

**TOWN OF WEST BOYLSTON
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**

**TOWN CLERK MINUTES
SEPT. 9, 2013**

Article 1, Section 3 of the Town of West Boylston General bylaws states that “One Hundred (100) legal voters, including the presiding officer and the clerk, shall constitute a quorum, provided that a number less than a quorum may vote an adjournment: and that not more than Seventy-five (75) shall be required to maintain a quorum once the meeting has been called to order by the Moderator and that a quorum of Seventy-five (75) be required to reconvene any adjourned session of any such meeting.”

The Moderator was informed that 183 registered voters were in attendance and that the quorum requirement has been met.

Town meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

M.G.L 39 § 15 was accepted at the Oct 20, 2008 Semi-Annual Town Meeting and placed in the General Bylaws Article I § 7. This By law Section states. “If a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting is required by statute, the Moderator may, at his or her discretion, decline to verify a voice vote by polling the voters or by dividing the meeting, and may record the vote as a two-thirds vote without taking such a count.”

The following people were sworn in as tellers by the Town Clerk;

Mark Brodier	Jack McCormick
Margaret Farwell	Franklin Daigneau
Jennifer Breen	Carol Peterson
Louise Howland	Barbara Deschenes

Upon a motion by Kevin McCormick and second by Christopher Rucho is was unanimously voted to waive the reading of the Warrant and refer it as subject matter only.

ARTICLE 1- AUTHORIZATION TO BORROW FUNDS FOR TOWN OFFICES PROJECT

Motion- John Hadley

Second- Christopher Rucho

John Hadley, Selectman, Facilities Implementation & Strategic Planning Committee (FISP) Chair, presented the following report;

Agenda for Presentation

Today's meeting will cover:

- Introduction of members of Committee
- Introduction of project
- Description of the Building
- Financial Impact of the project
- Discussion about the Senior Center
- Project Timetable
- Summary
- Questions

Introduction

The mission of the Committee is to establish a strategic plan for the municipal buildings of West Boylston. Once formulated, the Committee will begin to take the steps necessary to implement that strategic plan.

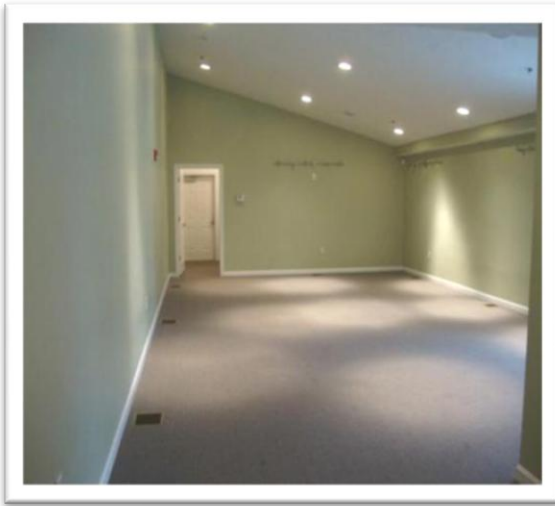
Project Summary

- The Town wishes to purchase the Three Rivers Building (140 Worcester Street) as a Town Hall and to pay for the project through a debt exclusion.



Building Description

- Nearly 10,000 sq. ft of usable office space
- Three floors with new elevator
- Storage space and offices in the basement
- Excellent condition
- To house administrative offices of the Town
- Meeting room space for boards/Committees
- Compliant with American with Disabilities Act
- Up to code for commercial building standards



