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Town of Danville
Board of Selectmen
Monday, February 5, 2024
7:00 pm

Meeting is Video-Recorded

Selectmen present: Shawn O’Neil, Chairman; Annemarie Inman, Vice Chair; Joe Hester; Sheila Johannesen; Dennis Griffiths; Paul Pazolt

Others present: Kim Burnham, Selectmen’s Administrator; Dave Knight; Chief Wade Parsons; Josh Manning, Paul Pazolt; Lisa Stith; B. Gail Kingston; Marianne Sears; Scott Barr; Sheila Suleski;

Shawn called the meeting to order and opened the meeting with a moment of silence for the troops who put themselves in harm’s way. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

I. Delegate Session

There was no one in the audience to address the Board.

II. Agenda

Building Committee Discussion-Finding a Location for a New Police Department

Shawn praised the Building Committee for their effort in making announcements and informing the public about their work. Paul Pazolt, chairman of the committee, said they’ve finished their study. Copies were handed out to the Selectmen. Thumb drives with several documents were also given out. A video summary of their work was shown, summarized below:

2023 Committee Members:

Dennis Griffiths Selectman	Noel Gordon	town resident
Wade Parson Chief of Police	Josh Manning	town resident
Justine Merced Danville PD	Paul Pazolt	town resident

Our mission: provide the town with

1. Police Department needs
 - a. Police Department needs
 - Grow with population
 - Guideline: 1.5 officers per 1,000 residents
 - Estimated 4,888 residents by 2040
 - Estimated 8,500 – 9,000 max. population
 - b. Additional space
 - Currently four rooms, 750 sq ft
 - Some items stored in sheds
 - Fire Department future space needs
 - c. Improved work flow
 - d. Privacy (public and police operations)
 - e. Safety, audit compliance

2. Location alternatives
 - a. 11 properties identified
 - b. 8 properties town owned
 - c. Three properties require negotiation/purchase
 - i. Post office land
 - ii. Portion of Baptist church land
 - iii. 11 Main Street property
 - d. 2 town owned properties – multiple options
 - i. Kimball Complex (add-on builds)
 - ii. Community Center (retrofit or add-on build)
3. Building structure estimated costs
 - a. Stuck build on location (revised Hersey Road footprint)
 - i. Provided by Charters Brothers/Stone River Architects at no cost
 - ii. Estimated \$2.7 million 2023 start to finish (budgetary)
 - b. Steel structure quote (budgetary)
 - i. Provided by Armstrong Steel at no cost
 - ii. 100x40x12 outside structure
 - iii. \$78k delivered, construction required building shell, ground-up finish
 - iv. Total cost unknown
 - c. Modular building quote (budgetary)
 - i. Provided by Summit48 Construction at no cost
 - ii. 5-piece building factory built and delivered/installed
 - iii. \$1.3-1.8 million start to finish including excavation
 - iv. Further discussion required
 - d. Rising building costs: 7% annually
4. Funding alternatives
 - a. \$537k in town capital reserve fund
 - i. Specific to the Police Department
 - b. Possible government grant - \$200k
 - i. Decision by December 2023
 - c. Sale of town assets
 - i. Town owned properties, other
5. Marketing strategy
 - a. Public awareness!
 - i. Town website
 - ii. Flyer/postal mail to residents
 - iii. Social media
 - iv. Local newspapers
 - v. Police facility open house
6. Conclusions
 - a. Police/fire/responder needs
 - b. Rising build costs (7%/year)
 - c. Tax payer/inflation impact

d. Town/resident priorities

“Every successful individual knows that his or her achievement depends on a community working together.” ~Paul Ryan

Paul said the mission of the committee was not to just put a trailer in the parking lot of the existing safety complex but to build something in which the police department can grow with over the years. He noted each item as presented in the video summary, saying that the conclusion is not making a recommendation; it is presenting information of which everyone may have differing opinions.

The maximum population estimates were discussed. The estimated population as presented came from different sources including a study by the Rockingham County Planning Commission, estimates provided by Charters Brothers, and the town’s Master Plan. These are simply estimates expressing potential growth of the town if all properties are improved with current zoning regulations.

