

Senior Center Building Committee Meeting Minutes  
March 11, 2024

In Attendance: Bobbi Grant, Rita Vail, Gary Weiner, Carol Keeney, John Matthews, Mike Doran, Mike Fedora, Cliff Bombard, Becky Moriarty (ex-officio), John Flynn via ZOOM  
Guest: Claudia Kapinos

Gary Weiner called the meeting to order at 11:04 AM.

Minutes from 2/26/24. Change "she" to "the speaker from Gary's training" on p.2  
Carol motion to approve. Bobbi seconded. All in favor. Cliff abstained.

Summary of Meeting with Legislative Reps

Rita, John M and Gary met with Robin and Jennifer from State Rep and Senators office at the Hampden Senior Center. Gary emailed a response from Robin. They weren't hopeful about funding. Budgetary funding problems this year. They offered to reach out Longmeadow to the woman who worked on the Longmeadow building project. Senator and State Rep will certainly keep us in mind when looking at the budget going forward.

Rita, Becky, and Gary attended the BOS meeting last Monday to ask the town to get information out to the public about the March 21<sup>st</sup> forum at the Senior Center.

**Grants, Publicity and Funding Possibilities**

Gary saw on "News Break" an app, that brings up local news items, the article about the Senior Center Building Committee

Committee should start to look at private fundraising opportunities.

Public Forum will happen on March 21<sup>st</sup>.

Becky will write up a draft robocall to give to the town admin and the board of selectmen regarding the public forum.

Another article to the reminder and the Times by Wednesday of this month. Gary will draft and Bobbi will send to the local papers.

Bobbi wonders about having a big thermometer in the front lawn with a goal to be raised. Doesn't know if that is something that can be done for this project.

Rita – asked for clarification about asking for 6.6 million at the town meeting, but then asking for contributions through fundraising and how that works.

Cliff explained that the town wouldn't go out to bond for a couple of years. Explained that the whole amount does not have to be borrowed. Cliff said that a dollar amount should be determined as a number to be fundraised and a number to be voted on by the town. Cliff thinks the Board of Selectmen could decide to draw an amount from stabilization, so the number asked for is less than 6.6 million. Cliff doesn't think the fundraising goal should be \$1 million, but it could be closer to \$500,000. It is up to the BOS to authorize an amount out of stabilization account. There are other future projects coming up for the town. BOS will need to address the issue before the town meeting in May.

Cliff continued to say that the project will rely on contributions/donation, taxpayer dollars and stabilization. Cliff would rather not see the town borrowing 6.6 million.

Cliff does not think the ask should be 6.6 at the town meeting as he thinks that number is a big ask for the town. John M thinks it should still be put forward to the townspeople to get a feel for what people think about it. It is difficult to predict how the town will vote.

Cliff stated that the BOS will have to decide if this will be an override question and that decision will be determined prior to the town meeting.

Bobbi asked if the finances can be made public at the hearing next week and could a \$500,000 fundraising goal be set and made public? Cliff does not think this is an unreasonable number.

John Flynn agrees with Cliff. John doesn't think it's unreasonable to ask for the total amount on an override vote. John thinks the whole number should be made public from the beginning and thinks an override vote would be more successful.

Would that hinder fundraising because the total amount was voted? John F. does not think it would.

Gary asked about the Friends of Hampden Seniors. Rita checked and \$47,000 has been designated for the senior center specifically. Bobbi would like to let the public know that the Friends are working hard and have already raised funds.

Bobbi will let Claudia know the Building Committee would like to be on the next agenda at the meeting on April 9<sup>th</sup>.

Mike D. was thinking about the soft costs regarding this building project. I.e. furniture. If that was taken out of the equation and fundraise for furniture, that would change the bottom line and the ask. The senior center has a lot of furniture now that would continue to be used.

Rita remembers asking Chris for a list of the total cost of furnishings, but one has not yet been provided. The committee would like to see a breakdown of those items. Becky will ask Chris for that breakdown.

