

**SELECT BOARD & LIBRARY BUILDING COMMITTEE WORKSHOP MINUTES**  
**May 8, 2014** **PAGE 1**

**Board members present:** Chairman David Cedarholm, Selectwoman Dennis and Selectman Scott Bugbee.

**Others present:** Paul and Annamarie Gasowski, Katrinka Pellecchia, Patricia Jenkins, Phyllis White, Carla Wilson, Cynthia Giguere, Tom and Peg Dolan, Bill Humm, Zach Smith, Jim and Lou Ann Griswold, Bill Henze, Giovanna Filippone, Gail Kindberg, Sharon Meeker, Cheryl Adams, Chuck Cox, Sharon Taylor, Barbara Nadori and Town Administrator Julie Glover.

1. Chairman Cedarholm calls the meeting to order at 6:06 pm and begins with introductions around the room.
2. Chairman Cedarholm reads the first item on the agenda – Review Committee’s Charge and its current success.

Katrinka Pellecchia reviews original charge. Final phase of preparing project documents has been extended since the Bond Warrant was not approved for 2014. There have been many public meetings and public input. Paul Gasowski states that there is still more work to do.

Chairman Cedarholm reads the ‘Purpose’ of the charge document.

To form a building committee that will oversee and recommend final plans for the new Lee Public Library Community Center and to be built on the bluff overlooking Little River Park. These plans will meet the needs of the Town of Lee in addition to being energy efficient and fiscally responsible.

3. Chairman Cedarholm has issues with a couple of those things: It was a goal that was set in 2007 or 2009 that a foundation would be formed, \$850,000 would be raised, a capital reserve fund would be formed and a palatable bond would be brought forward. The \$3 million bond that was brought forward was not fiscally responsible. Lee has one of the highest tax rates in the region and the Town has the Town Hall to consider at this time as well.

Tom Dolan states that the charge had nothing to do with the finances. The Committee did come up with a revised design because the first design was too expensive. He feels strongly that the Committee did its job and if the proposal did not meet the Board’s criteria then he would have expected that feedback when they composed and submitted the warrant article. The Committee had every impression that they met the goal and they had no feedback to the contrary. He thinks that they need to know what the parameters for acceptability will be. He is impressed with the dedication and effort that has been expended on this project for a decade.

Bruce Larson was been involved since 2004 when the 1<sup>st</sup> needs assessment was completed and the same needs exist now in addition to others. These needs include accessibility (ADA issue), collection space, age and fire-worthiness of the structure and the building was not satisfactory to be renovated for a Library. Lee has changed a lot since the 1960’s. There are no chicken farms left. This is a very educated community that is diverse in age. In looking for the charge for a building they were envisioning a structure that would look towards the future for the needs of the folks that are getting older. Lee needs a multi-generational community (space). The Library with a Community Center added to it would give a better quality of life to town members and increase the value of the Town. Mr. Larson believes that Selectman Cedarholm only cares about the money. The cheapest car won’t work according to Larson. Lee is blessed with ‘resources’ aka money. Coffers are overflowing. He thinks that the cry of poor is hollow. The Town needs to invest in a decent structure. He agrees that the Town needs a decent Town

office structure. The Town needed a good Transfer Station and still needs a good Town Clerk's office. Everyone needs to use the Library.

Chairman Cedarholm interjects that they need to get back on track with the agenda. He states that he does not appreciate Mr. Larson's comments regarding his interpretations of the costs. He supports having a nice Library, but they need to look at the whole picture when weighing the needs of the Town.

Selectwoman Dennis adds that everyone needs to actively listen to one another, be polite and kind, understand the value of differences, respect each other both verbally and non-verbally and promote some sort of collaboration.

Paul Gasowski thinks that they have been fiscally responsible and acted on good data based on previous studies. He hopes that there is a desire to move forward. If the Board thinks that this project is not fiscally responsible then the Committee needs the opportunity to address those concerns.

Zach Smith states that it is not fair to levy the failure of not raising the money that was promised on the Committee. As an architect he feels that they did the best job they could to present the best building possible.

Chairman Cedarholm states that he truly supports a new nicer Library. The large scale of the project is one of the major points he has an issue with.

Cynthia Giguere would like to agree on the fact that the Library and the Town Hall buildings do not meet ADA requirements. Chairman Cedarholm states that they are ADA accessible. The basement in the Library and the upstairs in Town Hall are not ADA accessible. The entrance to the building and the spaces between the stacks meets ADA standards. Ms. Giguere asks the Board where they want to make changes; size or cost. This is a favorable time for financing, bond rates are only going to go up. The longer we delay the greater the cost will be. In the January 6<sup>th</sup> Budget Hearing the projection that was made was less than \$100 per year for average property. She thinks the Town is out of compliance with ADA.

