

Minutes
10/16/2018 6:30PM Budget Committee Minutes
Public Works Facility, Enfield, NH

Present: Nancy Smith, Eric Crate, Jean Patten, Erik Russell, John Kluge, Sam Eaton, Dominic Albanese

Excused: Mike Diehn, Shirley Green, Mark Eisener

Staff: Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth

Sam Eaton called the meeting to order at 6:34PM

Administrative:

- Review of minutes from Joint Meeting of Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee
 - Dominic needs to be changed to 'excused' on the minutes
 - Jean Patten made motion to accept minutes as printed, Erik Russell seconded, vote unanimous to accept minutes with edits. Dominic Albanese abstained as he was not present at the joint meeting.

Review of Revenue and Expenses:

Discussion of potential future uses, amenities, facilities, etc. at Mascoma Lakeside Park

The town is purchasing lots 44 and 46 by the underpass. We want to get public feedback on the town's vision for the park, uses etc. To that end we are going to various committees, townspersons, to solicit this feedback. We are very close to completing the purchase and within the next month or so we should have closed on the property. We are interested in this group's feedback as not only members of the budget committee but also as residents. The purchase price is 127,500 plus 1100 closing costs and some lawyers and transaction fees.

Ed McLaughlin from Mascoma Lakeside Park Committee requested that as committee members think about possible uses, please think about it in the context of a greenspace as well as a recreational space. Mr. McLaughlin stated that Enfield Village School has given feedback at one end of the age group, and they have also been reaching out to the 'more distinguished' members of the community to get a nice cross section of input.

Nancy Smith asked if there are any restrictions placed on the property by the state?

Ryan Aylesworth stated that it is cleared for recreational or educational use only, in large part the things it is already being used for, in addition to an environmental classroom. Development is restricted – only those structures that advance recreational or educational activities may be erected.

John Kluge stated that there are some parts that cannot be built on at all without an archaeological survey in advance due to the possibility of native American artifacts being in those areas.

Mr. Aylesworth explained that there's an old cellar hole that may not be disturbed without special permission from the state.

Mr. McLaughlin If we decided to build we would have to do a complete archaeological survey first.

Ms. Smith asked what about the access roads?

Mr. Aylesworth explained that the terms do specify that the town needs to leave the emergency bypass where it is unless it is discussed with the state. The gates have been put up to keep all except

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emergency vehicles out. If the town were to move it that would have to be discussed with the state first.

Mr. Kluge asked why one would want to open it up, to which Ms. Smith responded that it's easier to turn in there than on the other side of the overpass. Mr. Kluge suggested that a steady stream of traffic, as the site gained popularity, could become a hazard with cars and children and other pedestrian traffic.

Mr. McLaughlin described the property as clay-ey bottom with lots of swale grass, primarily a non-motorized boat launch. It is important to understand whether we want to continue to use it as a non-motorized boat launch or if we want to use it as a swimming area.

Mr. Kluge asked about the status of the people who had docks down there that were of the mind that they had land rights to this property.

Mr. Aylesworth explained that the town had an attorney who is also a railroad historian do an in-depth title examination and a professional historical search back to the 1800's. It has been determined, through great historical examination, that no one who has property in the area has an actual deeded right to the waterfront land. This does not seem like it will be a hurdle.

Mr. Albanese wondered if now is the time to be making more facilities for the town to upkeep as we already seem to have a facilities problem, upkeeping the facilities we currently have. We need to be thoughtful about how we proceed.

Ms. Patten agreed that while she is all for doing this sort of building, especially for educational type things, the wading area for young children sounds like a safety burden she is not certain the town should take on. She also feels wary of building a pavilion that would require upkeep and simpler is better. It may not be good to keep adding and adding when people are stretched in areas already.

