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# Town of Shaftsbury

Municipal Offices at Cole Hall

## Meeting Minutes

PO Box 409  
61 Buck Hill Road  
Shaftsbury, VT  
05262-0409  
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### Community Center Development Committee

Date of Meeting: October 17, 2024 in person at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom

Members Present: Zoe Contros Kearl (presiding), Marlene Hall, Marie Watson. Also present was Town Administrator, Paula Iken and guest Ben Benedict.

1. Call to order

The meeting came to order at 5:01 p.m.

2. Conflict of interest

No one reported a conflict of interest with any item on the agenda.

3. Minutes

Ms. Hall moved to approve the ccdc minutes as amended (by the addition of a comma). Ms. Watson seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.

4. Announcement

There were none.

5. Public Comments

There were none.

6. Discussion of Ben Benedict's information

Mr. Benedict wrote a letter to the town regarding Cole Hall and the new community center, and included drawings prepared for the town several years ago. He attended to expand upon his letter.

Mr. Benedict said he served on the facilities committee when renovation plans for Cole Hall were submitted in 2010. They were never acted upon. He urges the town to focus on Cole Hall to ensure that it can be put to its best use. Committee members responded. Ms. Iken has reached out to Jamie Duggan at VT Historic Preservation. Ms. Contros Kearl said the committee is trying to

comply with the votes of the citizens regarding how to spend the former ARPA funds. She said their thoughts will be sought once again at Town Meeting 2025.

Mr. Benedict said the building was originally one large room, with rising Gothic windows and beautiful light. Can it be restored to that form? That space could be used as a community room. An addition could be added on the north side for staff, as was proposed when he was on the facilities committee.

Gina Jenks said the high priority for her is getting a safe building for town employees.

The group discussed safety, mold, accessibility, the vault, space needs, and additions. Ms. Contros Kearnl wondered whether a new, modern addition could be added to the north. Mr. Benedict said the plans submitted in 2010 were aimed at returning Cole Hall to its historic state and accommodating Town staff at the same time. The group discussed the pros and cons of the 2010 designs. It was agreed that fundraising for a renovated Cole Hall would be much easier than fundraising for a new community center.

Ms. Contros Kearnl wondered whether it might be a good idea to re-issue an RFP for designs for a remodeled Cole Hall.

Mr. Benedict said if he can be of help he will gladly volunteer his services.

#### 7. Review of action items

- Review the night's discussion with other members of the committee
- Ms. Iken will follow up with Mr. Benedict.
- Ms. Contros Kearnl will invite Mr. Ponessi to a meeting.

#### 8. Adjournment

Ms. Hall moved to adjourn at 5:45 p.m. Ms. Watson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.