer Lovette
Chip Springer
Jay Wilson

Agenda:

6:30 Call to order

Review of agenda

JA says opening and public comment period are opportunities for members of the public to make a short statement about their concerns. For the public, in order to make a presentation and get on the agenda, they must make the request to the budget committee or JA.

KR said she is recording the meeting for the minutes. LH said she doesn't want to be recorded. KR said anyone can record the meeting. HB said the law requires all parties to agree. SS said she doesn't want to be recorded. The recording was completed anyway.

6:35 Opening public comment period- No comments were presented.

6:40 Discussion of warrant article for Cemetery/Library access road

Presentation by Selectboard - 10 minutes- John Quinlan, defer selectboard presentation until 2/21.

Presentation by Chip Spalding - 10 minutes- presentation available [here](#). Summary- What the engineer was given forced them to design it, could have looked at the entire parcel, they may have been able to avoid challenging design. Burden will fall onto the town if ever built. Ben Crosby, DPW said the design will add 16 more structures to his preventive maintenance schedule. Chip said an alternative to the current location would be to change the library location to the cemetery location which would have frontage on Westin Hill Road. Chip said it's unfortunate that the design has gone as far as it has with the constraints. Chip said if we looked at the whole property, it could benefit the cemetery and library. Chip said its unfortunate a better solution for citing the library would occur if you looked at entire piece of property. DPW is looking at realigning Mason Road. Chip said why wouldn't the town do a holistic design to build roads that support other town efforts.

Rebuttal by Selectboard - 5 minutes- none

Question and answer - 10 minutes

SS asked Chip does the current design fall within 50 ft setback. 5 or 10 feet. Spalding said in presentation that the new library building fell within the town setback requirements of 50'. SS asked Chip if he was aware of wetlands permit. Chip said Yes. SS asked Chip was he aware of Zoning Board and its position on Zoning the library. Chip said he was aware. SS asked Chip how involved he was in the plan development, she asked if he attended any of the public meetings regarding the plan development. Chip said he did not. Chip said he became involved when he was asked by a selectman at the time to review the plans. He said the selectman that asked him to review the plans was Tim Berry. SS said did you volunteer to go to the library and tell them? Chip said No. Chip said that the library did not come before the planning board. The Zoning Board has not taken a position on the library. BM said that the library did not bypass any process. BM said Municipalities and Municipal buildings are exempt from the regular planning process. BM said that there is no requirement from Mont Vernon that municipal projects go before the planning board for review. KR asked the depth of the pipes and stated that even she who is not a plan reader can see that there is 1 and ¼ inch depth difference and wont those pipes stay full of water, freeze and the road will fail? KR question to Selectman- why haven't the library trustees or the selectboard gotten a 2nd opinion on this after the heavy concerns at the town meeting last year about the road design. KR question to Selectman- Is there a reason that the selectman did not go to the planning board for a formal review. HB said there was a 3rd party engineering firm that reviewed. KR asked Chip whether the basin along the road will have standing water and how that will impact the road. Chip said the road will fail. Chip said Leveque Lane needed to be rebuilt due to its basin and piping. Ben Crosby said he had a professional company analyze the road and they expect he will have to add \$2-3,000 to annual budget for maintenance. LH asked Chip the reason he was making this presentation to the budget committee. Chip said to inform the budget committee. Chip said he made pitch during the last town meeting. LH asked Chip if he presented to the planning board. Chip said yes. LH asked Chip if he presented to the select board. Chip said there is a selectman's rep on the planning board. Question as to whether cemetery trustee could speak to this. Lou Springer, cemetery trustee, said the trustee's view is simple. Lou said 3 or 4 years ago, access road was discussed for new cemetery, which will be operational in 10 years or 2030. Lou said the town will need access to the cemetery 2 to 3 years prior to the cemetery becoming

operational in order to do all the work necessary to lay out the cemetery. Lou said he did not care where the access is, but he doesn't want it in the field where the cornfield is, but he does want it to be at the road next to the postal service. He said that if we moved the road, it would be more expensive to cover. Lou said he doesn't want to change locations with the library. Cindy Raspiller, Library Trustee said, the trustees did hear Chip's concern and reviewed with DSK and Meridian. Cindy said John Quinlan, selectman, may or may not have a letter to support leaving the design as it is as a letter was requested. Cindy said the Conservation Commission was also concerned about where the library would be located so there concerns were taken into consideration in 2018. Cindy said location site that we chose was the last choice. Cindy said if the library was moved as is now being requested it would increase the library cost by about 50% due to many factors including library redesign, wetlands permit, and we would need to write a check to NH. Cindy said wetlands rules changed in 2019. Cindy strongly supports leaving the design as it is because we are forced to be there as Chip said.

7:15 Discussion of warrant article for Library

Presentation by Library - 10 minutes Presentation in this location.