Annie Gasowski drafted a new charge and it lists all the things that still need to be done; therefore, they need a new Building Committee.

Tom Dolan states that a professional consultant was hired in 2006 and stated that the average was 1.2 to 3 square feet per capita gross based upon looking 20 years out with the population going from 4400 to 5700 but if the population only grows to 4900 the current design would be 2.4 square feet. The median would actually be 2.1. The 2000 census showed college graduates were over double the NH rate. The classification of collections dictates amount of space.

Chairman Cedarholm closes Agenda item #2 by commenting on the library footprint range of 1.2 to 3 square feet per resident that was recommended which brings him to the table in the packet which shows that Lee's proposed Library of 12,000 square feet and considering the current population of 4300 results in a ratio of 2.77. The table compares 14 recently constructed Libraries in the region (excluding Newington). The average of the other 13 is 1.65. The other towns must have gone through a similar processes and no other Library comes close to 2.77 square foot ratio. Why is this? Bruce Larson asks if the other Libraries have community space. Chairman Cedarholm answers yes, but for one. Why is Lee so special and needs 12,000 square

feet? Katrinka Pellecchia states that South Berwick regrets not doing a Community Center. They are now doing a 5000 square foot addition. Chairman Cedarholm states that South Berwick's building has 6800 square feet for a population of 7200. What sets us so far apart from these other communities? Katrinka Pellecchia has spoken to the director of the Kingston Library and their 12,000 sf Library is already too small for their population of 6000. We are planning for the future. Peg Dolan and Chairman Cedarholm disagree about whether or not Brentwood has a community center in its Library. Peg Dolan states that the Kingston Library has 12,000+ square feet and the collection area is already too small according to their director. Chuck Cox states that the use increases in every town that builds a new library and Lee will be no different. He believes donations from the community will bring the costs way down. He hopes that this project will draw people together. This is important for quality of life.

Paul Gasowski states that the evolution of the current plan to build overlooking Little River Park represents careful thinking in an effort to bring everything together and create a synergy between the Library Community Center and Little River Park. He wants to be not only fiscally responsible but socially and culturally responsible to provide the next generation a place to meet and do various things in one setting.

Cynthia Giguere draws attention to the Patience Jackson Report dated 2006. They need to have a meaningful dialogue on where it is too large. The report asks for 12,370 square feet. The Wisconsin Study was the second methodology used to create the current plan.

Paul Gasowski states that there is a Town Center Plan that has 4 phases that has an established record in town that the voters have accepted and funded. Phase I is having difficulties because they have not been able to engage in dialogue over it. After 7 years of work and all kinds of documentation it is time to embrace the plan and figure out how we are going to get all four phases to happen.

Chairman Cedarholm interjects that this particular agenda is supposed to be focusing on the issues with this project and suggested hearing from the Board if they have any particular issues with the project. Mr. Gasowski asks if he can finish and suggests that this project has been isolated from the larger plan and should be part of a bigger picture.

Selectman Bugbee was on the Library's side of the building about 12 years ago with the Public Safety Complex project going back and forth with the Board of Selectmen. Recently he met with Library Director Sharon Taylor and had a nice dialogue. Selectman Bugbee, having just gone through the election process, had the opportunity to hear from the people that the cost is too high. He would like to hear from the voters and how much money they would actually support.

Selectwoman Dennis appreciates the hard work but is concerned with \$3.7 million and wished that the Bond had gone forward so that the voters could have weighed in. At this point, the Trustees might need to make a decision as to whether to bring forward a warrant article or keep working as a committee.

Bruce Larson understands being uncomfortable bonding the entire amount. Can we embrace the design and work on financing it separately. Need a good design to drive donations and raise more money. How can we work together to pay for it?

Selectman Bugbee asks who dealt with the construction firm and how the price was determined? Zach Smith states that they went through a bid process.

Tom Dolan states that it was a 2 step process. 1. A request for proposal based on qualifications. There were 15 submitted that were narrowed down to 5 and to 3. After lengthy review they chose Milestone Construction. There is a discussion on how the cost was developed. Paul Gasowski reminds the Board that they knew about this process and signed off on the hiring of Milestone. He states that he is hearing that the Board wants to sever their interest in formally being involved in a dialogue with this project. Chairman Cedarholm says that they do not want to sever any dialogue. Selectwoman Dennis only suggested that they have options if they are not happy with the progress these meetings are making.