Ms. Smith asked if the town would be responsible for maintenance? Mr. Aylesworth replied that the town would be responsible as it is a town owned property. The trust fund for the lake has been set up and non-municipal funds that go into this trust may be used in one of three ways:

- Acquisition, which will become moot once purchase is complete
- Capital improvements, e.g. grant match funding
- Ongoing maintenance and upkeep/operations
- Separate from this, it is currently approximately \$4000/year to keep the park the way it is at this time with expenses such as chemical toilets, mowing, mulching and similar. This is sustained by monies pledged by Mascoma Sailing club at \$2,000/year for the next 5 years, and the Enfield Village Association who has pledged the same.

Mr. Eaton asked about the parking capacity, which is approximately 30 cars, or two rows of 15 cars, on paper.

Mr. Kluge asked if we are discussing a gazebo or pavilion that is open vs. a 4-season structure?

Mr. Aylesworth stated that he has met with DPW, Police, fire, and Ambulance and they discussed open air covered area, plus an enclosed place with a fireplace or firepit both indoor and outdoor. These

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groups like the idea of that, and also shied away from a 4-season heated space. There is a possibility for a 4-season space but upkeep and cost could present challenges.

Mr. Kluge stated that somewhere that is relatively enclosed at night is an invitation to problems, and police will have to maintain a constant presence.

Ms. Patton stated that she has seen what has happened right down town at Huse Park, there is always trouble, there is always kids hanging out, they've got their skateboards going up over the picnic tables.

For skating in the winter, we'd need a rug, benches, maybe an outdoor fire pit.

A canoe storage option could be a good possibility and revenue generating. In the summer it would be nice for people to have access to a hose to wash off their dogs after a swim.

The plans must include a pavilion and the grant money must be used in a year. We do not have to raise the full \$135,000, the grant will match whatever we raise.

Mr. Albanese stated that we should be thoughtful about how we proceed, taking into account that we already have a beach that the town is supporting, walk slowly, just because we received a grant is not a reason to build.

Mr. McLaughlin explained that the library group stated that the ability to hold educational activities in this area is important, and rain or shine is also important. We are buying a facility that directly impacts the town, it is lakeside, right by the rail trail, and is accessible by foot from the downtown area. Another possibility is a boardwalk explaining what the different natural features in swampier parts of this area are. This area is positioned uniquely for the town and it is an asset to the town.

We could put some money from the grant into a trust fund or endowment fund and use the proceeds to fund upkeep and operations costs.

The design proposal does not have to be submitted prior to building, but the granting body will likely have a kick off meeting, mid-point check in, and close out meeting. If we have any changes it is wise to let them know as soon as possible. As this is federal monies, they are likely to be pretty strict about what the money is used for. We can leave money on the table if we choose to. The money could be used for tables and benches etc., perhaps, if they were housed within the pavilion.

Mr. Kluge stated that a solid 4 walled structure doesn't fit in with the area. Perhaps a more attractive version of Huse Park.

Mr. McLaughlin asked that the group now think about how to involve the school in the activities that would take place in the pavilion area.

Mr. Russel stated that it is likely too long for the children to walk to the lake for a program, but the natural science, 4 winds program will possibly use it. The time constraint would likely be too much for students during the school day.

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Regarding bathrooms for the facility, it was discussed that the port-a-potties from Stearns are more than sufficient. There may be some design preferences regarding a way to make the port-a-potties look less like a port-a-potties, but it seemed like that was the most straightforward solution. Composting toilets may be too time intensive, and indoor plumbing is a complex and expensive direction in which we probably do not want to go. In the winter, snowmobilers may make use of these quite a bit as well which would be good.

Mr. Aylesworth stated that no matter what we decide now, it is important to site the pavilion in such a way that we leave ourselves open to expansion in the future. We may want to leave this open for DHMC retreat meetings as a revenue stream for the town. This idea was quickly negated by the majority of committee members as too complex an undertaking at this time and are largely skeptical that it would be a draw for that crowd or that we desire to maintain it at a level that would attract this activity.

An open air, simple gazebo with a simple heat source for the winter is the takeaway from this group.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that crossing 4A to get to Shakoma beach is a large concern for families with children, so please ensure this issue remains in conversations going forward.

