



TOWN OF WARNER

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SELECT BOARD MEETING DRAFT MINUTES

November 9, 2023 3:00 pm
Lower Meeting Room Warner Town Hall 5 E Main St

1. Open the Meeting & Roll Call

Chair Seidel opened the meeting at 3:04pm. He said they would be holding a work session and they would be reviewing the community center issues to take a thoughtful approach to the building's needs and how to best manage them so they can serve the people of Warner.

Present were Harry Seidel (Chair), Faith Minton (via Zoom), Allan Brown, Georgia Flanders, and Butch Burbank, interim Town Administrator

Others Present: Clyde Carson (Finance Officer), Judy Newman-Rogers, Charlie Albano (Economic Development Committee), Ed Mical, Martha Mical, Neil Nevins, Anthony Mento

Charlie said at the last meeting, there were several questions posed to him and he created an agenda for his presentation. He handed out a copy of the agenda to those at the meeting.

Charlie said they may want to address a sequential plan (one thing per year) to do all of the work needed to the building. The first item on his agenda was the immediate issues identified by the Fire Department. He understood that the Town was already addressing some of these items. Allan said the doors need to be adjusted to see if they will close correctly. Chair Seidel said that he understood that Tim Allan (Public Works Director) is taking the lead on this. He has removed two sheds behind the building, and is working with the Fire Chief on the fire suppression system. There is also a wall needed to separate the egress corridor from where the washer/dryer are. To his knowledge, this has not been done yet. He knew that the Town had 45 days to remedy some of the things that needed attention. He explained several things that needed attention that will be taken care of, as they are safety issues. After speaking with Tim Allen, Allan said the Board would be able to put together a report to update the Fire Department on what has been done. Allan said he really wanted to get a cost to let the citizens know at Town Meeting, how much it would be to complete the tasks needed. A timeline would be good as well.

Charlie read a suggested action items from S&P which included ADA compliance and moving the welfare office to the Community building. Allan said they would need to move someone from the building if they were going to put the welfare office in the building as there wasn't any space left.

Charlie read further from the S&P report, which discussed areas where ADA compliance would need to be employed. The building does not meet ADA standards and is not an accessible design. The bathrooms, for example, are not ADA compliant or accessible. This is a top priority to address.

Anthony Mento said in 2021 the Economic Development Committee had a construction manager to come up with a price for an elevator with a new entry, which would connect all three levels and get rid of the old wooden ramp on the east side of the building. This would make all levels accessible. The cost for that was updated in 2023, and it was \$820,000. Since that time, the bathrooms that are there are non-compliant and would also need to be upgraded or modified. He does not yet have prices on that or the railing repair or anything else the Fire Marshall put on their list. Anthony said it could be as much as \$10,000 for a quick fix for the bathrooms.

Chair Seidel distributed copies of a list he came up with, which showed the items he felt were most important to take care of. He said he looks at the buildings needs in three ways: things to do right away, what would be nice to do down the road for energy efficiency, and lastly, the ADA compliance issues. He thought they could get grants for the elevator and ADA compliance. The same goes for the energy efficiency upgrades.

Chair Seidel listed:

Install doors and frames on the front of the building – People aren't using the front doors, but rather the fire doors on the side which is icy in the winter. To replace the doors is over \$5,000. He thought the current doors could be salvaged with new hardware and some weather stripping.

New Handrails on the stairs – They are leasing the building to people and these stairs are unsafe. He thought perhaps they shouldn't lease to Gear Up until they fix it. The repair is \$25,000.

Electrical Outlets and Lighting Replacement – this would consist of putting in LED bulbs, fixing outlets, etc. \$34,000.

Providing an ADA bathroom on each floor – \$20,000 for three bathrooms.

Overall fit-up, painting and hardware - \$27,820.

ADA Ramp Repair and Installing of Roof – The ramp needs to be shored up and to have a new roof. It is currently unusable half of the year. This would be \$37,000.

The last item would be to divide the space alongside CAP. This would be \$30,000.

The total is \$180,000. Chair Seidel said he doesn't feel that this is a CIP item because they need to do these things for the safety of the children, and to do them now. These are fairly tight numbers he got from a contractor. He wasn't sure if the cost for the ADA compliant bathroom was high enough. Allan said that the third floor bathroom would need to be plumbed, which would be more costly than the estimate included.

Chair Seidel commented that the windows in the building are in pretty good shape and don't need to be replaced. He said that NH Moose Plate and LCHIP grants are available to get funding for some of these projects.

Chair Seidel had a list of energy improvements that would pay the Town back in savings. There were big-ticket items on the list including air-sealing the building, a hybrid boiler, lighting conversions to LED, heat pumps, and a solar PV system. The total is \$190,000 should they decide to do these things. Allan thought these costs should be added to the total for the repairs to the building as they are things that will eventually need to be done.

Allan recalled an old plan of insulating the building by enclosing part of it in concrete and stucco. Anthony said this is a good way to solve an existing problem. He suggested creating a spreadsheet of all the options and values for each, and determine how much the Town wants to spend each year for “X” amount of years to get these things done. This could be a CIP.

Charlie talked about the need for office space in the town. The S&P report recommended that the Welfare office move to the building to provide some privacy. He added that the building needs a manager to keep up with ongoing issues and maintenance. Allan said that if they put the Welfare office in the community building, they will definitely need to make it ADA compliant, because it will have a Federal use.

Neil talked about the Community Development Block Grant, which requires a 50/50 match. USDA Rural Fund Development provides a possibility of covering 55% of a grant.

Anthony, Charlie and Neil agreed to come up with a spreadsheet for the goals and values for the building.

Faith wondered why a bathroom was necessary on the upper level. Anthony said that they did not need to put an ADA compliant/accessible bathroom on the third floor; it would be a nicety to have it, however.

Charlie thought the first year of work could be covered with a warrant article, for \$200,000. They could then plan for the next two or three years to see what the future costs would be. He added that his friend, Rhonda Rood, who is a realtor (who also knows the building and has read the report) provide an estimate for the community building. The estimated value of the building is \$150,000 - \$200,000, which is less than market value due to the issues with the building that need attention. Ms. Rood is not a commercial realtor so she suggested finding someone who is to get a more solid number. Charlie said the Town values the building at \$890,000.

Charlie said that ADA issues need to be updated first. Secondly, the energy efficiency, and lastly, the addition of an elevator. He wasn’t aware of a foundation that would provide funding for such a large expense. Allan said that the lease they have with the Gear Up group requests handicap accessibility. How would they get a handicapped person into that third floor space? Faith said that there is a handicapped accessible room at the Town’s library, so they shouldn’t feel obligated to provide for a handicapped access on the third floor. Allan said that this is true, but the lease asks that this provision is included. Chair Seidel worried about breach of duty with the lease, as they have not provided handicapped access to the space being leased, and the application asks that it is.

Charlie said the warrant article could be written “up to \$200,000 pending grant funding.”

Martha Mical opined that the Town is “beating the Community Building to death.” She said the Town should do what they can do now and take care of as much as possible. Things like changing lightbulbs and hardware are not that difficult.

Ed Mical asked why the ramp can't be used? If it is maintained and shoveled in the winter, it can be used. It was used for 13 years just fine. Martha said the ramp at the school is not covered and she didn't think the ramp at the community building needed to be. Allan agreed that they need to hire someone to do maintenance. It wasn't clear as to whether there was a state code that required the ramp to be covered. The Selectmen would look into this.

It was moved by Faith Minton and seconded by Allan Brown to adjourn the selectmen's work session of November 9, 2023. The motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 4:52pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of Warner