

**TOWN OF KENSINGTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
January 20, 2014
APPROVED FEBRUARY 3, 2014**

In attendance: Russell Perry and Scott Lowell were in attendance. Russell called the meeting to order at 7:02pm. Kevin joined at 7:15pm.

***This meeting was not taped. With the change in location and equipment limitations, on April 2, 2012 the selectmen made a decision to discontinue tape recording the meetings as it is not required by state statute.**

2014 BOND PUBLIC HEARING-

Russell made a motion to open the public hearing at 7:03pm seconded by Scott with both in favor.

Members present from the building committee: Stefanie Baker, Chief Sielicki, Janet Bunnell, Robert Gustafson, and Glenn Ritter. Peter Merrill and Maggi Kilcoyne were in the audience.

Not in attendance: Conrad Delisio, Bruce Cilley, Dan Lowry, Peter Fowler, Irene Greenberg, Jeffrey Worthen.

Russell read the anticipated warrant article as follows and advised all unnecessary spending in the final quarter of 2013 was placed on hold in anticipation of this article.

To see if the municipality will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,200,000 (one million, two hundred thousand dollars) for the construction and original equipping of a new Police/Emergency Management/Town Office building, and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$770,000 (seven hundred seventy thousand dollars) of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33) and to authorize the municipal officials to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon; furthermore, to authorize the use of \$130,000 (one hundred thirty thousand dollars) from the unassigned fund balance, with an additional amount of \$300,000 (three hundred thousand dollars) to come from donations. The selectmen recommend this appropriation. 3/5 ballot vote required

Glenn Ritter, a committee member, provided a PowerPoint presentation for the attendees which will also be posted on the town's website.

He mentioned the committee is comprised of resident volunteers that signed up when the Board of Selectmen asked for volunteers. Several of the volunteers are builders and Janet Raslavicus was asked for her expertise to help review the design of the building to ensure the best possible use of the space. They were tasked with finding an idea for the police department and emergency management, which is now housed at the fire department, as well as promoting and educating the public. They reviewed space needs and toured different police departments to get an idea of the space needs and structure. After extensive review they determined this proposed

design is the best value to the town and taxpayers and at the last minute decided to include the town offices since they are currently in a separate building.

Russell discussed the estimated tax impact on a project like this. The bond lenders provided different rates based on the term of the bond for the \$770k needed. If we choose to go with a 25 year bond, the payment will be reduced each year. The first three years average payment would be \$70k, which at the current tax rate is \$.24 per thousand dollar valuation which would equal \$72 per year on an average property. The proposed budget has the temporary trailers and rent included. With the proposed budget for \$56k for larger trailers and rent, the estimated tax impact would be \$.19/1000 which is \$57/year on a property value of 300k (\$317k is the mean). The difference is .05 /1000 which is \$15/year (for a \$300k property) on what we'd be paying vs. the cost of the bond for a building we would own. The payment will reduce each year from approximately \$70k to 36k for the final year on a 25 year bond.

Glenn reviewed why we need a new building:

- PD doesn't have bathrooms or running water which many people aren't aware of
- The trailers aren't handicapped accessible
- There isn't any storage space for weapons, documents and evidence. Some evidence needs to be refrigerated.
- Currently have offsite storage units so they need to leave town to access it and it should be stored in house.
- The town offices don't have adequate space or storage currently.
- The new building would be centrally located behind where PD trailers are currently placed. The existing driveway and parking lot would remain the same.
- The current town hall could still be suited for a meeting hall.
- We are wasting money on leases, trailers and storage facilities
- Future costs of renting and leasing will increase but the bond payments will decrease each year.
- Bond rates are now at an all-time low.
- The chosen site is town owned land.
- We can reduce utility costs with an energy star green building.

Russell also explained we'd be eligible for some grants such as one for emergency management which has a 50% match up to \$36k.

Since the offices moved out of the building in December 2009, the cost for leasing, rentals and other expenses were \$75k for the police department and \$45k for the town offices which are spaces we don't own and don't receive any equity. Russell stated they don't want to spend money but want a long term permanent solution.