Mr. Aylesworth stated that mucky or murky water does not stop children from swimming, and Mr. McLaughlin concurred that children use the area no matter what.

Revenue/Expense YTD report

Mr. Aylesworth updated the group with regard to budget appropriation.

- There was an inaccurate \$95,000 expense. This is corrected later in the report. We are currently 3% ahead of where we want to be, which is a good thing.
- We have \$320,000 that will be transferred to CIP capital reserve at the end of the year. Expenditures-wise, we are doing pretty well.
- We want to grow our fund balance to a high six figure balance, which is a long way from where we are now, but we are working on it.
- Ambulance revenue is at 68% of goal, we'd like to be at 80% of goal, but motor vehicle registrations are on track to exceed projections.

Mr. Kluge asked to confirm that the handwritten notes on the documents were 'late-breaking' budget news, not errors.

Ambulance and recreation revenue are lagging behind. We lost a lot of revenue to camps in Canaan this summer. With regard to the ambulance, a meeting is being scheduled to go over bookkeeping 'soup to nuts'. More transparency in reporting, recordkeeping and billing will be required going forward to ensure that we are being paid for all of the rides that are given. At this time we have collected 35% of the revenue that we should have, but we need to figure out why this is occurring and where the breakdown is.

Mr. Kluge suggested having an outside party come in to look at the billing processes.

Ms. Patten asked what the 'franchise fees' are, Mr. Aylesworth explained that they are Comcast fees.

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Mr. Aylesworth commented on the steep sewer increase to correct the undercharging in the past.

Mr. Aylesworth also commented on the water billing structure, stating that usage rate water meter charges work out to be similar to the alternative billing structure/higher fixed rate for those who have multiple units.

Discussion of pending strategic governance content to be published on the town website:

This is now on the website but has not been publicized yet. An advisory group has been convened to get input, feedback and shared ownership. There is a consensus that we need to be sure people are familiar with what we have done and what we are trying to do...we need to give people context for what they are weighing in on. To that end we will go to the listserv and ask for ideas on how to reach out to the demographics that are currently being missed in our communication strategy.

Mr. Albanese stated that we are currently discussing how to involve the community, possibly hanging back a little in 2019 and strategize how to move forward before we actually do – in a 5-year budgeting process starting next spring. A structure similar to the town manager search would be ideal, perhaps Ryan could get in front of some of the groups identified to discuss strategic governance with them. An informational sheet given out at the November election or perhaps a questionnaire to solicit opinions at town meetings would be helpful.

Mr. Crate suggested using the public access channel, or educational youtube videos put together by Ryan.

Ms. Smith suggested that we put together something that will make people answer the questions “What is *your* vision for our town?” and remain mindful that we are looking for visions, not plans. Also, putting together a one-pager in the three weeks before the election could be challenging.

Other business:

Ms. Patton informed the committee that 56 Main is closing on Saturday.

Mr. Aylesworth requested that the members of the committee would send him individual feedback regarding website structure, public outreach, or anything else that has been discussed, as he has not vetted all of the proposed budgets yet.

Naming of committee liaisons:

Nancy Smith – Police
Eric Crate – Public Works
Domenic Albanese – Planning and Zoning, Building Inspection
Jean Patton – Ambulance
Shirley – Administration
Sam Eaton – Recreation
Erik Russell – Library
Mike – Fire

Mr. Aylesworth requested that the members of this committee please cc him on all liaison meeting scheduling. It would be good to have initial meetings before next budget committee meeting. Only one organization took

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up our offer to come speak to their respective committee. Just because a budget request is in here does not mean that it has been granted.

**Next Meeting –
Thursday November 15th at 6:30 pm**

Upcoming Meetings (Generally meetings are at 6:30PM in the DPW Conference Room):

- Tuesday, November 27th
- Tuesday, December 4th
- Saturday, December 15th
- Tuesday, December 18th

At 8:20 pm Sam moved to close the meeting, hearing no objection it was closed.