

Town Center Committee Meeting Minutes

July 13, 2015

Present: Town Administrator Julie Glover (Facilitator), Cary Brown, Chuck Cox, David Meeker, Deb Schanda, Larry Kindberg, Lori Wright, Paul Gasowski, Ron Pitkin, Ruth Eifert, Chief Dronsfield, Chief Nemet and Janet Allen.

Not Present: Brian Seeley and Caren Rossi

1. Everyone introduced themselves. The Select Board's Charge to the Committee was reviewed and Julie Glover gave a general statement. She reminds a few that they still need to be sworn in.
2. Department Heads do not want the town offices to move to the 2nd floor of the Public Safety Complex. Various reasons are discussed including safety issues by Chief Dronsfield.
3. Janet Allen wants to see the 'data' on the square footage needs for the municipal offices.
4. Paul Gasowski highly recommends that the Committee review the work of the previous Town Center Committees.
5. Julie Glover asks for a volunteer to be secretary and take notes. No one volunteers. She will take notes and facilitate the meeting.
6. Ron Pitkin asks what the results were from the previous reports. Julie Glover gives a brief overview. Paul Gasowski disagrees with her assessment.
7. Julie Glover will send out the previous studies, reports, etc. to the Committee.
8. Julie Glover states that Town Hall cannot function in the 21st century. Chief Dronsfield states that the Town Hall has safety/law enforcement issues.
9. Ron Pitkin asks about the survey that was going to be sent out. Glover responds that Select Board initially contracted with AG Architects to perform a Needs Analysis, which would have included a survey, but the Board later decided not to move forward. Chuck Cox states that all of the Needs Assessment vendors said that public input is needed.
10. Ron Pitkin states that there is no growth in Lee and therefore fewer kids. Chief Dronsfield states that there is a lull right now in growth, but there are 50 house developments in the works.
11. Ron Pitkin comments on Lee's high tax rate.
12. Glover discusses the Municipal Records Committee and the need for storage space. There is a general conversation about records storage. Janet Allen suggests storing off-site. Deb Schanda states that it is cheap to digitize.
13. Lori Wright asks about the Charrette that was done.

14. Ron Pitkin asks if other towns have built new town offices. Julie Glover names a few.
15. Paul Gasowski states that the Town needs to preserve old buildings such as Town Hall and the Library. Should look into federal grants.
16. Ron Pitkin points out that even if voters agree to build new office building, the town still will have to fix old buildings. There is a general discussion about money to restore. Cary Brown asks how much to restore? In general there are many old buildings that get restored and then can't be occupied.
17. How does the historical society come into play? Janet Allen and Julie Glover say possible to move it into Town Hall, if municipal offices are relocated.
18. Julie Glover points out that many in town are not interested in preserving the old buildings.
19. Ron Pitkin asked if Public Safety Complex could be used as temporary offices.
20. Ron Pitkin asks if any other buildings are for sale in town. Discussed 122 Mast Road. Chief Dronsfield states that the Bricker house just sold.
21. Deb Schanda is concerned about the aesthetics of the Town Center.
22. Paul Gasowski has a strong desire to build a community.
23. Chief Dronsfield states that times are changing much more traffic on Routes 155 & 152. Town Center is not going to be walkable.
24. Deb Schanda wants to be proud of her town.
25. Cary Brown states that the traffic is only going to continue. Town might only have enough money to paint and secure structures. The offices might need to stay put.
26. Paul Gasowski says there are tiers of options. Tax rate is not an indicator. He states that Lee is not an unwealthy town. The people in the room and in the town live quite well.
27. Cary Brown states that they need to lower the tax rate. It is a problem.
28. Discussion about the inadequate septic system at the Town offices and Library.
29. Paul Gasowski asks to video all the meetings. The consensus is not to do that. States how important it is that the minutes are accurate. Chief Dronsfield states that the Administrative Assistant Robin Estee might be willing to take minutes.
30. Chiefs Nemet and Dronsfield discuss the issues at the Safety Complex with regards to traffic and parking. Chief Dronsfield suggests building an addition to the Public Safety Complex. Discussion regarding the existence of a vernal pool and bog near Stevens Field.

31. Committee agrees to meet twice a month on Monday nights in order to meet six month deadline imposed by Select Board. Next meeting is July 27th at PSC. The tour of the buildings meeting will be on August 10th beginning at the Town Hall.
32. Paul Gasowski will look into finding money for the historical buildings. Chuck Cox suggests getting it on the National Register.
33. Glover will distribute 2009 Town Center Report and other documents. Committee members will come to next meeting with a “wish list” of what they would like to see happen with the Town Center.
34. Meeting adjourns at 7:33 pm.

Minutes taken by: _____
Julie Glover, Facilitator

Minutes typed by: _____
Denise Duval, Town Secretary