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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: December 5, 2024, remotely via Zoom

Members Present: Paula Iken, Joan Dornhoefer, Ben Benedict, Marie Watson, Zoe Contros Kearl, and Sarah Costin.

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. Dornhoefer moved to accept the November 25 minutes. Mr. Benedict seconded the motion.

4. Announcements

5. Public Comments

There were none.

6. Updates

Mr. Benedict said he'd visited the building the day before in the company of, among others, a local plumbing and heating contractor. They climbed to the roof and found four package HVAC units up there which appear to be 26 years old. Mr. Hayden, the contractor, will communicate his estimate as to the cost of replacing those units. For the meanwhile, though, they seem to be functioning.

Many of the exam rooms and two of the offices have old German-made HVAC units about which he knows very little. They appear to store heat at night when electricity rates used to be lower.

Much of the interior is old and needs replacing. He will try to put together a budget for those renovations. He also asked for contact information for the maintenance contractor for the HVAC units.

7. General Timeline

Ms. Iken said she'd formally signed on Vicky as the Town realtor representative.

Mr. Benedict said he hoped to have renovation cost estimates for discussion at the special Select Board meeting on Monday.

Ms. Miller asked and all agreed that the CCDC's next task is to turn to renovations at Cole Hall, to make it the new community center.

The question as to what kind of vote – floor or Australian ballot – is needed is still up in the air pending comment from the Town's counsel. Tentatively, the CCDC will plan to meet on December 12 to discuss next steps.

Ms. Contros Kearn will send around her draft presentation for comment. Mr. Benedict plans to speak about the current status of the building and near term renovation costs that might need to be covered. He said that he is very confident that purchasing the old medical center is the cheapest option.

Ms. Miller said she thought moving the Town offices down the street will help create a more bustling village center, a goal expressed by those who participated in the ARPA survey. Ms. Contros Kearn thought that citizens might wonder why the Town has purchased so much land in such a short time. The cost of maintaining both a community center and Town office could also come up.

Mr. Benedict suggested touching base with the dentist.

What will the neighbors think of the increased traffic to the site? Mr. Benedict thought it would be comparable to what the medical center experienced.

8. Review of action items

It was agreed that Mr. Benedict, Ms. Contros Kearn, and Ms. Iken will meet on Monday December 16 at 4:30 p.m.

Ms. Contros Kearn will prepare and share her Powerpoint presentation.

9. Adjournment

Mr. Benedict moved to adjourn at 5:48 p.m. Ms. Watson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.