Current use of the Safety Complex was discussed briefly. The PD stores items in trailers on the property. The FD may need more space if an ambulance crew is to be housed there 24/7. If the PD moves, this will likely give the FD the room they need to grow. The PD also needs to improve their workflow and moving to a new location will provide that. People being brought in, especially juveniles, should be brought to the station in an area separated from the general public. This is a safety issue, and the current police department is not in compliance. Paul suggested that the “powers that be” who check for compliance will likely not close the station for this safety violation. Dennis said that recently the state has been looking into auditing facilities, but it’s guessed that most towns in NH, which have grown over time in their own ways, will not be in compliance with ideal state regulations. There may or may not be penalties levied, but there may be incentives such as lower insurance costs for those towns meeting guidelines.

Speaking of location alternatives, Paul explained that the committee decided to leave all properties on their matrix as future reference, even if a property was deemed unsuitable. It was determined a lot next to the post office is not owned by the town. A resident suggested buying a portion of the Baptist church land. Speaking of this, he said the church owns a large lot next to the Town Hall. Buying a portion of their land would require negotiations. The lot at 11 Main Street is not for sale currently. This was listed here because Steve Woitkun, the fire chief, spoke with the property owner who said if he put his property up for sale, the price would be \$800k.

Two town owned properties were discussed. A stand-alone building could be constructed between the Town Hall and the Kimball Safety Complex. This has pros and cons. A building could also be constructed along Gerry Drive. The Community Center could be retrofit to house a police station, or an addition could be built onto it.

Paul talked about the plans drawn by Charters Brothers in 2020 for a new building on Hersey Road. Charters Brothers updated the plans at no cost. Chief Parson spoke with them about shrinking the footprint. Two of the jail cells are gone, the garage and conference room designs are smaller, and other rooms have been redesigned to make the building smaller. However, the cost as previously designed in 2020 was \$2.6 million. The new smaller design is \$2.7 million due to rising construction costs.

The committee also received a quote for an all-steel building from a company in Colorado for about \$78k. It would need to be constructed, and the insides will need to be built including walls. When this was mentioned to the Charters Brothers, they said the town could end up spending more money on this.

The committee received a quote for a modular building from Summit48 in Concord, NH. They were given the footprint as drawn by Charters Brothers. Summit48 gave the committee a quote for \$1.3 million, but Paul said that number is now \$1.8 million. He said this quote is not a direct comparison. Paul said their price includes clearing the land, electrical, sheetrock, and the building would be move-in ready. Dennis said he has some doubts about this quote. The committee did not have lengthy discussions with Summit48 about their quote. He said the price tag, \$1 million less than a stick-built, seems too good to be true, but it would be foolish not to investigate this further.

Paul emphasized that every year that goes by, the price increases. Sheila clarified that the town owns the plan as drawn by Charters Brothers, enabling the town to take this to other contractors and builders to get their quotes. Dennis clarified that Charters Brothers is a management contractor, specializing in managing subcontractors. He said he's not opposed to seeing what other contractors may charge but noted the Charters have been very good to the town, are residents, and were amenable to redoing their plans at no cost.

Funding alternatives were discussed. Dennis said the \$200k is most likely guaranteed as it's part of our state reps' earmarked budgets. Danville is #2 on the list of fifteen projects. The #1 project on the list is in Tuftonboro. The whole federal budget of 2024 has not been passed yet, so there is a chance that this could be cut, but Dennis feels confident it will be added to the existing \$537k already in the fund. He explained that the grant parameters have been widened.