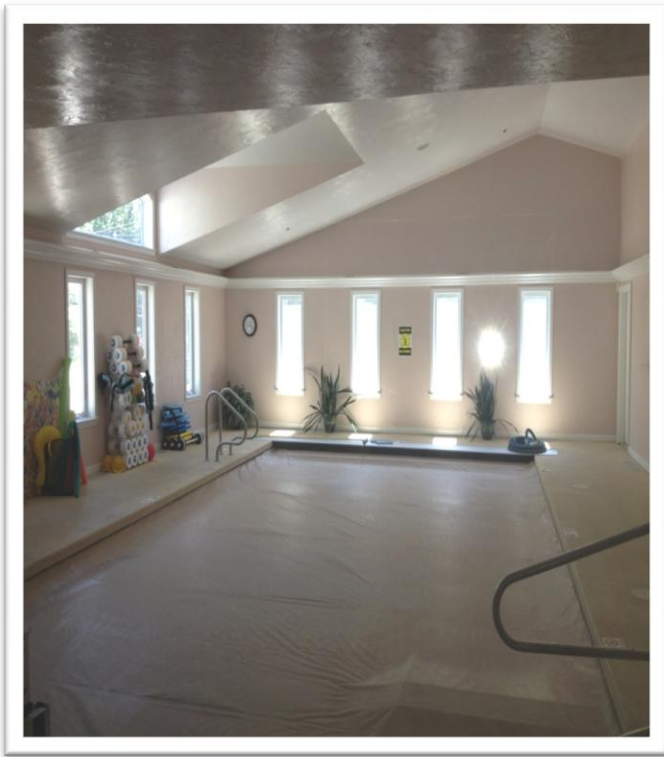
First floor meeting room space



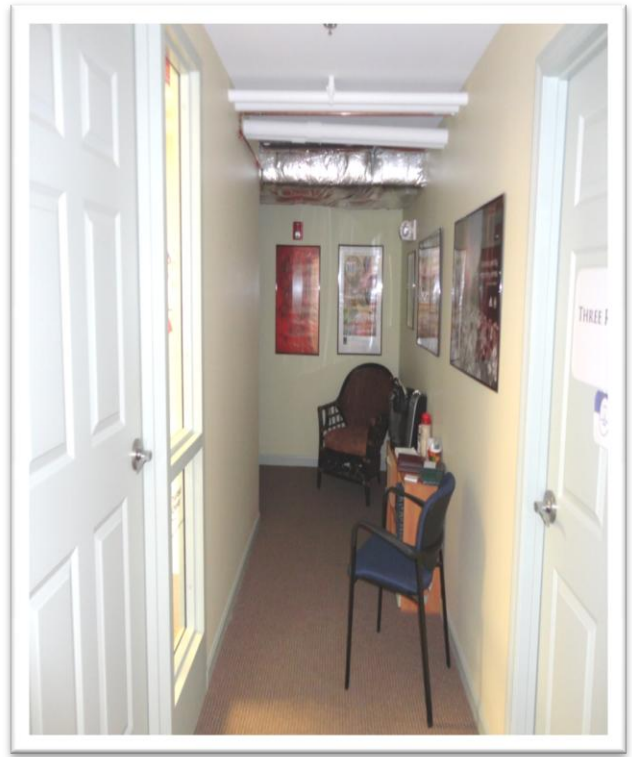
Second floor meeting room space



Samples of office suites



While the building currently has a small pool used for rehabilitation it will be covered and used for other purposes



The basement is partially finished with offices and would provide the Town with plenty of storage space as well.



There are 43 parking spaces which would be sufficient for the roughly 15 employees and visitors to the building.

The new Town offices will house the following offices/town departments:

- Town Clerk
- Treasurer-Collector
- Building Department
- Board of Health
- Assessors
- Information Technology
- Board of Selectmen
- Town Administrator
- Town Accountant
- Planning Board
- Conservation Commission
- ZBA
- Veterans Agent
- Cemetery Commission
- Public Access/Cable Studio

Ray Bricault, Finance Committee , and FISP Committee member presented the following report;

Financial Impact

- Current cost of renting office space is nearly \$125,000 a year for Town Offices and Senior Center
- From April (2008) through April (2014), the taxpayers have paid rental costs for 127 Hartwell Street of over \$760,000!
- Previous analysis on costs to build new Town Offices and Senior Center on Town Owned property was roughly \$14 million due to the costs of new construction for governmental entities!
- Decision was made to purchase property to reduce the new construction costs
- Purchase price expected to be \$1.575 million
- With renovation and other moving expenses, the total borrowing will be \$2 million or less.
- A debt exclusion for 30 years would cost the average taxpayer (\$250,000 home) about \$31 a year.
- Estimated Tax Bill Impact (per \$100k)

FY15	\$16.33
FY20	\$14.99
FY25	\$13.65
FY30	\$12.30
FY35	\$10.96
FY40	\$9.61

FY45 \$0.00

- If approved, the debt expenditures will increase by \$131,667 in FY15
- HOWEVER, there is \$100,208 of debt costs is being reduced that same year, making the debt impact to the taxpayers only \$31,459.
- The Committee believes most taxpayers in West Boylston would not even notice these tax increases in their annual tax bill!

What our debt looks like over next several years

Add \$131,667 for purchase of new Town Offices
Subtract \$100,209 for other debt coming off in FY15
Subtract \$54,839 for other debt coming off in FY16
Subtract \$235,106 for other debt coming off in FY17

Reduction of over \$250,000 in debt costs in the next three years even with the purchase of the Three Rivers Building!

Bruce Peterson, and FISP Committee member presented the following report;

Operational Cost

- The Town currently spends \$124,692 in rental costs at 127 Hartwell Street.
- It is expected to cost the Town roughly \$42,000 to maintain and operate the new building.
- Budgetary considerations should also include the loss of property taxes currently collected on the Three Rivers property (\$14,500).
- Total effective cost of operations for Three Rivers Building expected to be \$56,853 which is MUCH less than current rent of \$124,692!
- In the short term there will be operational costs for the Senior Center as well.
- We have an estimate of \$35,000 for rental costs for continuing to rent space for senior services.
- Even adding this amount to the Three Rivers operating costs indicates that this is a financially prudent deal (\$91,853 of new costs vs. \$124,692 of current costs); a difference of nearly \$33,000 a year.