The audience was asked if they had any questions:

Don Johnson asked if the committee had any quotes from builders which should be obtained before a warrant article or bond is proposed. He also asked if there were any caveats with the donations. He's also concerned the costs can run over the allotted amount. Glenn is confident

we can remain within the budget. They do not have any bids yet, but talked to a lot of builders (and several committee members are builders) who came back a little less than what we're proposing. There is a cushion in the rough numbers which they proposed at \$120-\$140/sqft. They also have the option to change the design if that's necessary. There aren't any restrictions on the donation.

Dawn Frost asked what the overall cost was for the building. It is \$1.2M of which \$300k has been confirmed as donations, \$130k will be used from the unreserved fund balance which leaves \$770k that we need to raise with a bond.

Don Johnson asked why money was not spent from the budget but our taxes increased. Russell let him know that during the last 5-6 years the Board voted to use the fund balance to keep the tax rate steady. This past year they did not use any funds to offset the increased tax rate knowing this warrant article was coming. Most of the savings in the budget was due to a mild winter and the Board froze spending in the final quarter of the year.

Keith Johnson asked what the ecological impact is from using the site. Glenn advised there are mapped wetlands because of the pond; however there will not be any impact whatsoever. They will use a silt fence and the building meets the setbacks. He confirmed a well can also be drilled on site.

Leslie Artigliere stated she doesn't think it's a good time to ask for this because of the increase in taxes last year. She thinks we could find another building or a smaller building to house the PD. Russell let her know she has valid concerns and we all pay taxes and all people who came to help the main reason was tax concerns. Right now the PD is in a trailer with no running water and we have an obligation to provide them a facility. He wishes there were other options but there aren't a lot of commercial buildings in town and renting or leasing costs will not decrease. We now have four separate storage facilities and our goal is to get them to a point where they have a building to operate out of and it's been a long time and it's embarrassing we've made them work in those conditions.

Most of the committee has gone over the size, specs and comparisons and went through every aspect and dialed it back. There's a lot of stuff that we never had and should've had. They aren't asking for more than is needed, just a basic functioning building for a PD.

Brad Brown asked where the septic system will be placed. Chief Sielicki showed where it will be on the map on the left hand side of parking lot.

Don Johnson stated if the article doesn't pass, they can add bathrooms and septic to the trailers. The cost to setup and rental of trailers is in the proposed budget. We have a few bids and will try to negotiate the best price. The cost to lease trailers providing adequate space on site is almost as much as buying new.

Peter Merrill inquired about the trailers. The projected cost includes bathrooms and running water. There will be two double wide trailers which is roughly the square footage of the area in the town hall they were using. Chief also stated they will need permission from the state and

federal agencies to place two double wide trailers in the parking lot. They may need to place them behind the old town hall again. Kevin stated we're going to need to rent more storage space for the town offices for their records.

Matt Smith asked if a study was done to have a joint PD with another town. Chief reported many towns looked into it and found out most towns lose local control and they don't have as much service. There is currently only one instance of it in the state that have done it but ended up hiring many part time officers afterwards. Matt also asked if the old building will ever be useful again. Russell stated that they'd like to use it for a meeting hall, but this will be addressed later on in meeting.

Mike Schwotzer noted on page 2 of 6 in the budget we spent \$13,800 on the trailers in 2013. There is an increase of \$40k which will already impact the tax rate to get the double wide trailers. Therefore if warrant article passes, they won't need the \$40k and the Board should highlight this in their analysis- if the article passes, they won't need the double wide trailers.

Peter Merrill inquired if the Board looked into purchasing the double wide trailers instead of leasing them. Russell stated we did not consider buying trailers as a viable option and would not have had time to put together information for a warrant article to purchase trailers. The ideal situation isn't to purchase trailers and leasing them is expensive. Kevin stated to make a trailer permanent there are many more expenses.

Wendy Berry asked if we looked at the tax impact on the operating expenses and maintenance costs. Russell stated we will probably do better on utilities and certainly there will be maintenance expenses, which is why we're here in the first place, with the old town hall building and this building will have to be properly maintained.

Don Johnson asked if the costs include all of the necessary furnishings. The PD has all of their necessary furnishings and has some in storage. He also asked if requirements for new buildings are all included. Chief stated there aren't any jail cells since they are expensive and a liability and they have access to Brentwood, but would do the booking here.

Keith Johnson asked if the furniture in the two trailers will furnish the structure, Chief reported some of the grant money will assist with furnishing for emergency management, the community room and electronics.