Dennis explained the involvement of Congressman Pappas and the BUILD act (Building Up Infrastructure for Local Departments). This was recently introduced to congress. It was discovered that there were no existing grants available for building something like a police station from the ground up. This was the problem the Building Committee faced when looking for funding sources. Dennis said he expects this bill to pass later this summer, closer to election time. Congressman Pappas was able to get co-sponsors, both Democrat and Republican, from key swing states, all with small towns experiencing infrastructure issues. The total bill sets aside \$500 million split evenly between the police and fire departments. Up to \$4 million can be awarded per applicant, totaling \$8 million per town (\$4 million each, to fire and police departments). There are four or five requirements, the key one being that the recipient town has a population of less than 50k. Dennis reiterated that there's no guarantee, but it's worth a try. It's in a subcommittee right now and he is receiving daily status updates.

Paul talked about the lot on Pine Street. It's a one-acre lot between two existing homes and the frontage is narrow. The town could sell this lot and proceeds be set aside for the new building.

Marketing was discussed. Assuming quotes and a location were obtained, a flyer could be mailed to residents, or something included with the tax bills. To send a two-page flyer alone to each taxpayer, the cost would be about \$1800. Paul mentioned that Salem had an open house in which the public was invited to tour the existing police department.

Conclusions were reviewed, including the needs of the fire department. Jim Bradbury was thanked for his effort on the committee. He said that the needs of the taxpayers and needs of the two safety departments have to meet. He said it's a matter of time but is optimistic that it can be done.

An evaluation matrix was displayed. The lots were listed at the top of the chart. General information was listed along with criteria, and all was calculated through a rating process. Paul said this was an idea from

Dave Knight. Each committee member ranked the choices, and the top seven ranked averages were as follows:

1. Community Center, new build
2. Hersey Road, new build
3. Community Center, retrofit
4. 11 Main Street
5. Baptist Church, partial property purchase
6. Kimball Safety complex, both options

Paul said the other options fell off the list as the rankings were calculated. Properties on Route 111A and Back Road remain on the list but do not appear to be viable options at this time. They are designated conservation lands. The deed for the property on GH Carter Drive states it is for recreation purposes only. As mentioned, the post office property belongs to the post office, and the smaller lot near the post office was ranked last on the matrix. Paul said that anyone could look at these properties and rank them differently, therefore the conclusions as presented should not be taken as recommendations. As an example, he said the Community Center hosts over 180 events annually, including voting. All of those activities would need to go somewhere else if the building were retrofit. Paul said more details for each property are listed in the documents presented to the Board. Using the elementary school in town would not be easy since it is part of a district.

Dennis suggested to the Board that they prepare questions to ask if more information is needed about a particular property or a construction company, or if it's presumed something has been overlooked. Paul said his contact information is included in the packet presented. Sheila asked about the ballfield next to the Community Center. Paul pointed out that it was named after a World War 2 veteran and is about an acre in size. It was not included in the list as presented here but it could be investigated later. Dennis said that this property could be used, but then a ballfield will need to be built elsewhere. The same could be said for Goldthwaite Park. Dennis said that all these details could be presented to the Building Committee for future discussion.

Paul said that Josh Manning investigated properties in town and got the most viable options. Dennis said that private property wasn't considered but at any time, someone could donate land to the town. Shawn said the information was well presented. Paul asked that this work be put to good use and not fall off the Board's agendas. Dennis said he can put together some items for the Board to focus on. He said he feels confident this can go on the 2025 town warrant, with a bond and advertising, possibly public hearings and town events.

Dave Knight expressed praise for the work done, especially that the property on Hersey Road ranked so high on the matrix. He said this indicated that the work done by Chief Parsons a few years ago was worthwhile and still viable. He reminded the Board that the maximum population study was done before the state changed parameters for Accessory Dwelling Units. If more people in town are renting portions of their homes or building ADUs, this can skew the projected maximum population numbers. Other zoning rules can change also. He also said that, when this was discussed several years ago, it was determined that a loan may be less expensive than a bond. It's more flexible, can be paid off sooner, and banks are anxious to work with towns, especially TDBank.

Dave also said that any information put out to the voters before a warrant article is written is considered advertising. Anything put out after a warrant article is written is electioneering and is illegal. He cautioned timing when getting information to the public.

Joe asked if Wade could offer his opinion on the matrix, and he declined. It was mentioned that he has an open-door policy, and the Board members were invited to speak with the Chief individually. Dave mentioned that Paul started with the committee as a videographer but became the chair of the committee very quickly. Paul was thanked for all that he's done.

