

**TOWN OF ENFIELD
MUNICIPAL FACILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 25, 2019

Present: Phil Shipman, Rob West, Maynard Southard, Shirley Green, Jean Patten, Ryan Aylesworth

Guests: Julia Griffin, Town Manager of Hanover; Martin McMillan, Fire Chief; Charlie Dennis, Chief of Police; Douglas Hackett, Communications Coordinator

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM.

There were no draft minutes available to approve. The Committee proceeded to begin the meeting by traveling to Hanover to visit the Town Offices and the Public Safety Facility.

The Committee met with Ms. Griffin, Hanover Town Manager, for a tour of the municipal offices building located at 41 South Main Street. The building is of historical significance because it was the former station for the Hanover Fire Department and the Hanover Police Department. The district court used to operate out of the meeting room located on the second floor. The building has been renovated to accommodate the needs of the town offices as best as it can. It is not ideal, but it works. Major budget commitments have gone towards building a Community Center, making improvements to the Public Safety Building, and making improvements to the Public Works facilities. Town Hall has had some remodeling and repartitioning to help accommodate office needs, but these have been done in somewhat incremental fashion and there have not been any expansion or major redesign projects.

There are currently 19 staff working in the building, which spans three floors (including the finished basement). There are a total of 155 full time town employees, with an additional 60-70 seasonal positions. The population is estimated to be around 7,000 people; with an increase to 11,250 with Dartmouth students when school is in session. Ms. Griffin notes that many people come to Hanover for jobs related to the college or the hospital.

The first floor of the building has an entryway from the main street walkway. The first-floor entryway hosts as much of the customer service focused needs as possible – such as the tax collector, car and voter registrations, utility payments, the Assessing Department, a public notary, and parking enforcement.

There are minor accessibility issues within the first floor as stairs had to be installed to adapt the building for use as office space. There is not enough room to make a ramp inside, so they installed a ramp on the outside of the building to an external door which can be accessed by the public to reach the elevators. The Finance Office, Administrative Services, and the Town Manager's Office are also located on the first level.

The building did not have any air conditioning or air circulation system, so in the winter of 2018 a special project was completed to install cassettes and mini-split air systems throughout the building. After the project was completed there was a noticeable decrease in fuel oil consumption. Other improvements to energy efficiency have included window replacements, insulation updates, and solar panels installed on the roof of the building. The solar panels produce roughly 16 kilowatts of energy.

The second level holds the Planning, Zoning and Code offices, which include space for the Zoning Administrator, the Building Inspector, a Planner and Senior Planner, an Administrative Assistant, and the Public Health division. The Board of Selectmen meeting room is also located on the second floor.

The Planning and Zoning office, located on the second floor, is filled to maximum capacity. The office has large filing cabinets full of documents which block visibility and accessibility in the space.

- The Committee discussed whether it was in the best interest to have the Planning and Zoning offices located with the Enfield Town Offices and the convenience or hinderances of having the Enfield Planning and Zoning located at the Department of Public Works.

Prior to the Town Offices being moved into the building, the Board Room on the second floor was utilized for the District Court. The room is currently used for meetings three to four nights per week. The seating available is adequate to fit community members that attend Board of Selectmen meetings, and is typically full to capacity for major Planning and Zoning meetings. If necessary, meetings can be moved to a local school auditorium to accommodate more attendees. The room includes a large C shaped desk for board member seating, a smart board, a sound system, and cameras provided by CATV, as well as seating for over twenty community members.

Building Details:

- The building has five vaults, which are excessive for the actual needs of the town offices; however, it is cost prohibitive to remove them.
- The building has carpet tiles throughout the building. The tiles were purchased on sale and surplus was purchased so that small sections can be replaced when/if necessary.
- There has been a debate on replacing the oil furnace with a pellet system as a back up to the recently updated air systems.

The basement included:

- the staff break room
- a rear exit to the parking area (locked to public access)
- storage for parking meter equipment and supplies
- Elevator access
- Restrooms
- A meeting room for internal use (heavily utilized)
- A room with work desks that includes space for the part time welfare advisor and their files; it also serves as voter information storage
- Office space for the IT department – including two work stations and a large walk in closet space for servers
- A large back room for document storage
 - Ms. Griffin noted that it is a slow process to digitize files for the town, it is being put in the budget to purchase a digitizer for the plans to assist with the space and storage issues
 - Records back to the 19th century are on file and according to current laws must be kept as permanent records
 - There was a small area off the back of the room that included more document storage as well as additional server equipment

Ms. Griffin noted that there was particular concern for having document storage and IT equipment in the basement as they were at risk for flooding damage

Throughout the tour, Ms. Griffin noted that having meeting spaces or ‘huddle space’ was important to the functions of each department.

