

**TOWN OF JAFFREY  
Jaffrey, New Hampshire**

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
Meeting Minutes  
November 1, 2010**

**Present:** Chairman MacIsaac, Selectman Batchelder, Selectman LaBrie

**Absent:** None

**Staff:** Town Manager Hartman, Administrative Assistant Richard

**CALL TO ORDER**

Selectman MacIsaac called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

**MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL**

None

**PUBLIC HEARING**

None

**APPOINTMENTS**

Ad hoc Community Center Committee

Chairman MacIsaac asked Susan Leach what the committee's plans are. Leach said that the tentative plans are to go to Town Meeting in March to present a bond issue for the Community Center.

Chairman MacIsaac said that how he defines the Community Center is that it will be a Town owned building, Town staffed and operated by the Town, on Town property and will be Town funded. When the project is approved, the Town will manage it. All agreed.

Leach said that their main objective was to develop some programs and a place to put those programs. She said that they are hoping that there would be an Advisory Community from the Community Center to help with the programming.

MacIsaac said that on the list of priorities for the Board of Selectmen that the Board's number one priority is fixing the Town Office. The Facilities Committee is now down to three alternatives and a guess at the cost would be around \$1.5 to \$2 million, which

would be a big pill for the town to swallow.

Susan Leach said that bringing the Town Office and the Community Center to Town Meeting would be a bigger pill to swallow.

LaBrie said that this would be a real sticker shock to the people if they were faced with two bonds.

Owen Houghton said that he would not vote from the Community Center point of view on taking a position on the bond issue until everything was clear. Repeatedly people have been saying that this is not the right year. When is the right year?

LaBrie said that at the last Facilities Committee meeting they were down to three alternatives and that, the next meeting will be November 15<sup>th</sup> but that does not mean that the committee will be concluding as to where we are going to be then. More information will be obtained on the three locations and discussed it. Probably in middle to the end of December, they will have the actual one they will be going with. LaBrie also said that even when they get down to two, one of those two could not even be decided until the end of the year.

LaBrie asked that once we go ahead with a bond issue, do you really think that the Town of Jaffrey would be happy with two big bond issues? One is a replacement to what is crumbling and the other is a Community Center.

Frank Sterling commented that he thought that the building the Facilities Committee is holding out for is not going to be the one chosen. If not chosen, then the committee would be looking at two other sites that would take more than a year to develop. He said that the probability is that a new town office would not be scheduled for construction until 2012 or 2013. He would hope that recognizing that this Community Center has stood aside on a number of occasions; he would hope that the Board of Selectmen would decide not to bring the bond issue forward for a new town office this year.

Sterling believes that the new town offices are not needed immediately. The Turner Report gave the town five to six years for this building, the report is only a year or two old, and at the least, he believes that the town has another two years to develop a plan for a new town office building. We would hope that the Board would have respect for the work of this committee over the last twenty years that you would stand aside and let us have a clear shot at it.

Chairman MacIsaac stated that the assumption is that we cannot sit here in this building for the next four or five years and wait, have the Community Center built and then work on the Town Office. We have a list of improvements that have to be made. A good example of that is this year the roof leaked and the budget committee would not allow us to put any money in the maintenance of the building and we had to find money just to repair the roof and take the money out of another budget. Therefore, the assumption that we can just sit here and do nothing, I believe is not a good assumption.

MacIsaac said that the second thing is that we need to take action on a Town Office and we need to go forward and say that this is what we are going to do even if it's an article saying that we want you to approve buying the land.

Frank Sterling commented that he believes that we do not have to come to Town Meeting this year with a \$2 million bond request for funding. He does not believe that the necessity is so overriding for new town office that you need to do it this year.

Sterling said that the situation at the library last spring was a clear indication that there is a need for a place for kids to go after school. It did get to be a real problem at the library and I give Joan Knight and her staff all the credit in the world for managing it as well as they did. However, we need, the Town needs, and the kids need somewhere to go after school. This is obvious.

Selectmen LaBrie stated that we are now into the third year after the Turner Report came out. We need to put priorities in order. This is a necessity that has to be done eventually and eventually is right around the corner. Having a Community Center is a wonderful idea if we were a town that had a lot of money. Every year we struggle with the budget and the Budget Committee is very good. Do you really think that the Budget Committee is going to approve a community center building when they know this building is the one that needs to be done now while the Community Center is one we would like to do? The priorities are just opposite. We have needs and we have wants. We need to take care of this problem and we would like and want to have a community center when it is possible. I know that this is not a good year. The economy is bad enough and we cannot even be sure that we are going to be able to pass this bond. If we do not, it will be back on the slate again next year. We have to do something and we cannot just sit on our hands while we are spending money building a wanted thing but not a necessary thing.

Susan Leach said that there is a great need not a want. This would not be just for children but for seniors, for all of us.

Will Duval stated that it would take the town at least two years to get the drawings together for a new town office. He believes that the community center needs to act now because this has been going on for twenty years. The community has accomplished a lot in the last two and a half years and if this can be approved this year, he can have the drawings done in thirty days. Will is operating under a design build scenario. Mike Hartman mentioned that this approach may not be acceptable to grant agencies.

Matt Keenan said that if we were at this point in November with three potential sites, by the time March rolls around the Board would not have enough information to answer the questions that will be brought up at any of the meetings. He asked where the Community Center is on the list.

Chairman MacIsaac commented that number one was the Town Offices and second was the Recycling Center.

Christine Bergeron who is a committee member on the Community Center Committee said that she believes the safety of children is more important than the safety concerns that the Board has for town offices.

Owen Houghton said no bond article would be approved if it was not supported by the Board of Selectmen or the Budget Committee.

Houghton said that he would advise that this not be a controversy with the press or the citizens in terms of deal about what are needs are. This is not an adversarial relationship. Susan Leach agreed with Houghton.

Keenan asked the Board if the committee got a 501C, what would be the chances of the town deeding the property to the community center.

LaBrie thought that they would have a good chance and she would vote yes because the land was bought for that purpose.

After listening to more comments and concerns, the meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Submitted:

Attest:

Sue Richard  
Administrative Assistant

Donald MacIsaac  
Chairman  
Board of Selectmen