

TOWN OF JEFFERSON  
SELECT BOARD  
July 8, 2019

The regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen for the Town of Jefferson was held at the Select Board Office Monday July 8, 2019 at 4:00 pm

**PRESENT:** Kevin Meehan, Chair; Tom Brady and Cindy Silver(4:20) members comprising a quorum of the Board.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Linda Cushman, Assistant to Selectmen; Stuart Arnett, CEO ; Chris Kennedy, architect; Mike Bruss, construction consultant, ADG, LLC; Mike Wheeler, EHDanson; Michelle Morin-Grey, NCC , Chris Milligan, Fire Chief

Kevin Meehan opened the regular Select Board meeting at 4:00 pm. The Highway and Transfer Station report was reviewed.

**RFQ Interviews:**

Stuart Arnett, Chris Kennedy and Mike Bruss of ADG were in to present there qualifications for the Feasibility Study Building Reuse project. Mr. Arnett stated his position within this project and introduced Mr. Kennedy and his role as well as Mr. Bruss and his role in the project. Mr. Arnett stated that their goal is to come up the the best possible plan for the Town to meet their goal. Mr. Kennedy said that he is with UK Architects of Hanover. They have done many projects of this type. As well as looking at structural concerns they look at how does a project effect a community, how does this project engage the community as well as how does it improve the community. They have worked with Plan NH working on charretts in local communities. Mr. Kennedy explained how they can put together a visual plan doing virtual designs. He gave examples of several project that he has been involved with. Mike Bruss introduced himself stating he has a private management company after having owned a construction management company for 35 years. He has worked extensively on preservation and adaptive reuse projects. Mr. Bruss said that he has a project in Lancaster working on the PJ Noyes building project working for Northern Forestry, he has just completed a project in Littleton working on the waterfront project. Mr. Bruss stated that the majority of work he does now is for municipalities and non-profits working with abandoned and distressed buildings bring them into relevant use for the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Having been in construction Mr. Bruss said that he can assist the architects with cost of new construction analysis as well as energy analysis. Mr. Arnett said that the group is very community oriented. Mr. Arnett said as he see this project the Town if looking at the feasibility of the project, if this can work, is it a good idea or not a good idea and the final part of the project is how is it paid for. The Town does not want to end up with two empty building versus one. The information and comments within the survey were specific and helpful. The timing of getting all this information ready to present for budget and town meeting will be addressed as well as holding hearing to inform the public of what is being prepared. Mr. Arnett said that he would ask for any question from the Board. Cindy Silver arrived apologizing for being late. Kevin gave Cindy a quick update of what has been presented. There was a brief explanation of different types of funding may be available to assist with any needed construction. Linda Cushman did state that Jefferson does not qualify for CGDGs unless the threshold has changed recently. Michele Grey said if there was an anchor tenant economic development may apply. Mr. Arnett said that the survey focused on three things locating the town offices, the library and having senior center at the building. There was a little diversity there as well.

Mr. Arnett asked if the Board had any questions of them.

Kevin said that is one of the things the Board looks at our stand point in the separation of the Town the Town's makeup is prominently an older group. It was not a surprise to the Board that those areas were more targeted than child or youth interest. Kevin said that there is still a need for youth programs. Mr. Arnett said that the comments in the survey showed the same. The comments from the survey were helpful in letting the Board know that there are other interests. Cindy asked if the group could tell of some of the previous municipality they completed and the scope of the work. Mr. Bruss stated that in Francestown there was an condemned old academy building a little larger than this with a second story that was converted into town offices and meeting hall, bring the building into the 21<sup>st</sup> century installing a lift and including mixed use of the building. In Meredith working currently on the library being a historical building, working with the trustees, planning board and selectmen on this project. Mr. Kennedy said that he is working on a couple libraries right now, one being with Mr. Bruss the other a small library with no bathrooms and a lot too small to accommodate a septic system, though the main problem is that it is not accessible. The question came up was the library required to have a restroom, not because when it was built in 1912 it met the building code, if there were any codes. Mr. Kennedy said they are working to resolve these issues and make the building usable. These projects require a lot of thought to make the project work. They have done renovation of large mill buildings in Claremont. Mr. Kennedy said that almost half of the projects they do are some kind of renovation or additions to existing buildings. They try to focus on the benefits to a community in doing a project. Mr. Arnett said that he is the finance part to the project. He is working with some towns now on their zoning to encourage what they want to see develop. He works to help with the economic strategies how do we get people to encourage something rather than saying what they don't want. Kevin did state that Jefferson is currently working on updating the Master Plan. With this project happening the Planning Board thought this was the time to take a good look at the Plan. The Planning Board has decided that now is the time to take the opportunity to update the Plan with this project in mind. An example of this type of change is in Farmington there is an acre and half lot downtown where the fire station used to be and they are working to make their zoning more flexible to encourage housing. Cindy asked if they have had in their experiences for example if the town offices move to the new building what happens to this building, what is the domino effect. This one thing as a group ADG does consider, you don't want to go from one empty building to two empty buildings. There are redevelopment scenarios that could be looked at. We would look at codes to see what may be triggered with the change of use, the size of these buildings are not very large so there is flexibility. A space like the Town Hall the question is do you keep it as a function space or look to see if there may be other uses such as a restaurant or such. We can quickly analyze to see if there are any red flags that come up, then we could do a cost estimate with regards to the needed changes. The Board would have the information needed to analyze what to do with the buildings, retain them, disperse or keep the current functions in the buildings. This will give the Board the priorities needed to make decisions with. The Board controls the destiny. Kevin stated that as well as the three buildings there is a piece of property. It was asked if the Town has a Capital Improvement Plan. Yes, as well as capital reserve funds for specific needs. Cindy said that something that has come up is the interest from the Historical Society to have space at the building as well. The current Historical Building they own with a stipulation that if they no longer use the building it goes back to church conference. It was asked if the building is on the historical record. This was not known. This building is in need of major repairs. Tom asked in the future of repurposing a building is this where grants would come in. If the use was not going to be municipal then you would need to look at funding means to pay for the repurposing. An example was given as a federal building was given to a municipality this opened up a different source. Tom asked if the survey with basically three specified uses being determined does this help with ADG's part. Yes the uses that were given seem to be reasonable uses. There is no project that is not challenged with cost. This is something that may be able to be looked at in phases. Something else that should be considered is whether a space can be

