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# Town of Shaftsbury

Municipal Offices at Cole Hall

## Meeting Minutes

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### Community Center Development Committee

Date of Meeting: November 14, 2024 in person at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom

Members Present: Paula Iken (presiding), Marie Watson, Joan Dornhoefer, Marlene Hall, and Sarah Costin (via Zoom). Also present were Naomi Miller, Ben Benedict, and Rick Bennett.

1. Call to Order

The meeting came to order at 5 p.m.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement

No one reported a conflict of interest.

3. Minutes

Ms. Watson moved to approve the minutes of October 24. Ms. Dornhoefer seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-2.

4. Announcements

There were none.

5. Public Comments

Mr. Bennett reported he was attending as chair of the Economic Development Committee, which hoped to be of use to the committee in fundraising for the community center.

6. Discussion of Project Ideas

Committee members discussed the purchase of the Shaftsbury Medical Center. Comments included the price is right; it is accessible; it wouldn't be expensive to re-shape it to suit the Town's needs. Ms. Iken said the realtor is trying to locate the site plans for the interior. Mr. Benedict said he thought the building was designed by Tim Smith, who should have the plans. Mr. Benedict volunteered to view the building and the plans and comment on how it might fit the Town's needs.

The group discussed the renovations of Cole Hall as a community space. Ms. Hall said if all the walls could be removed up- and downstairs, the elevator could be left where it is and be truly useful. Mr. Benedict said the state office managing disability requirements can be persuaded to cede some ADA requirements.

A question was raised as to whether to vote on acquiring the medical center must be made by Australian ballot or could it be made by floor vote. Another issue is that the center is in a

condominium situation. Ms. Iken will be discussing such matters with Town counsel. Ms. Miller said we'd found out that we can go into contract for purchase without a vote, as long as the contract is contingent on approval by the voters. The committee discussed how the new federal administration might impact the security of the former ARPA monies. Ms. Hall said the Town could mount a special election quite easily. It would resemble a school election, an up or down, with votes accepted at Cole Hall. The vote would have to be duly warned.

Ms. Iken described the medical center building as a "Swiss Army knife" sort of space.

Ms. Hall said she's asked her clerk colleagues about building a new vault, what it costs and what it takes. She would hope to re-use the current vault door.

Ms. Dornhoefer wondered whether an additional wastewater system could be built on the medical center grounds.

Mr. Benedict recommended exploring thoroughly how the medical center could be made to fit the Town's needs. He will try to get the site plans from previous architects or the realtor or Dr. King.

The schedule was discussed - what steps should happen when, e.g, SB vote, contract, inspection, lawyer, and so on.

Mr. Bennett said he hoped the BCRC could present their business district study before the Select Board, probably sometime in January 2025.

#### 7. Review of action items

- Mr. Benedict will try to track down the site plans.
- Ms. Iken will ask Town counsel about the vote, the condominium situation.
- Ms. Miller said the CCDC should vote to tentatively recommend the purchase of the medical center to the Select Board for use as the town office and some community center functions. Ms. Watson so moved. Ms. Dornhoefer seconded the motion. On discussion, it was decided to simply announce at the next SB meeting that the CCDC is interested in pursuing the medical center and, subsequently, work towards renovating Cole Hall.

#### 8. Adjournment

Ms. Watson moved to adjourn at 5:55 p.m. Ms. Hall seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.