It was noted there were not many closets or storage areas in the building. The Committee inquired if there was sufficient storage in the building. Ms. Griffin noted that the current space offered was adequate and

that storage requires an ongoing effort to process and cull to remain organized. The biggest issue with storage was for the files related to the Planning and Zoning offices. She noted that cold storage was available at another municipal building and was utilized for inactive human resource records, inactive planning and zoning files, and inactive legal files.

Municipal facilities for the town include: the Howe Library, the Community Center, the Public Safety Complex, DPW/Highway Facility, the Water Works facility, Town Hall, a small library in Etna, and a small section of senior housing which is to be sold to Twin Pines Housing Trust. Twin Pines will be building a new structure for senior housing and current tenants will be moved into the new building. The old building will then be torn down and rebuilt to provide additional senior housing.

The Howe Library building is owned by the Howe Library Corporation and the town is responsible for the operating budget and staff. The corporation also assists with projects that are outside of the operational budget such as computer purchases, furniture replacement, and web site development.

There is \$50,000 that is budgeted annually for energy efficiency upgrades to all municipal buildings. Current priorities include projects for the public safety building (reinsulate, replacing siding and windows, and upgrading the roof so it can hold solar panels) as well as adding mini-splits to the police areas of the Public Safety building and the Community Center. The wastewater treatment plant recently added solar panels that produce 70 kilowatts of energy, which offsets 80% of its energy usage. In accordance with industry best practices, the town maintains an undesignated fund balance equivalent to approximately 17% of its general operating budget. Undesignated fund balance is often used to offset the cost of more expensive one-time facility improvement projects.

The Committee then moved the meeting to the Public Safety Complex located at 48 Lyme Road.

Building History:

The building was built to house the fire department in the 1960's. An addition was completed in the 1980's to add the police department. The two departments had been previously co-located in the building that the Town Offices now occupy. The police department operated out of the Main Street location until 80's when the addition to the Fire Department was completed.

The Committee met with Chief McMillan for a tour of the fire department.

The Committee discussed the determination for the site that was chose to build the property and what details are important in the decision-making process. Chief McMillan noted that response times may assist in judging the best location. The ideal situation is out the door in one minute and on the scene within three minutes. While this is not always possible, it can help frame the importance of location and relativity to the town operations. Staff commutes for response times could also be another consideration. Accessibility by the public is also important in that you want interactions with community members to be open and welcoming. The property should also be well lit and easy to find to assist in public visibility.

The apparatus belonging to the fire department had three through and through bays housing fire engines, a ladder truck, and two ambulances. Chief McMillan noted that having the equipment on a regular maintenance schedule helps them last longer. Mechanics that work for the town perform the minor work in house; however outside contractors are utilized to test the equipment or perform major repairs such as replacing the springs on the ladder truck. There is also a shop exhaust system installed on the apparatus floor for each vehicle. In addition to the engines and ambulances, the fire department also owns a ranger, a four-wheeler, a snow mobile, and a hovercraft (donation that was retrofitted and updated) to use on ice.

A shed roof was added to a section on the back of the building to allow for protective storage of the items; it was built so that a bay door could be added in the future to close it off.

There is some storage available over the bays and it is utilized for records. They are trying to transition to an electronic system. Cold storage is utilized for additional paperwork.

The first floor of the department has two offices, one belongs to the chief and one is shared by four officers in charge of maintenance, training, communication, or EMS. All of the firefighters are cross trained as advanced EMTs or paramedics. There are five to seven people on duty at all times, and two rigs are run before calling in assistance from neighboring towns. The current work flow is scheduled to have specific groupings of staff assigned to shifts together. This structure allows for a balance of leadership on each shift between Captains, Lieutenants, and firefighters, and is supplemented with on-call staff. The fire department currently employs 23 full time staff, with a 50/50 split of trained paramedics and AEMTs.

Chief McMillan supports the fire-based EMS operation based off of their ratio to calls on emergency versus fire. If their call focus shifted to be heavier on the fire side then the current structure may not work as effectively and may require focus on separate response facilitation.

The building also has a large 25 square foot training room that can host trainings for the fire and/or police department.

The second floor of the fire department houses a recreation room, a full kitchen, seven bunk rooms, one locker room with an additional large closet space for formal uniforms, one bathroom with shower facilities, and an exercise room that is shared with the police department. There is also a laundry room. The second floor does not have elevator access which can make things like stocking the kitchen or replacing furniture and equipment particularly difficult. It is also not handicap accessible.

Feedback:

- Make a plan that allows for additions to be made in the future
- Take into consideration the room for growth in staff; particularly with providing facilities such as unisex bathrooms, handicapped accessibility, and split male/female facilities (locker rooms, bunk rooms).
- Chief McMillan noted that it would be ideal to design the washing machine units to be on the apparatus floor and not on the second floor which requires bringing contaminated materials through the building.
- Be aware of clearance for overhead doors – particularly if ladder trucks are added to the fleet as they require a higher clearance.

The Committee then met with Chief Dennis and Mr. Hackett for a tour of the police department.