efficiently utilized, something that the Board can get behind as a good value. Mr. Kennedy said that they have found that if a community does not have a champion to stay on top of a study it will end up setting on a shelf some collecting dust. Cindy said that towns people have said they want to see meeting and committee put together to keep informed.

Tom said that he has asked had individuals why would I want to move to Jefferson when there is nothing for kids. Would you look at a project something like this as a place where you could also have like an incubator to start something to bring younger people into town if you had programs for them. Does this make sense? Yes, what is taking place now is what they call "age friendly" communities. What works good for an older age group also works for a younger group. A lot of what you do in a community to make it easier for the older population makes it easier for everybody. On the economic side of this in the North Country at one time when mills were closing there were the loss of jobs, now there is a lack of people to fill the job openings. This is something that needs to be addressed. Mr. Arnett said that he is working with NCC to work with communities to see what changes can be made to to improve each community so an entrepreneur would want to open a business. Not every town wants to be a "Littleton" nor should it have to be. Not everyone wants to live in Nashua, they just need some sign that a community is moving ahead to be interested in moving there. This is what they are hoping for in Lancaster with the PJ Noyes building. Libraries do help with this as being the place where connections to high speed internet are made. Mr. Arnett said that they look forward to working with the Town. It was asked if the Board has a time frame for making a decision on who they would like to hire. Kevin said that there is a regular Board meeting after the interviews are completed, so it should be tonight. The Board thanked everyone for coming.

Mike Wheeler of EH Danson asked the Board how they would like to start. Kevin said a brief introduction of yourself and then proceed with the project.

Mr. Wheeler said that a project like the one in Jefferson is not unusual for EH Danson. Mr. Wheeler said that he has brought some different projects that they have worked on to show the Board. Jefferson's project is a little different as it has more of a marketing aspect to it, however this fits right in with other project they have done. In a lot of cases funding lags with the respect to getting things moving along. They have broken some of these projects down into phases. Once the feasibility study is done, they come up with a plan as to how to move forward. The survey results were precise as to what is wanted. To look at the study and survey and see what options are for funding is available to make this happen. In the proposal there is the name NCIC which they have worked with on a lot of different projects to get funding. It is possible if the Town wanted Mr. Wheeler said that he could speak with NCIC on the funding side so that everyone as a group would know what is available. It may help to steer the project a little. The other option is to do the creativity part then go look to see what funding could work. Mr. Wheeler said that there are two approaches and he is willing to work with the Town going in either direction. It is in our proposal there is an outline as to who this would be approached. The other pieces of the proposal is related to what you have for an asset we would be looking at it from a mechanical, structural and electrical stand point. Depending on what the end use is, when we get to the process of what will be designed into the building. We will know what you have and need at that point. If there are added things needed to bring the infrastructure on the inside up it will be known and Danson will have the answers for the Board. In the proposal there is a site component to the proposal, for the purpose of assess what services are available such as water, septic and things like that. These services tend to become a player in this kind of process in the event we get into larger assemble spaces and things like that where the building may require some kind of fire suppressant system. At the end of the report there could/would be a list of thing that needs to be addressed within the building some of which will be code driven. Initially Mr. Wheeler said during the walk through he believes that the building has been fairly will taken care of. At the end of the project

