

Minutes of August 3, 2022 Building Committee meeting
FINAL (w/ Wayne's review and revisions)
Approved at 9/1/22 Building Committee Meeting

Wakefield Parks and Recreation Commission - Building Committee

August 3, 2022 Meeting held at Wakefield Parks and Rec Building

Attendees:

Wayne Robinson

Alyssa Hall

Charlie Edwards

Tom Dube

Howie Knight

Denny Miller

Tom Daniels

Wakefield Police Chief Fenton

John Myers

Wayne Robinson called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Wayne summarized two meetings held with Groen Construction discussing their current proposal for construction of a new Recreation Center/Community Center in Wakefield. Wayne has told Groen that the current estimate of \$7 million for construction will not pass in an election by the townspeople. He suggested to Groen that \$5 million would have a better chance of acceptance. Groen pushed back stating that the estimate for the gymnasium alone would be approximately \$4.7 million and suggested perhaps building the Center in phases.

Tom Dube and Wayne told the Committee that Charlie Edwards has been collaborating closely with the contractors who are in the process of constructing Wakefield's new DPW building – what are their thoughts on the cost of constructing a “like facility” to serve as a new Recreation/Community Center?

Tom, Charlie, and Wayne met recently with Groen Construction, pushing them hard for what's necessary as next steps and what economies could Groen offer to reduce their estimated cost of construction. Groen wanted \$55,000 to move forward. Wayne reported the conversations were not going the right way – little progress was being made to reduce the estimated cost of construction.

Wayne gave the floor to Charlie Edwards. Charlie reported that he feels Wakefield would have a much better chance of accepting a \$5 million cost of construction for a new facility. Groen is stuck in the range of high \$6 million dollar cost estimate. Even paying Groen \$55,000 will not get us a conceptual plan for a building – there would be an additional cost to bring in an architect and a civil engineer. (It was stated that smaller companies can provide similar architectural and design services at a lower cost.)

Charlie presented some rough drawings of a conceptual building discussed with Mark Pearson and Charlie Zilch, both of whom have been engaged by Wakefield to complete the new DPW project. The concept for the Rec/Community is a metal “barn-like” building, gymnasium in the center surrounded by an interior walking track, offices, locker rooms, and activity rooms. The building would include a basement which would house the mechanicals and provide storage opportunities. Heat could be provided from multiple sources – pellet, solar and propane. The estimated cost for the new DPW

building is \$200 per sq. ft. The estimate for similar construction materials used in a new Rec Center would be between \$200 and \$250 per sq. ft. and we would be working with the same General Contractor, Mark Pearson, who is currently on site building the new Wakefield DPW building. Mr. Pearson would provide us with less “red tape”, an “on site build” and other “soft” services which will be included in the build price (building renderings, for example).

It was stated again with Wayne, Tom Dube and Charlie Edwards in agreement that, after pushing Groen Construction hard to get them to work with us to achieve price reductions, Groen won't move off their “high \$6 million” estimate to build the new Rec/Community Center.

It was suggested that it is time we moved on from Groen and look for another contractor to help us develop a proposal that would be more acceptable to the citizens of Wakefield to present at the Town's next Deliberative Session for a vote to put the project back on the ballot during 2023.

The Committee voted unanimously to move on from Groen and to hear from Mr. Pearson and Mr. Zilch on their thoughts and plans as to how they can help us with the project.

Mr. Pearson and Mr. Zilch were called into the meeting and introduced themselves to the group. Mr. Pearson has 40+ years' experience as a general contractor. He is a former police officer/Captain. Has served as the Hudson, NH Asst. Town Administrator, Old Orchard Beach Town Administrator (with significant recreation program responsibility), Plaistow, NH Town Manager (Southern NH pipeline project and a new highway garage. He understands town “politics”, Capital Improvement Projects, and Budget Committees.

Charlie Zilch has worked with Mark Pearson on many of the projects Mark mentioned in his introduction. They both understand “recreation and Community Center” needs.

Both come with excellent referrals. We would gain economies as Mr. Pearson is already engaged with Wakefield on the DPW build. Pearson would provide a (i) design build, (ii) value engineering with quality and decreased cost and (iii) work as the “Owner's project manager dealing directly with sub-contractors.

Several design questions were asked. Denny Miller – what is the roof pitch? Can we collect all water running off the roof in an underground cistern and use the water for fire protection? What gauge metal is the building – we want the building to look good/no dents on the siding for a prolonged period. What is the snow load for the roof? Each of the questions was answered promptly and efficiently by Mr. Pearson indicating to the group his willingness to understand the needs of the Committee and the Town and signaling his willingness work with us.

The Committee set some time frames for some deliverables. We need drawings of the building – inside and outside – to use to sell the concept to the citizens of Wakefield. We need descriptions of the programs that will be offered and descriptions of the functionality of the building and its proposed contents. We need to establish a schedule of meetings, with encouragement including incentives (door prizes?, food?) to attend to gather townspeople to support the project before the 2023 Deliberative Session. We need to put all the above in place before the end of September 2022. We need to address two major concerns of the townspeople – what is the cost to build and furnish the facility and what is the cost to operate the facility.

Other voter concerns were discussed. Interest rates are higher than they were in March 2022 when the first vote was taken. What is the impact on payments now that we are talking a lower cost to build? What does the building look like outside and inside – does the architecture “fit” with Wakefield? What

does the new highway department building look like? We want a steel building that will last and look good for at least 30 years w/o high maintenance costs.

Note: Tom Daniels is working with Wayne and Alyssa to develop an estimated operating budget for the new facility.

There was discussion about energy costs. Solar was mentioned along with pellets and propane. Mr. Pearson cited several elements which need to be considered when budgeting energy costs. Wakefield has an excellent contract to purchase propane. There are several options – propane, oil, solar, mini-splits, pellets – all of which will be included in an analysis of the most efficient energy cost option(s) which Mr. Pearson will complete for our review.

Mark Pearson will provide the Committee with exterior and interior renderings of the building at no cost to us.

Next steps

Mark Pearson and Charlie Zilch, working together, to provide to the Committee by September 1, 2022

- Operating cost estimates (Wayne and Alyssa collaborating independently with Tom Daniels)
- Renderings of the building – interior and exterior
- Cost to build and furnish the facility
- Timeline for the build

Mark Pearson contact information;

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Mr. Pearson is expecting an email listing the “Next steps” mentioned above.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Respectfully submitted,

John Myers