

Town of Northumberland Building Committee
Draft Meeting Minutes
February 23, 2021

Present: Bill Caron, Alan Rossetto, Gail Rossetto, Sam Oakes, Jim Gibson, Sean Durkin, Nicole Canavan, Peter Pelletier, Robin Irving

Alan Rossetto opened the meeting at 6:00PM.

Alan asked for a motion to accept the Thursday, February 4, 2021 meeting minutes. Sam Oakes motioned to accept the minutes, Bill Caron seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

A report from the Building Committee for the Town Report was passed out to the members. It was given to Robin last week. There was not enough time to pass it by the committee members before it needed to be sent in. There were no issues with the report.

There was much discussion on how to get people to come to Town meeting and vote for the Public Safety Building. Alan read a short speech that he would like to give at Town meeting.

Alan has gone to see Barry Normandeau, stopped at Mom's, talked with Paul Perras at the Transfer station, the Pit Stop, and a few other area residents to discuss the need for this project. He will be contacting Jim Weagle so that the two of them can go to Rotobec and NSA.

Robin said not to take this the wrong way, and with no disrespect, however, we need more long term, tax paying residents to speak up about the project, not just "flat-landers". Nancy Mellow, John Normand, and other residents are for the building. We need small business owners, and some of the younger generation to speak up also. We need to have a 3/5 vote so we need as many people as we can at Town Meeting who are for the project.

Sam said that in the draft selectmen's report to the town seemed to give, in his opinion, a lot more attention to the seven million dollar water/sewer warrant without including any specifics that were included in other discussions. There was no mention of the bottom line tax impact.

Robin commented on the water bond and that the impact of the water bond has been misrepresented. The calculations that have been done have been oversimplified.

Sean said he is 100 percent for the upgrading. The ambulance and police need help. However, if this does not pass, what do we do? Wait another year and try again? How do we convince people that we need to spend this money now. Is there any way to bring down the cost.

Bill advised that the school increase is what the people in town are worried about right now. Sam asked what are we looking at for a tax increase from the school. Bill said it would be \$3.00 per thousand.

Sam discussed the approximately 54 cent decrease in the municipal tax rate. Interest rates are at 1.67 so over 20 years it is about 20 to 30 thousand dollars in interest fees. Bill said that this building has been a need for many years.

Nicole discussed the fact that this new building will be built to last with minimum maintenance.

Robin said that when the plan was being drawn up a detail that wasn't focused on was that the police have to adhere to certain standards. They can't do that in the building they are in now.

Nicole advised that if this project does not pass and we look at it again an another year, the building costs and the interest costs will have increased.

Sean said that he would not want to work in the conditions the ambulance and police are working in now. We have to do something. Bill advised that the warrant has already been put in the Town warrant and if it doesn't pass that is when we will have to have the discussion to rework the project.

Robin advised that the interest rate will be going up to 2.25 as of March 31, 2021. If the project passes, we will still have the opportunity to get the grants. Northern Borders limit last year was \$350,000.00. It could be \$500,000.00 this year and we had five people from the Government at the informational meeting that said they would all support us for these grants.

Alan said we need to charge forth as is. The warrant has already been put in for Town Meeting.

Robin advised that we need to be braced for ugliness at Town meeting.

Jim discussed the fact that if this warrant does not pass, there will be no ambulance service in Groveton. It will leave the north country with a problem. Lancaster is not interested in covering Groveton. He has spoken with a member of the Ambulance in Lancaster and that person would be willing to come to our town meeting, however, Lancaster's town meeting is the same time as ours, so it will not be possible for him to attend. Weeks hospital was even willing to come because if this warrant does not pass, it will leave the North Country in one vary bad predicament. It would be good to have someone from the alternative service come and tell us how they feel.

Robin said that maybe a conference call between Robin, Peter and the state representatives to get them to come to our town meeting? It is a long shot because we are not sure he would go to an individual town.

Jim advised that he has kept the costs of the ambulance down to one of the lowest in the county or state so it will be up to the residents in town meeting to say yes or no.

Our next meeting, if there will be one, will be determined after Town Meeting.

Alan asked for a motion to adjourn. Bill made a motion to adjourn. Jim seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:00

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Rossetto, Secretary