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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 21, 2024 in person at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom

Members Present: Paula Iken (presiding), Zoe Contros Kearl, Marie Watson, Marlene Hall, Joan Dornhoefer, and Ben Benedict. Also present was Naomi Miller.

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. Hall moved to approve the minutes of November 14. Ms. Watson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

4. Announcements

There were none.

5. Public Comments

There were none.

6. Discuss current status of projects

Mr. Benedict noted that he'd reviewed the site plans for the former Medical Center. He said he thought the two back rooms might not be as big as we'd like. He hopes to have a draft layout of the proposed office and community center spaces by November 25.

Committee members discussed how to use space in the Medical Center, and how to think of the new community center in Cole Hall. Ms. Contros Kearl noted that the Medical Center could serve as a community center while renovations are ongoing at Cole Hall.

Ms. Miller said we'd found at that we can enter into a contract contingent upon approval of the voters. The vote can be held at a special meeting. We have not yet learned whether the vote must be by Australian ballot. Ms. Miller suggested holding a public meeting with a presentation (such as a Powerpoint) to present the idea, with the vote to be held shortly thereafter. Such a meeting will be scheduled. Ms. Hall will contact the Secretary of State's office to learn more about timelines for a vote.

Committee members reported on responses to an article in the Banner on the possibility that the Town might purchase the Medical Center. Only positive comments have been received.

Mr. Benedict said he thought the Town should require that the building be empty when sold. Other committee members wondered whether there might be some items we would want.

Ms. Miller suggested the committee appoint a member to present the proposal to buy the center to the Select Board. The Select Board would discuss it in executive committee and vote there. Going forward, the Select Board would be responsible for all negotiating over the purchase. The CCDC would handle organizing the public presentation and the vote. Mr. Benedict said he was willing to consider presenting his to-be-designed site plans to the Select Board. Ms. Contros Kearn suggested she'd be willing to give an introduction to the committee's process. The committee decided to propose a special Select Board meeting for December 9, with one agenda item: the Medical Center.

Mike Yannotti visited the Medical Center. He asked that, should the Town purchase the site, it re-pave the parking lot as it is full of potholes. On discussion, the committee wondered whether the dental office, which owns 30% of the condominium, would consider offering frequent dental clinics in exchange for snow plowing and parking lot maintenance.

Ms. Iken said the modular home company representative checked in last week.

Mr. Benedict noted that the insulation in the Medical Center isn't likely to be up to modern standards. He said the it is likely that the only way to get it up to specifications would be to remove the siding, install 4" foam slabs, and then re-side. It will be expensive. Mr. Benedict will try to find contact information for a home inspector he respects.

Regarding the public presentation, it was agreed that it would describe the arc of the committee's work – who they interviewed, what they considered, what they learned from the process, how they arrived at their current proposal.

Ms. Dornhoefer wondered how the citizens would think about maintaining two buildings. Mr. Benedict noted that the Center has a south-facing roof, suitable for solar panels.

Mr. Benedict said he wanted it to be clear that he is volunteering his services and does not wish anything in return from the Town.

The committee will meet again on November 25. Mr. Benedict will produce a draft site plan. Everyone will come with questions they think might be asked by the public. Ms. Contros Kearn will write something up for the presentation. Ms. Hall will try to come up with a timeline for the vote warnings and vote. The committee will ask Ms. Cornwell if any of the medical furniture should be salvaged.

8. Review of action items

9. Adjournment

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