



MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, July 22, 2015 6:30 PM
Board of Selectmen Meeting Room,
Town Hall

Members present: Gil Archambault, Veeral Bharucha, Paul Dargie, Tim Finan, Joe Oneail, and Judy Plant.

Members Excused: Matt Lydon

Staff present: Jack Sheehy, Finance Director

Also in attendance: Michelle Sampson (Library Director), Kim Paul (Library Trustee), Chris Costantino (Library Trustee), and Kathy Bauer (Selectman)

July 22, 2015 AGENDA

1. Wadleigh Library Renovation and Expansion – Michelle Sampson, Kim Paul, and Chris Costantino
2. Approval of Minutes: July 8, 2015 6:30 PM Meeting at Police Station Community Room
3. Other Business
 - a. Next meeting date: August 5, 2015, 6:30 PM, Police Station Community Room
 - b. Other

Paul Dargie convened the meeting at 6:30 PM noting that Matt Lydon was excused.

Wadleigh Library Renovation and Expansion – Michelle Sampson, Kim Paul, and Chris Costantino: Paul Dargie recognized the group to begin their presentation to the committee. Michelle Sampson began the presentation by commenting that the proposal for this year is basically the same as last year's proposal, with the cost increased a bit to account for inflation. She then started a PowerPoint presentation that reviewed the proposed building project. The following are some of the key points that were made during the PowerPoint presentation:

- This year's plan is the same plan as last year's plan because it is the best plan. It results in a building that meets the needs for the foreseeable future at the lowest cost. Over the past 20 years, the needs of the library, the condition and options for the existing building, and possible new building configurations were studied extensively. The result of all this extensive work was the creation of last year's plan.
- There were ten building concepts considered over the past ten years. Four of these were more fully developed:
 1. 2007 Renovation/addition, 27,000 gross sq. ft., \$5.6M
 2. 2011-A Renovation/addition, 31,600 gross sq. ft., \$8.5M
 3. 2011-B Renovation/addition, 23,600 gross sq. ft., \$5.7M

4. 2014 Rebuild/addition, 21,000 gross sq. ft., \$5.5M. This is the plan that was on the ballot last year and is being proposed again for this year.
- A flyer describing the project was distributed to the committee. The flyer can be downloaded at this site: www.wadleighlibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Wadleigh-Library-Flyer-updated-2-12-2015.pdf
 - The project proposal consists of three phases.
 1. Build new 8100 sq. ft. addition in front of existing building.
 2. Move operations to new addition. Raze 1980 structure and build new structure on same footprint.
 3. Raze 1950 structure and build new structure on same footprint.
 - The proposal on the 2015 ballot failed when it received 43% yes votes, while 60% yes votes were needed due to it being a bonded project. The perception of the presenters was that there was not one single reason why people voted “no” on the proposal. Anecdotally, some of the reasons that people mentioned as to why they voted “no” were: the cost of the proposal was too high, the design was not good, the façade is ugly, and there is no longer a need for traditional libraries since the internet has changed everything.
 - Reasons why libraries are still relevant were discussed. Some statistics showing the current high use levels
 - * 54 NH communities have invested in library projects in the past 10 years.
 - * The Wadleigh Library had these activities during the first six month of 2015
 - * 10,275 average visits per month
 - * Nearly 20,000 item checkouts per month
 - * 380 library programs attended by 9,134 people
 - * Community groups booked rooms 116 times (853 attendees)
 - * 130 requests for quiet study space (people were given a meeting room when available)

That was the end of the formal presentation. This was followed by a question and answer session. Some of the topics discussed during the Q&A were:

- **Fundraising.** The library has a single \$500K donation to be used towards the construction. There is another \$10K that was raised independently. This total of \$510K is the largest amount of independent funding of a public program in Milford that anyone can remember. Some committee members suggested that additional fundraising is needed. The architect had mentioned last year that it is easier to fundraise after the building project has been approved since donors can identify with the project.
- **Public perception.** The perception that public libraries are no longer relevant and therefore don’t deserve new funding is a detriment to achieving the 60% vote total that is needed. Efforts need to be made to educate voters on the value and need for public libraries, and to actively market the proposal. One thought was to change the name to something with a newer connotation, perhaps calling it a media center or information commons instead of a library. The mission for the library has evolved, and the new mission needs to be promoted.
- **Alternative projects might squeeze out funding.** There are several other projects that might be on the ballot this year that might limit the availability of funds for the library. Examples are potential warrant articles for the schools, bridges, roads, UV cleaning at the waste water treatment plant, dump trucks, etc.
- **Square footage per person.** The current building is about 0.8 sq. ft. per resident, the proposed building is about 1.3 sq. ft. per resident, and the state average is about 1.4 sq. ft. per resident.

- **Egress.** The issue of alternative egress to the parking area has not be addressed. This will be reviewed before the plans are finalized, but as of now, the egress is planned to be the same as the current layout.
- **Taxes.** Last year's proposal was \$0.33 on the tax rate, or \$66 on a house with an assessed value of \$200,000. Some committee members suggested that this would be too much of a burden for some taxpayers.

Minutes: Gil Archambault moved and Veeral Bharucha seconded that the minutes from the July 8, 2015 meeting be approved. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment: Gil Archambault moved and Judy Plant seconded that the meeting be adjourned. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Next meeting date is Wednesday August 5th, 2015 at the Milord police Station community meeting room at 6:30 pm.

Minutes submitted by Paul Dargie