Chairman Cedarholm concerns are not solely financial. He has grave concern with the impact this project will have on the rural character and historic resources of the Town Center. He is concerned with how the scale of this project will impact the character and view from the Town Center and also concerned with the pace of the project. 2016 was supposed to be the construction date and then the Trustees came forward with a 2014 construction start date. The pace was moved up too fast. He loves the idea of a community room connected with the Library. The Town has a plethora of community rooms in the Town Center including the room in the Public Safety Complex, rooms available in the church and the school.

Superintendent Jim Morse is present to explain the use of Mast Way School space. A side point, they just finished the cafeteria project at Moharimet which was estimated to cost \$275 per square foot and ended up costing \$400 per square foot. Mr. Morse pulled some data on the school usage and from the beginning of the school year to this point they have had 575 uses of their facility. An after school program has used it 220, Lee community men's adult basketball league has used it 97 times, boy scouts 27 times, Girls on the Run 24 times and the ORYA over 100 times. Student use supersedes everything.

Cynthia Giguere asks about how insurance coverage levels are determined. Mr. Morse is not sure. Non-profits are only charged for custodial services if an event is on the weekend. Cafeteria and gymnasium are booked up, but classrooms are typically available per Mr. Morse.

Pat Jenkins states that there are many small groups such as book clubs and knitting classes that need space to meet but do not need a big space such as safety complex or school. These groups would fit perfectly in a Library.

Tom Dolan wants to talk more about square foot without more data. He would submit that without having a program summary (level/quality of collection) from other libraries we can't really know how they arrived at the square footage. Without knowing how the other libraries assessed their requirements we can't answer the square footage/ratio question. Chairman Cedarholm appreciates this, but we need to live within our means. All 13 communities have ranges that aren't even close to Lee's proposed plan. There needs to be a compromise. Mr. Dolan created a spreadsheet during one of the public information sessions that showed what the \$100 per average household would pay. He does not believe we have to compromise. Chairman Cedarholm states that he did not appreciate these comparisons at all.

Bill Henze supported the original warrant article because if the Town puts up \$100,000 a year for the next 5 years then the Library would raise \$750,000. He thinks that the whole project should be scrapped until funds are raised. South Berwick and Durham have hired consultants to

raise the money. South Berwick raised \$1,100,000. The cost per person for S. Berwick is \$509, \$379 for Durham and \$889 for Lee. The bonds per household for S. Berwick were \$957, \$902 for Durham and for \$1705 Lee. There was more discussion over other data comparison. The problem with this proposal is that it is twice as expensive as it should be.

Bruce Larson wants to keep same project, but how do we afford it? He would like to push the schedule because of a belief that prices are going to go up. He agrees there needs to be concern regarding the historic Town Center but the project does not call for clear cutting.

Katrinka Pellecchia believes that the building committee should continue. Chairman Cedarholm agrees that there needs to be more dialogue and that the Board needs to give Committee clear parameters.

Barbara Nadori is new to the foundation and states that in looking at the possibilities for fundraising there are people in the community who would be willing to donate but they have to have a clear understanding that the Town is behind this project. It is hard to ask people to donate money if it is unclear that there is a project that the Town is going to move forward on.

Cynthia Giguere adds that the voters look to see if the Board supports a project before making a decision. The Board needs to get behind the project. She believes that the Board and the Committee should look at all 4 phases together and look at different ways to configuring the finances. Create a spreadsheet and look at cost of bonding at different rates. She can't overstate enough that we need lower interest rates. Also look at different scenarios to reduce costs, use old furniture. Suggested going out for one bond for all projects at once. This will keep costs down. They would be looking to bond in spring 2015. She asks Chairman Cedarholm what his vision is.

Chairman Cedarholm says that he loves the rural character of the Town Center. He would re-purpose the existing buildings in Town Center. Modesty and compromise is the only way these projects are going to happen. He stated that Sunapee built an 8000 square foot Library; raised \$1.2 million and bonded less than \$1 million. Their combined tax rate is \$14.62 and town rate is \$2.93. There also has never been a discussion about locating the Library somewhere else. He also believes that they still have a legal issue with the 2011 vote to locate the building at Bricker property. Last year the Board voted to support the location and he doesn't think that the Board had authority to do that.

There is some discussion over the Town's Tax rate.