Direct K-9 Donations, Escrow Account

Shawn made and Sheila seconded the **motion to direct the Board to create the K9 escrow account, to allow town residents to donate to the account, for veterinary care, equipment, and other cares.** The motion **passed** unanimously.

Shawn made and Sheila seconded the **motion to deposit the \$2,000.00 donation into the account just created.** The motion **passed** unanimously.

Shawn explained that when someone donates something to the town for a specific purpose, the Board has the authority to accept or reject it. If it's accepted, it's accepted under the terms of the donor and those wishes are honored. It is suggested that an accompanying letter be included with any donations.

III. Old/New Business

Right to Know requests were received for the legal opinions/emails discussed regarding the hand-counting of ballots. Shawn said he'd like to release that information after redacting the email addresses of the assistant town moderator and Mr. Underhill. Sheila said other information had been released previously without redacting email addresses. Shawn pointed out that there was information, legal opinions, being discussed without the Board's knowledge. Annemarie said that during the Deliberative Session Barry shared details of emails between town council and himself. She said he was using town council for his personal use without the permission of the Selectmen, at the taxpayers' expense, and she has an issue with that. She said that is unacceptable. Sheila said he was acting as the town moderator and Annemarie said his line of questioning was not on behalf of the town but for himself. Sheila said she does not have a problem with Barry asking someone as the moderator. Annemarie pointed out that the Board was blind-sided during the Deliberative Session when they should have been apprised of the communication prior to the meeting.

The Board reviewed the emails.

Shawn made and Sheila seconded the **motion to release any and all of Matt Serge's communications with the town moderator and the Secretary of State's regarding the February 3, 2024 Deliberative Session, regarding the legal matters, with the redaction of the assistant moderator's and Mr. Underhill's email addresses.** It was clarified that if the email address is redacted, the name is still on the document. The motion **passed** unanimously.

The emails already released cannot be retracted.

It was mentioned that the town is looking for camera operators. The pay is \$10.00 per hour with a three-hour minimum.

Shawn mentioned that the veteran credits given to the town veterans equaled \$175,500.00 in 2023.

Jimmy Seaver mentioned to the Board that another town has canceled their request for a dump truck. This has opened up the possibility of Danville using funds, if approved during the March vote, as a down payment for a truck. There is usually a two-year wait for trucks and the town could be paying off the vehicle during the next two years as it waits for the truck to be finished. Jimmy said if we wait until after the March election, the truck will not be available anymore. It was clarified that this is a replacement for an existing vehicle. Dave said that, unless rules have changed, money from the operating budget can be used to supplement a replacement vehicle. Shawn said that this can be looked at.

Candidate's night was changed from February 13 to the 27th, 7pm at the Community Center.

IV. Minutes

The minutes of Monday, February 5, 2024, were reviewed. A dollar amount was corrected. Sheila made and Joe seconded a **motion to approve the Wednesday, December 20, 2024, minutes as amended**. The motion **passed** unanimously.

The non-public minutes of Monday, February 5, 2024, were reviewed. Sheila made and Joe seconded a **motion to approve the non-public Wednesday, December 20, 2024, minutes as written**. The motion **passed** unanimously.

V. Announcements

Thursday, February 8, 2024: TRSD Deliberative Session, 40 Greenough Road, Plaistow, NH at 7pm (Timberlane Performing Arts Center or PAC)

Monday, February 19, 2024: Town Hall closed in observance of President's Day

Tuesday, February 20, 2024: Board of Selectmen's meeting, 7pm at the Town Hall

Tuesday, February 27, 2024: Meet the Candidate's Night, 7pm at the Community Center

Tuesday, March 12, 2024: Town & School Election Session, 8am-8pm, Community Center

Saturday, April 20, 2024: Rabies Clinic is rescheduled from April 6th to April 20th, Kimball Safety Complex, 10am-12pm

At 8:15pm, Shawn stated the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Denison