Question and answer - 15 minutes

TB asked what happened to the library trustees' statement that they would only ask the town for \$800,000 or 20% of the overall costs. TB asked is there a quick and easy explanation. Cindy said that was the library trustees' goal. Cindy said we have raised 57% of the overall costs and we are asking the town for 43%. TB asked what the library trustees will do if the voters do not approve this warrant article. Cindy said the aspiration was to come forward looking for less money, the Mont Vernon Library Charitable Foundation raised a larger percentage of the overall costs. Cindy said when the global pandemic hit all economic assumptions went out the door. Cindy said she was excited that the overall costs was only \$6 million. Cindy said the many deadlines associated with the money that was raised leaves us no out. Cindy said she was favorably impressed that tax impact is lower than she expected it to be. Cindy said if we voted for the library two years ago the bond interest rate would have been 2% instead of 5%. TB said he is aware of all the constraints that we have. TB asked what is the plan to make it go forward. Cindy said you can weeble wobble but do not fall down. Cindy said that the taxpayers that voted against the library would lose the town \$1 million. Cindy said at some point people start feeling that they are not entitled to a library. Amy White, Library Trustee said, at the deliberative session, Sean Mamone, told her that drafting grants takes a ton of time. Amy told Sean she knows. She said the that now the library trustees and library foundation has lots of experience writing grants. She said it took a ton of time drafting the NEH grant. Amy said we worked incredibly hard to get the grant and now we have more opportunities to draft more grants. Cindy said more grants will come when taxpayers support the project. Spencer Lovette, MVLFCF member says he would rather put time towards grant writing for the town. KR asked if there was a typo in the presentation because it says \$2.6 million. Cindy said yes. KR said that the overall costs is over \$800,000, there are maintenance concerns, and the building is barely meeting code. KR said code should be the minimum standpoint. KR said she read the Fire Department report on the plans. KR wants to know if what has been presented is the final plans. Cindy said Yes. Cindy said the RFP was released in November and the design is the design at this point. Cindy said Anne Dodd, the Library Building Committee member is an expert and she assisted in reviewing the bids that were received. KR asked the reason there are not two egresses from the children's room. Cindy said the capacity is 24 and a back door is not required. KR said that the code is a minimum standard to build to. KR also asked about the flat room and it posing issues of ice dams and snow build up would be a continuous

safety problem. LH said isn't that what DPW would take of? BC said no. KR said the official size of the room is larger if furniture is moved. BM said that it is not a shelter, and it cannot be an shelter. Jay Ward, Fire Chief, said he asked the library trustees to move the building from Category 2 to Category 4, BM advises that would be extremely costly and unnecessary. Jay said he specifically stated it would be a temporary shelter if there is a need to offsite school or offsite neighborhood, it will be a temporary shelter. LH asked about building maintenance. Cindy said that the library is a trust fund baby because the Daland Trust will continue to maintain the building. Cindy said the DPW doesn't maintain the building.

7:40 Discussion of warrant article for Library Sprinkler System

Presentation by Library - 10 minutes

Question and answer - 10 minutes

Jay Wilson, Fire Chief, says that the sprinkler is a life safety and building protection. Jay says there is a calculated 327 person occupancy load and the fire risk is higher. Jay says that the occupancy load falls within code requirements. Jay says the right thing to do to protect visitors and to protect the building is to get the sprinkler. He cannot see why not. Jay says DPW is asking for sprinkler to protect investment. Jay says the library's quote for sprinklers from back of envelope, some we agree with some we do not. Jay says he doesn't have an agenda. LH asked Jay if he's supported the building as long as it has a sprinkler system. LH said if you have no agenda. Jay said he has a vote and he plans to use it. KR asked why wasn't a sprinkler included in the project originally. BM said codes are developed on a national level adopted at local level, all codes. BM said the code writers do what they think is best to provide a degree of life safety and safety for those occupying the building. BM said sprinklers are required for a building of this use category that are larger than 12,000.. BM quoted this document from DSK after reviewing the fire department's report. BM said there is a less than 300-person occupancy code, not as a mixed use as Fire chief has asked. BM does this for a living. BM says he supports sprinklers when they are required by code and practical from a cost view. BM says the library building committee has done what it feels is right and what they think they should do. BM says codes are written at a national level and decisions are made at national level by experts. BM says the Library Building Committee has applied for a waiver from the NH Fire Marshal. BM reads the response from the Assistant Fire Marshall. Jay Wilson said there is a 16 page document from fire risk management AMTEC and questions not answered. Jay said he was going to put together a plan of action. Jay said he was going to go back and develop a response to the questions. Jay said the occupancy is still in limbo. KR stated again, I am not looking for a code answer. Why did the Library Trustees or Building Committee not include a sprinkler system in the proposal to protect the town's now possible 6-million-dollar investment? BM states because of added expense and code does not require it. KR asked for copy of the letter that Raspiller mentioned during her presentation that Meridian was said to have sent.

New Business: Selectboard had a meeting, Jack instructed Joan to calculate the town raises at 9%, 8% and 7%, in case someone makes a motion to reduce the raises.

Public Comment

Amy White said 9% is high so what are other towns doing? No response from Selectboard

Bonnie Angulas asked when the budget committee would be voting on the warrants. JA said we already voted on the budget but will be voting on the warrant after the presentations are done. JA says we will vote on last Wednesday before town meeting.

TB and SS make a motion to adjourn. 8:14 pm adjourned.