Robin Johnson asked the Board to clarify why is it a problem to place trailers in the parking lot, but they aren't building there. Chief stated the parking lot has to remain and keep parking spaces there. The building would be fifteen feet from the edge of the parking lot. There's a drainage swale that they didn't want to obstruct and they didn't do significant site work for temporary trailers.

Dawn Frost who works in the town offices wasn't aware her office was part of plan. Russell advised they didn't decide that until last week. As they were looking at the design and projected costs they started talking to the architects it became apparent to get the full value for the new construction and to ask for a significant amount of money, the committee thought it was better to

include it. She asked if we end up leasing double wide trailers, would they tie into the town hall septic and are these costs including in the budget. The budgeted costs would include rental but there would still be tie in costs which aren't included. These fees in the budget are for the lease.

The total square footage of finished office space in the design is approximately 4,000 sq. ft. The PD and Emergency Management and town offices are 3300 sq. ft on the first floor level. PD is 2,300sqft and the Town & EM 1,792sqft.

Clarissa Parsons asked if we will still use the town hall. Russell responded we would anticipate it still being a meeting hall without any town offices in the basement.

Peter Merrill asked if it was built in budget to have meetings in town hall? No, the meetings will still be held at the school until the building is ready. The drainage and water problems need to be remediated in the old town hall first.

Dawn Frost asked if the warrant article passes, where will the police department be located until the building is complete. They will remain in the existing trailer but may need to move across street or down further from where they are. They will remain in the trailer for another year knowing there is a solution.

Leslie Artigliere asked if there is another smaller option of the building. Glenn said the architect and designers met and there is a minimum amount of space that is now needed, and other than shrinking the lobby, they need both exits with staircases and there are minimal things to remove while still maintaining a functional PD and office space. Kevin advised we are going to lose our officers if we don't provide them with an adequate work place. They can go to other towns for more money but they like our town, but there is a limitation on how long they can put up with not having a building. He asked if anyone would like to have to go to another building to use a bathroom. The cost to retrain new officers would exceed these costs. Glenn said to keep them working and doing what they do, \$15-\$20 a year works for him.

Randy Wood asked if they took into consideration if the community grows. Russell said it hasn't grown significantly in the last ten years and they don't anticipate it, but they do have land they could expand and it's adequate for the officers they have now. Chief stated the International Police Chief Association and the FBI recommends 1.2 officers per 500 people and we are where we should be. If there's another development or commercial base they could add another officer but this building should last fifty years.

Russell stated there will be more information sessions between now and the deliberative session with opportunities for people to ask more questions so they can make an informed decision and anyone can send questions to the Board.

Richard Elwell asked if the plans can be downsized and distributed to people. They will be posted on the website.

Russell made a motion to adjourn the bond public hearing at 8:00pm, seconded by Kevin with all in favor.

2014 2nd PROPOSED BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING-

Russell opened the budget public hearing at 8:05pm seconded by Scott with all in favor. He reviewed the changes made to the budget which were discussed at the last hearing and noted there is a 3% increase from last year but it is less than the default budget. These warrant articles were discussed:

- New Building listed as \$800k but it will be adjusted to \$770k
- Fire truck lease \$60,740
- Meals on wheels \$696
- Richie MacFarland Center \$1,500
- Town Hall drainage \$52,000

The total proposed budget with warrant articles total \$914k. Three of these articles were resident petitioned. No residents were present to answer questions.

Kevin and the Board unanimously agreed to include an article for \$2,000 to continue maintenance on the Grange Hall.

Matt Smith had questions regarding the warrant article for \$52k to confirm it is for the existing town hall. Peter Merrill advised the article can be spent up to that amount and the \$52k would be earmarked for that purpose. Russell said that he would have to look into the wording to confirm if they had to raise the entire 52k if less was required.

Wendy Berry asked for an update on the town hall warrant article from last year. She hasn't seen any updates on their Facebook page. The Board let her know the money was appropriated last year and since the cost exceeded the warrant article the petitioners secured a grant and obtained donations for the additional amount.