the Board will receive something similar to the proposal it will include schematic drawings of the building, all the reports, basic evaluation of everything and what we see as code improvements may be needed. The determining factor will be what is the occupancy going to be. Mr. Wheeler said that they have assembled a good team to work on this project. As he has said NCIC has provided funding options on a majority to the projects they have worked on. NCIC covers northern NH and Vermont, they have the expertise to assist with financial options. Mr. Wheeler said that this is how he would approach this project, there are a couple meetings scheduled with the Board to set down and discuss things once funding has come together. Mr. Wheeler said that what he would need from the Board is direction. Cindy did tell Mr. Wheeler that there may be the potential of the Historical Society being part of the project. Mr. Wheeler said that he had worked with Adele Woods on something in the past for the Library and some miscellaneous things at the Historical Society. Most of this work was regarding access issues. Mr. Wheeler said that they have worked with the town of Bethlehem on their library. Cindy asked what other towns has EH Danson done work for. Lyndonville, Derby, and Island Pond, Mr. Wheeler said they have worked with a lot of the towns in northern Vermont and also done some work with the city of Berlin. Cindy asked if he had done other projects such as the Jefferson project dealing with an abandon school building. Mr. Wheeler stated that they have done some municipal work such as town office things, there has been a lot of public safety work. EH Danson has done a lot of municipality work. Mr. Wheeler said the sample project that he brought with him is a library. The library itself is a historical building, with another historical build that is connected to a bank adjacent to the library that was gifted to the library. Mr. Wheeler said that the feasibility study that they were asked to do here is similar to what Jefferson is looking to do. They had two buildings it had to be determine whether the buildings could be connected and make this a usable space. In the end the project was done in stages, making the changes that needed to be done to the buildings first and then working on connecting the two. The approach on the estimating of the project at this stage they would figure out what renovation may have to be done with a cost estimate and include an overall cost estimate for the project as part of our services to the Town. Cindy asked if the firm has worked within the municipalities working with building committees and the town to have champion with in town. Mr. Wheeler said most of the projects like that have been with school bonding projects. This project is a little more unique as it is multi faceted. Mr. Wheeler asked what the population make up is of the town. Mr. Wheeler said that the Town Survey will be helpful as part of their proposal is to get feedback from the residents, the question being how best to do this, hard form, electronically web-based or use some other means. Cindy did state that not everyone has computer access. There some other options. Linda presented the population figures as compiled by NH Employment Security, age 55 to 64 is 239 and 65 and over is 183 total population was listed as 978. The senior population would be about 20%. Mr. Wheeler said that the building has the potential of being a multi-use facility. These are all things that will be explored. Mr. Wheeler said that many of the projects that they have done have different types of funding sources such as the USDA and municipal bonding and some gifted funds, some were also with State and County funding Mr. Wheeler said that he has many other projects that . Kevin said that one of the questions that keeps coming up with regards to using the school building is what will happen to the current library, office and historical buildings and the land that was purchased for the purpose of a new library. What would be the scope and scale of your looking at this part of the project. It would be in part not detailed but general with discussion with the Board once the buildings were vacated what the potential would be. This would be difficult with the Historical Society building as it is a specialty building and it is very historic, the library building not so much as it is more residential, and this building assuming it is all vacated it is kind of hard to judge what this would be used for. Cindy asked what had been done in other towns with a building like this. Mr. Wheeler said that in most towns this type of space was still used as a meeting space and voting. These buildings are going to be difficult to finds a reuse for, it takes a special development side for this. Tom asked if Mr. Wheeler had reviewed the survey results. Yes, he had. Even though there was no survey results for activities for youth or young families. Would this be something that you would look at putting in to try

to attract families to the town. Mr. Wheeler said that when he was at the building with Cindy and Kevin there was some mention of that. There is all ready a playground there so there is a component of community there. The talked about the possibility of some trails and such in that area. There is no survey or site plan of that area. Mr. Wheeler said that he would be able to do an aerial site review for the school site, though it is a heavily wooded area. Mr. Wheeler asked if there are a lot of community event done yearly like dinners and such. There are two events that are done annually, the firemen do a breakfast. Mr. Wheeler said that most of the municipalities do pancake breakfasts and things like spaghetti dinners. Mr. Wheeler said that in order to have a community draw you need to have some kind of activity to make that draw. Cindy said that the talk that she has heard is that it would be nice to have more fund raisers, hunter suppers like had been held in the past, just a lot more community events. Mr. Wheeler said that he things the senior component might be a player in that regards as a draw. This will need to be explored more. Some of the spaces can be multi-use spaces. The Board thanked Mr. Wheeler for his time. Mr. Wheeler asked if the Board had an idea as to when they would be making a decision. Cindy said possibly this afternoon.

The meeting was recessed at 5:45 pm.

The meeting was called to order at 6:25 pm by Kevin Meehan, Chair.