Becky explained that the Senior Center Modernization Grant was not successful, and that money is not guaranteed every year as a funding source. If other grants are available through MCOA, Becky will follow up and reapply.

### **EV Charging Stations**

Gary sent a draft email about the EV Charging stations asking for an enterprise fund to be established for the stations with proceeds to benefit the senior center. Gary read his email to the committee. John M asked if the charging stations will be maintained by the company and Gary responded yes.

Rita made a motion to send correspondence to the Selectmen. Cliff Seconded. All in favor.

### **Discussion on the Forum on March 21<sup>st</sup>.**

Presentation at 6:00. Chris Wante will be at the meeting.

Don to welcome everyone and provide a dollar amount.

Bobbi thinks bringing up some of the history of the committee is important at the forum.

Rita thinks that what Don said at the presentation to the Board of Selectmen was very good. Short and sweet.

Rita thinks tours could be awkward at the beginning. Rita thinks the presentation should happen at the beginning and then tours afterwards.

6:00 presentation and tours after if people are interested. Q&A after the presentation/tour.

Refreshments. Becky will be available to provide tours.

Claudia thinks it will be important to get the information out to the Friends Board and the COA Board.

BOS was asked to do a Robo call as well as send an email to all Departments informing them of the meeting. Discussion about Robo calls and how you can sign up on the Town of Hampden website.

Becky will add General Robo Call information to the next scribe.

### **FAQ sheet**

Rita previously submitted a list of questions that she recorded from the members of the COA board. Incorporate that list into the Frequently Asked Questions sheet.  
What happens to programs and services during construction?  
How will the project be paid for?

Becky handed out a copy of the FAQ sheet that was sent out by Chris from a project at the Williamstown Fire Department. Discussion. Carol likes the simplified breakdown of the cost.

Becky asked if there is a need to have a handout at the forum. Cliff will do a projection of the numbers and will talk to Dick Patullo.

Rita thinks the handout at the first forum should be the design and be general. At the next forum go into more detail. Gives the committee more time and gives people the opportunity to think about the project.

Becky will post on the website and will make copies of the plan for everyone who comes to the forum. Becky will post a forum notice in the lobby. Discussion as to whether to put anything on the website before the forum. John M wonders about why we shouldn't post the design before the forum. Discussion.

Could the sign by the road be used to advertise the forum?

John Flynn talked about a local project in a neighboring town where all information was made available before the town meeting, and it was a successful vote. John asked what the second public forum agenda should be. There is a short time period we are working with. Two months until town meeting. Electronic sign board at Wilbraham Road intersection can announce the public forum as well as the sign outside of town hall. John F thinks more information should go out ahead of time. John F thinks the history of the committee could be on a handout at the forum explaining what are the shortcomings of the current center and why the need for the project?

Currently the design is the only thing being handed out at the meeting on 3/21. Questions at the forum will be tracked. FAQ sheet from the first forum to be ready for the second forum.

Tentative date of Thursday, April 18<sup>th</sup> for the second forum. 6:00 start.

Becky will work on an 11x17 to include a summary of why we are here, etc., and some frequently asked questions.

### **Other Business:**

Has the open meeting law changed? Is there a requirement to post through the Clerk? John Flynn said a town meeting vote was taken and posting on the website is the only place that is required. Becky will send through the Town Clerk as well as post on the website for future meetings.

New invoice from edm submitted to the committee. Cliff made a motion to approve payment of the bill. Seconded by John M. All in favor.

Cliff motion to adjourn. Rita seconded. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 12:31 PM.

Next meeting:

Forum Date: 3/21/2024 at 6:00PM at the Hampden Senior Center

Meeting 3/25/2024 at 11:00 AM at the Hampden Police Department

Respectfully Submitted for the Secretary: Rebecca C. Moriarty, Executive Director (Ex-Officio)

ZOOM Recording:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/eNiGJNUIKMPv0Vwkf2NcxRyXuR9RiVKg3rLfFZy3VLGjxwRWk4QN1T3WARXOpndr.8DQ7wXoVsvB-irGq>

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