



**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
TOWN OF NEW MARLBOROUGH  
OFFICE OF THE SELECTBOARD  
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**Minutes  
Town Hall Planning Committee  
September 15, 2022  
4:30 p.m.**

**Committee Members Present:**

Rona Easton  
Robert Hartt  
Richard Long  
Barbara Marchione  
Mari Enoch, Chief Procurement Officer

**Others Present:**

Prue Spaulding  
Tara White  
Joe Poindexter, NM5VN

Richard Long called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

**A motion was made by Bob Hartt, seconded by Rona Easton, and so voted to approve the minutes of September 1, 2022 as amended.**

Richard opined that the objective of the temporary Town Hall Planning Committee is to produce sufficient information for Special Town Meeting in order that voters can make an informed decision about either investing in the existing Town Hall or going with another option. He proposed a timeline which included a Special Town Meeting prior to Thanksgiving as there is worry that the Winery option on Knight Road might not be available next spring. He voiced concern that the RFP process will take several months and would not allow for a meeting this fall. If the Town uses the exemption for Unique Property Acquisitions a fall meeting will be possible. He distributed an email from Jeremia Pollard, Town Counsel, which explains that the Select Board must determine in writing that advertising will not benefit the government body's interest. The determination must be published for thirty days and include a proposed purchase price.

Bob expressed concerns about the speed of the proposed process and reiterated the need for programming, public feedback, and a budget.

Richard distributed a basic schematic of the Winery building prepared by Housatonic Architectural Services showing a proposed plan to house Town Hall in the Winery and included an area for the Police Department. It was noted that there were further decisions to be made about the programming that was presented on the drawings including police department, bathrooms, and locked offices vs an open floor plan with cubicles.

The immediate question at hand is to make a decision about moving forward with the exemption.

Mari asked if the State needs to approve the exemption. Richard said based on the written guidance, he didn't think so and speculates that the purpose of publishing the document for 30 days is to provide an opportunity for someone to object, including potentially the State.

The members of the Committee were in agreement to work to preserve the option of the Winery.

There was some skepticism that the Committee could get the numbers regarding renovation costs in time for a November meeting but all agreed to try.

Bob distributed a list of objectives for the Committee to consider which included: Solicit community feedback regarding alternative and key factors to be considered, determine current and possible long-term programming needs for staff and community, determine budget parameters for any recommendations, and prepare an RFP to solicit offers to sell a suitable building that will accommodate the staff and organizational needs.

Barbara offered to work with contractors to get cost estimates for the existing Town Hall for renovations that have not been addressed in the ADA compliance documents.

Richard will continue to work on the exemption and would like to work with Rona on programming.

Bob offered to help with the terms of any option contract.

The group discussed the next steps as far as pursuing the Winery option. It was decided that Richard would send an email to the Select Board informing it of the Committee's recommendation that the Select Board pursue the exemption and begin negotiations with the Winery in order to maintain the option.

**A motion was made by Barbara, seconded by Rona, and so voted to recommend that the Select Board negotiate a price and options contract.**

Bob shared a draft of a communication from the Committee that could be used in the NM5VN to introduce the issue and ask for public feedback.

Barbara will continue to work on survey questions for public feedback and committee members are encouraged to submit questions to her. It was determined there was not enough time to insert a survey in the October issue of the NM5VN news. It was suggested the survey should also be mailed and distributed online.

The Committee set the date of the next meeting for Thursday, September 22 at 5:30 via zoom as Richard was going to be out of town.

**A motion was made, seconded and so voted to adjourn the meeting at 6:16 pm.**

Submitted by,  
Mari Enoch

Date Approved: September 22, 2022