Kevin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **Unfinished Business:**

Cindy said that she would like to make a motion based on the information provided in the two written proposals and interviews recommend that the Board approve the RFQ as presented by ADG, LLC. If a contract is not able to be negotiated then a the Board will revisit the RFQ's process. Tom seconded the motion. The motion carries.

The Board thanked Michelle Grey for her assistance in this process.

The warrants were signed for the payroll and accounts payable.

Invoices were approved for payment May 28, June 3 and June 10, 2019.

#### **Minute Approval:**

Cindy made a motion to accepted the minutes of the June 24, 2019 meeting as presented. Tom seconded the motion. Cindy suggested making a few verbiage corrections. The corrections were made. The motion carries to accept the minutes as corrected.

#### **Public Input:**

Chris Milligan was in to present a check that has been received for a false alarm at NFI. NH State Police had requested that the Town send a bill for their services from the Fire Department. The check is from DHHS. It is not for the entire amount that was bill, however it is all that was allowed.

The second issue that has come to light is the property that is owned by Michael Fraser is being advertised as a bed and breakfast. The State Fire Marshall's office had been at the property about a year ago and did an inspection. Mr. Fraser was written a letter from the Fire Marshall's office on March 29, 2019 outlining to him as to what would have to be done to the property to operate a bed and

breakfast. Chris said that as of this date there has been no contact from Mr. Fraser as to whether any of the improvements have been done. Chris asked if the business permit had been issued, is this the hearing that is being held Thursday(July 11). No, Mr. Fraser has not applied for a business permit.

The Board made the decision that a letter will be sent to Mr. Fraser informing him that he is not in compliance

### **Reports of Departments/Boards:**

*Highway Department:* None

*Office:*

Linda reported that this morning when she came in the generator was running, after checking everything she end up calling Royal Electric. Royal suggested contacting Eversource to see if there was an issue with the meter, if not then Royal would send someone to check the generator. Eversource sent a person out and there was nothing on their end. Royal Electric sent two men later in the day, it was determined that there were two fuses blown in the distribution box. The service men believe there could have been a lightning strike.

The other thing that has been being worked on is a problem with the phone in the Fire Department. Linda said that she has been trying to reach the repair service with no luck. She will keep trying working on this.

Linda said that there has been someone in inquiring about about how to get a variance and whether the variance comes before a building permit.

Someone had inquired on getting house numbers and how they were assigned. There was an inquiry as to putting a second house on a lot, was this permitted or what had to be done.

### **Unfinished Business:**

Linda met with CAI, Franco Rossi, President regarding putting the Town's tax maps online. This is not as easy as we were in hopes. Mr. Rossi did say that this is a good time to be discussing this as our tax map files are getting harder to up date because they are not digital. The State of New Hampshire has a digital file, however they are just taken from the tax map as it is, without doing the research of the deeds and such. These files can be used however they will not be accurate as it would be if the deed research was done. To recompile all the files using the deed research would cost in the range of \$75,000. To do the on screen records using the current records the cost would be about \$20,000 plus a one time setup fee of \$3,000 plus the first year fee of \$2,400 and there would be an annual service fee of \$3,000. Mr. Rossi said that CAI would be willing to work with the Town and do this type of a project in two segments, billing half of the cost and doing the work at the end of the year and billing the remainder for the second year period. The project would be billed for payment the end of 2020 and the beginning of 2021. The work can not be done in stages. Within the changes and putting the maps online that they can include more of the assessing data. Avitar has a program that will allow for batching records that could be forwarded to CAI. Linda said that there would be a lot of time involved in keeping some of this information updated. Cindy asked what would take up the time. If information such as building permit are include this will have to be done by the Town. Kevin said the day to day

items would have to be updated by the Town. This again would depend on how much information the Board want supplied.

Linda was asked to contact CAI and ask them to submit an estimate including what would have to be done to upgrade the tax map files to digital format.

Cindy said that as far as the Town Garden goes Winnie has sent her a letter stating that she had sent out six request for funds to support the upkeep of the Town Garden. Cindy said that there should be an update from Winnie later.

There have been several people in that are just looking to chat about things going on in Town.

Linda said that she is planning on getting out the timber bills and the bill to Santa's Village this week.

**New Business:**

**Public Input:** None

**Non-Public RSA-91-A:39(if needed):** None

**Any Other Business:**

Debbie Dubois has confirmed that some member of the Historical Society will be in on July 15.

Kevin said that he would like to discuss with John Silver, Jr. the mowing rates that is being charged. Kevin question as to whether John should be working as an employee rather as a private contractor, and be paid for the use of his equipment as is done in some other of the mowing jobs.

**The next meeting will be July 15, 2019.**

**Adjournment:**

Tom made a motion to adjourn. Cindy seconded the motion. Motion carries.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,