Maintenance costs/repairs	\$9,900	(similar to annual costs for other municipal buildings)
Added supplies	\$2,000	(roughly 25% increase over current costs)
Insurance	\$1,833	(as quoted by MIIA)
Added Custodial	\$3,600	(increased by 5 hours of custodial service)
Utilities	\$18,420	(current costs of building \$15,350 + 20%)
Grounds keeping	\$1,200	(estimated \$100/month)
Other	\$5,400	(elevators, alarms, and others)

Total \$42,353 *(this is the additional amount over current budget)*

Siobhan Bohanson, Selectwoman, and FISP Committee member presented the following report;

Senior Center

The Town was looking at the Bethlehem Baptist Church for the Senior/Community Center and were bringing both of the buildings to Town Meeting. The Church had second thoughts and withdrew from negotiations. The Three Rivers Building is large enough for the municipal operations, it would not be large enough for the Town's Senior Center.

The Council on Aging approached the Board of Selectmen with specifications and requirements they felt were needed for the Senior Center. The Selectmen sent out a Request for Proposal for the lease of approximately 2,500 – 4,000 square feet of office space in the Town of West Boylston, for a senior center and related offices.

On August 7th the FISP Committee authorized the Town Administrator to prepare a Request for Proposals for leased space to house the Senior Center and its programs and operations. Responses are due back on September 20th.

Christopher Rucho, Selectman, and FISP Committee member presented the following report;

Project Timetable

- These are the steps needed to complete the project:

	Description	Start Date to Completion Date
Step 1	Town Meeting Approval	Sept. 9, 2013
Step 2	Debt Exclusion Vote	Sept. 17, 2013
Step 3	Complete purchase & sale	December 2013
Step 4	Move into new offices	By April 2014

Kevin McCormick, Selectman, and FISP Committee member presented the following report;

Summary

- The Three Rivers Building is better suited for our use than the current location
- Buying a suitable building is preferable to building one from a cost standpoint
- This process makes financial sense comparing rental costs to cost of ownership
- The cost to the average homeowner would be \$31 a year.
- This project would eliminate the future uncertainty which comes with renting space for our town offices
- The Town is actively seeking new space for the Senior Center and its programs

- Currently, West Boylston is the ONLY Community in Massachusetts renting space for our municipal offices on a permanent basis

Endorsements

- Facilities Implementation & Strategic Planning Committee
- Board of Selectmen
- Finance Committee
- Capital Investment Board
- Council On Aging
- Conservation Commission
- Economic Development Task Force
- Board of Health

Voting Information

- Town Meeting action is necessary to appropriate the funds and approve the acquisition of the property
- Town Election will be held on September 17, 2013 from 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. to approve the borrowing
- Both events are critical to the success of the project
- Absentee ballots are available now from the Town Clerk's office

Want more Information?

Facility Implementation & Strategic Planning Committee
Town of West Boylston
127 Hartwell Street, Ste. 100
West Boylston, MA 01583
508-835-3490

Email: lgaumond@westboylston-ma.gov

Thank you for your attention.
We are happy to answer any questions?

Questions:

Bernard Dow stated that he had reservations regarding the purchase of the building because he felt that the seniors would be left out in the cold. He stated that he had contacted a FISP Cmte. member prior to the meeting and was reassured that that was not the case. He thanked the committee for all of their hard work, and asked the town meeting floor to endorse the project.

Gail Radcliff- Council on Aging Member, stated that the senior center was looking into leasing space at 127 Hartwell St., and have contacted the owner of the building regarding a 3 year lease. The current lease runs out in April 2014.

Andrew Beardsley wanted to know who was doing the negotiations with the Three Rivers Building and what the current assessment vs. the sales price was. John Hadley stated that the assessed value of a property and what a person is willing to purchase a property for are two separate items. A comparison was made between what the Friendly's property was on Rt. 12. Assessed Value was \$347,600 and sold for \$700,000.



Peter Rotando addressed concerns about drainage issues and if the property was considered a wetland. FISP stated that that is not the case and that the Conservation Commission has verified that. The Cmte. also stated that when Chapter 90 money is available they will look into any issues that may arise.

Elizabeth Arnow inquired on the costs associated with the refurbishment of the building. FISP noted that the building is already divided into separate offices and that they were confident that the amount set aside would be adequate for the renovations required.

At 7:40 p.m. Moderator Meindersma called for the vote.

It was voted by a 2/3rds majority as declared by the Moderator under Chapter 39 § 15, with 2 dissenting votes, to appropriate the sum of \$2,000,000 in order to purchase the parcel of land with the building thereon located at 140 Worcester Street for use of Town Offices, and to rehabilitate, improve, furnish and equip said land and building for such use, and all costs incidental and related thereto, and, to meet this appropriation, authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to borrow such sum under G.L. Chapter 44, section 7 or any other enabling authority and to issue bonds or notes of the town therefor, provided, however, that the appropriation authorized hereunder shall be contingent upon approval by the voters of a ballot question to exclude the amounts required to pay for the bond or any notes issued for such project from the provisions of Proposition 2 1/2, so called, and further authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire said property, by gift, purchase, and/or eminent domain taking, on such terms as the Board of Selectmen deems appropriate.

Motion to dismiss the meeting by Kevin McCormick and second by Siobhan Bohson at 7:41 p.m.

Attest:

Kim D. Hopewell, Town Clerk