Paul Gasowski states that in early Town Center studies the Bales site and Stevens field were rejected. Now the Bricker House is being suggested which will not suffice as a Library. There are load bearing and ADA compliant issues. He questions the real merit with this suggestion. He thinks the existing plan is a good plan, i.e. 4 phases. It has been vetted by a lot of people. We became an SB2 Town under the premise that more people would vote to decide matters of concern. There is a responsibility to advance this project to the voters and let them speak. Two things need to happen. First the building committee needs to be recharged. Second, a second committee should be formed to discuss a municipal campus. Building a Library on the bluff will be complementary to the Town Center and meet the needs of the people. Decisions have been data driven.

Bruce Larson thinks Chairman Cedarholm is single-handedly sabotaging the vision. He thinks the vision that many people have should go forward. He questioned whether there is anyone else who agrees with Chairman Cedarholm's concerns or if this is a singular 'Cedarholm' plan.

Chairman Cedarholm states that this is not a 'Cedarholm' plan. He hasn't come up with this on his own. He has been contacted by hundreds of people over the years who have voiced their concerns. He loves the Library. He hates speaking against the Library plan, but someone has to consider the big picture. There are a lot of people that are unwilling come forward to say a word because they do not want to risk being chastised as a non-supporter of the Library and this is how he feels.

Selectman Bugbee adds that people are coming to him as well and that this is a formidable group. These people are reluctant to come forward because they don't want to be tagged anti-Library. We need to get something to the voters so that they can speak. He suggests maybe having a special town meeting.

Zach Smith asks the Board to help them get their word out and get people to the meetings. They need to get the public's feedback and opinions. How do they build a conduit or pipeline to get this information?

Chairman Cedarholm thinks that this would be a great agenda item for the next meeting.

Chuck Cox says that we need to have the other side or other people on the committee. He is not convinced that SB2 is any good. He thinks that the voters are uninformed. He does not think people will go online to get information.

Pat Jenkins is looking at the long range plan. She is worried about Town Hall falling down. The foundation needs work. The Library needs to move first according to the 4 phase plan. She is happy to see these discussions. She does not see that dissolving the committee is moving forward. She believes that Town Meeting was better because everyone had to sit there and listen in order to vote.

4. Chairman Cedarholm asks the Board if they have new developments that they would like to discuss. Selectman Bugbee has seen pictures of the foundation of Town Hall and that definitely needs to be addressed. Selectwoman Dennis adds that all you can smell is mold when you walk into Town Hall. She thinks that should be addressed immediately and hopes to talk about it at Monday night's meeting. She does not agree with the Town purchasing the Bricker property. Chairman Cedarholm starts by stating that things have changed since 2007. The big thing is the economy. The early dreams were born from a completely different situation. The economy tanked for one thing. The Town Hall continues to decline. Town Hall should be moved to Phase I. The Bricker property is an exciting opportunity and should at least be talked about. Whether it becomes Town Hall or a Senior Center, he is in support of having the discussion this year. He does not necessarily support purchasing it, but does support talking about it.

Peg Dolan asks what happens to the Library if Town Hall is taken care of first. Chairman Cedarholm stated that there has been a recent discussion about relocating the Town offices to the Public Safety Complex (PSC). This would open up the Town Hall space for possible community room.

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Cynthia Giguere states that Town Hall could be potential for office space or Lee office incubator space.

Chairman Cedarholm states that there is nothing wrong to putting a building to good use. We should be using the PSC to its full capacity.

Paul Gasowski asks what would happen to current Library. The earlier studies state that this parcel of land cannot be expanded on. The Heritage and Historical people would be very interested in that space. He thinks the preliminary plan is just fine and to move the Town offices into the old Library is a 'bang up concept'. In 2009 the cost was \$460,000 to renovate Town Hall. Historically the Town Offices belong at the old campus. It glues everything together according to Gasowski.

Selectwoman Dennis supports moving Town offices to PSC. They still need to talk to the Chiefs. There is lots of wasted space in the PSC.

Selectman Bugbee asks how they are going to proceed at this point. He suggests setting up another meeting to continue discussion.

Selectwoman Dennis wants to set the next meeting to 2 hour maximum.

The group sets the next meeting for June 5<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 – 8:00 pm.

8. Chairman Cedarholm motions to adjourn at 8:38 pm. Selectman Dennis, seconds. All in favor.  
**Motion Carries.**

Minutes transcribed by:

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Denise Duval, Town Secretary

6/23/14

Minutes accepted by The Lee Select Board:

  
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David Cedarholm, Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Carole Dennis

  
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Scott Bugbee