Richard Elwell stated the reason the new petitioned warrant article was submitted was because it appeared the Board of Selectmen was not going to be addressing the drainage issue this year and they didn't want to wait another year to fix the problem. Russell responded it could've been a town sponsored article had there been any conversations with the Friends of the Town Hall. Richard thought from a conversation at a previous meeting if there was going to be an article, the Friends would need to petition it. Russell clarified he stated it wasn't in the budget so if it was done, it would need to be done by warrant article, not that it had to come from the Friends. The Board offered to work with the Friends but they didn't take them up on it. Kevin advised since taxes increased last year and they can only deal with funding for priority items they can only do so much. Russell advised there are funds in building maintenance line item. Peter Merrill asked if the warrant article does not pass, would the Board work on the drainage this year. Russell stated they want to address the water problem as the first step.

The Board clarified for Linda Blood the reason we received petitioned social service requests again.

The Board is hoping once the drainage is fixed it will get us one step closer to using the building again. People have expressed ideas for a community center and they'd like to get residents involved in discussing possible usages.

There were no other questions.

Russell made a motion to close the public hearing at 8:25pm, seconded by Kevin with all in favor.

Russell made a motion to start the regular session of the selectmen's meeting at 8:30pm, seconded by Kevin with all in favor.

CITIZEN'S FORUM-

DEPARTMENT HEADS:

Police Department- Chief Sielicki did not have anything to report.

Fire Department- Chief Leblanc presented paperwork for three new probationary members of the fire department:

Russell made a motion to appoint Norman Deboisbriand, Holly McCann, and Katelyn Ahearn as probationary members of the fire department, seconded by Scott with all favor.

Building Inspector-Mark Sikorski was not in attendance.

Road Manager- Dave Buxton was not in attendance.

Emergency Management-Robert Gustafson reported he attended the Seacoast Preparedness meeting and the Seabrook quarterly meeting on January 8th.

Assessing Clerk- Kathleen Felch reported the following:

- She asked the Board to sign the monthly reimbursements for emergency management and the library until March when the appropriations are finalized.
- Barn preservation process. She is anticipating fourteen renewals that Avitar will need to inspect. She will obtain a cost from Avitar. She is not expecting any new applications.

Tax Collector- Carlene Wiggin did not have anything to report.

Town Clerk- Dawn Frost reported:

- She asked if the Board would hold a staff meeting to discuss the building plans if they are approved.
- Pam has been working with the new software and it's online now. The links can be found on her page of the website to register automobiles, dogs and vital records requests.
- She asked permission to have two separate petty cash accounts, one for her and one for Pam. She confirmed it is audited annually. Russell made a motion to approve her request, seconded by Kevin with all in favor.

Recreation Department- Members were not in attendance.

Conservation Commission- Members were not in attendance.

Sawyer Kensington Trust- Bruce Cilley was not in attendance however Russell reported The Farmstand donated funds to the Trust for \$14,900. These funds are donated directly to the Trust and uses for the funds are still to be determined.

NEW BUSINESS:

OLD BUSINESS

Administrative Assistant:

- **Health Officer Update-** Russell was added to the contact information for the State.
- **Intersection of Routes 150/108-** NHDOT responded they would try to keep the unpaved area plowed, however it may not be done in a timely manner. Lynne spoke to a member of the RPC and they advised asking the NHDOT to add the paving to their list of short term future projects.
- **Senate Bill 354-** There is a legislative bill to propose changes to redefine agritourism.
- **Donations to the Friends of the Town Hall-** Lynne will send acknowledgement letters to all who donated.

Bills & Mail- Bills were approved and signed. Russell made a motion to approve the bill from Mark Sikorski pending Lynne's review, seconded by Kevin with all in favor. The two plowing bills weren't approved by the Road Manager so they were not approved for payment.

Next Meeting Date-February 3, 2014 7:30pm in the Kensington Elementary School Library.

Approval of Minutes – Russell made a motion to approve the January 6, 2014 minutes, seconded by Scott with both in favor.

Non Public Session RSA91A:3,II(e): Russell made a motion to enter non-public session at 8:53pm, seconded by Kevin with all in favor. A pending legal matter was discussed. Russell made a motion to leave non-public session, seal the minutes and return to regular session at 9:02pm, seconded by Scott with all in favor.

Russell Perry moved to adjourn at 9:05pm, seconded by Scott with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynne Bonitatibus
Administrative Assistant