Dispatch is located in the center of the police department, including three dispatch stations and an IT closet. In 2002 the dispatch area needed to expand and outgrew the office space that had originally been built to house it, so walls were knocked out to open the space. Structural changes such as the need for air conditioning as well as increased need for computer utilization has been difficult to adapt to.

There is a bathroom located within the dispatch center which is not ideal (privacy and noise issues).

There is also a juvenile female cell that was put in just outside of the dispatch room to accommodate for sight/sound separation standards; however, sounds from perpetrators in the cell can be disruptive to dispatch operations.

A hallway from dispatch leads past the juvenile cell to the cell block area. Cell blocks have cameras and an external flushing mechanism for the cell block toilets. The cells are not typically utilized for extended periods of time. The booking room is located just beyond the cells and is attached to the one-car sally port.

Dispatch is the only one with access to open the door for the sally port, but there is a button located inside so anyone can close it. Lock boxes are located on the wall entering the booking room to store firearms. There is also a discharge device for clearing firearms before entering the building.

Down the hall from the cell blocks there is a kitchen, and office space for an investigator, as well as two work stations and a briefing room. A hallway then leads to offices for prosecution and records, an interview room with video and sound recording equipment (access to the back room is through the prosecution and records office), and a library that is equipped with a television screen, a microphone, and internet access for webinars or virtual meetings. Chief Dennis has an office at the end of the hallway which then leads back out to the lobby area. There is also a work office which can be used as an informal meeting space, and separate office holding AFIS equipment. Mr. Hackett noted that the AFIS equipment is heavily utilized for employment purposes by local schools hospitals, and Peace corps. Because of the heavy utilization, it is ideal to have this located near the front lobby so as to avoid bringing the public back into the booking area. There is video surveillance in the room.

The Committee inquired if the space fit the needs of the department. Mr. Hackett noted that they are pushing the use and capacity, including sharing offices where necessary. Some areas have been renovated to make better accommodations – including installing walls to create a computer work station and the briefing room near the back entrance of the building.

Three janitors and a buildings department help maintain the police facilities. All five personnel are town employees. The police also utilize a dry-cleaning service for their uniforms.

There is no elevator located between the first and second level of the police side which requires everything to be carried upstairs. This also hinders accessibility for the ‘soft interview’ room as well as the EOC room.

The second floor also had:

- A ‘soft interview’ room
- A large room which can be utilized for training or as EOC room. There is a small side room off of it that can be used for smaller subgroup meetings as well.
- A room for Munitions storage
- Evidence lockers
- Evidence storage – including refrigeration for blood/urine/sexual assault kits as well as shelving and bins for evidence after it has been recorded. Ventilation is a necessary upgrade for this space.
- A small closet sized area for computer and communications infrastructure
- Men’s and women’s locker rooms. (purposely built in more women’s locker room space to allow for future growth).
- The utility and mechanical room
 - The air handler and boiler are located on 2nd floor
 - There used to be a generator for the building in the space, but it caught on fire and was removed

The architect that built the addition in the 80’s designed many odd shaped rooms which hinders utilization – ex. walls and closets that have awkward angles, steps located in 2nd floor areas such as evidence room and mechanical room making for awkward access and tripping hazards, etc.

Notable details:

- Lack of parking space is an issue
- A garage is currently being added for the police department to store their cruisers. Some equipment is sensitive to low temperatures, AED's must be brought in from the cruisers and computers have difficulty turning on in the winter months. Having to clear snow and ice from vehicles also hinders the efficiency of response time. Without a garage the vehicles are also exposed to the possibility of vandalism – which has happened in the past.
- Both chiefs agree that having the emergency operations co-located is of benefit to the town municipalities and the community
- The budget is being set to replace the roof and have it fitted to house solar panels.
- The building is equipped with sprinklers, but it is an old system and sometimes there are issues with leaks.
- The departments rely on doing small projects in the building each year as opposed to performing a full renovation.
- The fire department maintains the internal upkeep on their own; the police department utilizes town maintenance employees for their portion of the facilities.
- Police and fire both agreed that sharing common needs such as beds, a training room, and shower facilities is an asset to municipal functions and budgets
- The link between fire and police has helped mend fences and increase the cohesiveness of emergency response
- Adaptations have been necessary to adjust to needs such as running CAT 5 cable to support the IT infrastructure as well as adding electrical outlets and computer jacks to allow for more work stations to be accommodated.
- Mr. Hackett stated: "Don't start small and hope it lasts."
- Think about daily activity and flow of utilization– small things such as a place for employees to hang coats, and bigger things like how booking and cell blocks integrate with inner offices, etc.

After the completion of the tour, Mr. Aylesworth noted he would be sending an email to Committee members with regard to site visits scheduled for Monday July 29th.

Mr. Aylesworth motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Patten seconded. All committee members were in favor (6-0).

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 pm.