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Town of Shaftsbury

Municipal Offices at Cole Hall

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Meeting Minutes

Community Center Development Committee

Date of Meeting: Thursday, January 23, 2025, in person at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom

Members Present: Town administrator Paula Iken (presiding), Zoe Contros Kearn (Zoom), Joan Dornhoefer, Marie Watson, Marlene Hall, Sarah Costin, Naomi Miller (guest), and Alan Baker (public on Zoom).

1. Call to Order

The meeting came to order at 5:00 PM.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement

No one reported a conflict of interest.

3. Minutes

The minutes were reviewed. Ms. Costin motioned for approval, Ms. Hall seconded, Ms. Dornhoefer abstained. The minutes were approved without correction.

4. Announcements

Ms. Iken said that she was looking further into a HUD grant and that these are open enrollment. She is waiting for a reply. Ms. Iken also discussed the mold testing done at the medical building, she's waiting for results. The inspector gave his opinion that mold in the medical building is easier to remediate because it is in far fewer places. Ms. Iken said results should be received before the 2/11 meeting.

5. Public Comments

No public comments. Mr. Baker joined online at 5:08 PM but did not comment.

6. Discussion of continuing preparation for 2/11 meeting

Ms. Iken mentioned that she had expertise in presenting an effective argument as she taught this subject for 10 years. She laid out the structure and the committee discussed the claims, reasons, and evidence for purchasing the medical building. The claim is that the town should buy the medical building. The reasons and evidence are: 1) Reason- it is the most fiscally responsible way to house the town offices. Evidence- the committee looked intensively into options and this is the lowest cost/sq. ft. Energy costs should be less and be improvable. 2) Reason- Cole Hall is no longer viable for housing the town offices and vault. Evidence- the building needs extensive repairs to stop water coming in, remediate mold, etc. In addition, the vault is overloaded, there is not enough space for current staff and the town is growing. 3) Reason- the medical building is ADA compliant. The discussion went further into the importance of organization and clarity. Ms. Watson read her presentation which includes introducing the CCDC and its purpose as well as some memories of Shaftsbury community gatherings. Ms. Hall noted that she will need to check in registered voters. Ms. Contros-Kearn reiterated the importance of sharing the diligence of the committee in exploring options and that she would come up with a speech that formalizes the outline of reasons. The meeting structure including Q & A, handouts (agenda and map), and snacks was discussed further. The Select Board or Tom Dailey will moderate the Q & A. The Select Board will make the recommendation on the CCDC claim. Ms. Contros said she would bring a PowerPoint to the next meeting (1/30/25) and the committee can workshop it. Ms. Iken said that she will have binders with the inspection reports from the medical building and the Cole Hall mold inspection results available at the 2/11 meeting. Mr. Benedict was not present but some of his comments from the 1/16 meeting were mentioned: specifics on

renovations needed at the medical building, estimated cost of renovation, and preparation for future needs of the town office. Ms. Iken said she attended an Energy Committee meeting and thought that having them at the 2/11 meeting would be useful.

7. Discussion of Vermont Preservation Trust rep visit

Ms. Iken talked to a representative of the Vermont Preservation Trust who said Cole Hall sounded like a good candidate. Next step is a visit from him on 2/6/25 at around 11:30 AM to assess the building. The rep said stone buildings are rare in the middle and Northern parts of Vermont, so the trust has a vest interest in preserving the ones in the Southern part of Vermont. He will look at the building, then send in an assessment team that puts needed repairs in ranked order. A Friends group would need to be set up to take fundraising and grant monies for the town.

8. Review of Action Items

Ms. Contros Kearl will bring PowerPoint.

Mr. Benedict will be asked to bring list of estimated costs.

Ms. Iken will invite the medical building inspectors and the Energy Committee to the 2/11 meeting.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 PM