

FRANCESTOWN HERITAGE COMMISSION
Minutes of February 1, 2016 Meeting

Present: Barbara Caskie, BJ Carbee, Diane Curran, Brad Howell, Michele Ferencsik, Elly Miles, Lisa Stewart
Guests: Jenna Lapachinski, Mike Petrovick
Others: Deb Adams, Lisa Bourbeau, Betty Behrsing, Ruth Behrsing, Scott Carbee, Polly Freese, Joseph Ludwig, Shirley Ludwig, Jamie Pike

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM.

Michele distributed a letter dated 2/18/15 from Jenna Lapachinski to Mike Petrovick re defining features of the Town Hall which indicated downstairs bathrooms might not be a requirement. She said although we had raised over \$100,000.00, when the final price was determined we had been asked to raise an additional \$300,000 in an unrealistic time frame. She asked if Jenna could advice regarding cuts to the project that would reduce the final cost. She also asked if Jenna had ideas or resources for fundraising and whether she had experience with other Town Halls with similar needs and issues.

Jenna recommended contacting Maggie Steir, Field Services Representative at NH Preservation Alliance, for fund raising ideas which Michele will do. Jenna said the Langdon Meeting House was somewhat similar to our situation except they were able to proceed in smaller stages, which allowed more time to obtain funding.

Michele was concerned that people had approached her after the last Board of Selectmen's meeting with the impression that the Town Hall project was falling apart.

Brad said no such comment was made at the meeting. His statement there was that it was the concensus at the last Heritage Commission meeting to keep moving forward and to continue to investigate all fund raising avenues.

Michele said the Friends of the Town Hall has changed its name to Friends of the Francestown Heritage Commission. She introduced Lisa Bourbeau to speak to that.

Lisa B said the name change would enable the Friends to be able to support stewardship and other programs which may come up in the future. The Friends have incorporated as a non-profit with the State of New Hampshire as a charity organization. As such they can apply for grants not available to municipal departments while simultaneously applying for Federal 501 c 3 status. They will be establishing a website and a facebook page.

Deb Adams brought up possibilities which could lead to savings such as moving the men's bathroom on the 1st floor to the off-stage area so that floor space and seating capacity would not be lessened as occupancy would be reduced with the current plan.

Mike said there have been many discussions as to what design would work best for the town and still meet Code and LCHIP requirements. He said we have already used a waiver to cut the

number of fixtures in the women's bathrooms and explained why first floor bathrooms were required. This is our best compromise.

Lisa B asked exactly how much was being saved by getting rid of the current back bumpout addition.

Mike said he didn't have hard figures on that but Hancock had spent \$1,200,000 on their renovation project. Our initial figure was that high and has been lowered to the \$999,000 level. He said it would be better if we had the full amount to work with as there is already quite a list of alternates to be added back in if at all possible. Even cutting all the small items together wouldn't amount to savings of more than \$30,000 if that.

Michele said that it was still important to look at even small items that could be cut to demonstrate to donors and prospective donors that we have looked at all possibilities. We have met with the architect and with LCHIP and done everything possible to get the figure down.

Mike asked why the figure wasn't OK. He said it is down to barebones, based on work needed and actual bids.

Brad said if cuts affect the building's functionality, is it worth it to tweak things a bit more even if that were possible. We still have a considerable amount of money to raise. Given the time needed for fundraising, how much flexibility is there in the LCHIP grant time frame?

Jenna replied that there is a 6-month administrative extension given by the LCHIP office. A further 12-month extension can be authorized by the LCHIP Board. She said even extensions totaling 24 months were not unknown.

Michele thanked Jenna for coming to meet with Mike Petrovick and the Commission.

The next regular meeting of the Heritage Commission will be February 13, 2016 at 9 AM.

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Elly Miles