

**Town of Richmond  
Town Center and Library Committee  
Minutes December 15, 2022**

**Present:** Josh Arneson, Laurie Dana, Dave Healy, Amy Wardwell, Christine Werneke

**For Black River Design:** John Hemmelgarn and Andrew McCullough

**I. Welcome & Public Comment** - None

**II. Additions or Deletions to Agenda** -- None

**III. Items for Presentation or Discussion**

**a) Discussion with Black River on a project plan and next steps to the design process**

**Timeline & Milestones** -- Christine asked that we return to a consideration of the draft timeline from our first meeting with Black River. As of this meeting, we are on schedule for the Option 2 timeline which aimed for a bond vote at a May special election. The committee discussed the need for 30-40 day prep and warning time prior to a Bond Vote and that May is likely not doable. Josh will ask Linda to outline the various required steps prior to a Bond Vote (warning, public meeting, Selectboard approval, printing ballots, etc.) We would like to have this for the next meeting so that we can draft a schedule that would accommodate a fall 2023 Special Election. This will allow us to look at other points at which Selectboard and public comment is appropriate.

**Town Meeting** – The committee discussed whether there should be a presentation at Town Meeting and the consensus was that it was premature to have a floor discussion. Josh commented that this is a Monday evening and there will likely be a lengthy budget discussion already. The committee was in favor of having an information table with displays and handouts about the work to date—both at Monday evening Town Meeting and during the voting on Tuesday. This would be a good opportunity for committee members to engage with the public.

**Informational Meeting** – John felt that we will have enough information to have a public information & feedback session after the March town meeting. We may have design options to present and get comment on at that point. This could be promoted at Town Meeting.

**Decisions Needed** – John laid out the next decisions that the committee will need to make before Black River can proceed with more specific design plans. The decisions include:

- **Police Department program requirements** – Josh reported that the Town’s conversations with Hinesburg about combined policing may or may not proceed and, in any case, a decision is several years away. The committee feels that we need to proceed on the basis of current Police Dept. needs and our best information on the future of policing. The committee felt that they need more information on police needs and for their January 12 meeting, will invite community members Gary Margolis & Jared Katz, the Richmond Police Chief and officers, and June Heston and Jeff Forward (representing the Selectboard) for an exploration of space needs for the Police Department. **Jeff will be asked to make the invitation to these individuals.** There was some discussion about inviting the Hinesburg Police Chief, but I believe that we decided against this. Andrew (Black River) will have the results of their interview with the Police Chief, the 2 design plans that compare with and without addition. They will also bring sample plans from other Police Departments that they have designed. This will be an information session, not a vote.
- **Tenant Space** – Christine commented that we should look at how much space we want to allocate to tenants--not necessarily the tenants are. That said, the Committee seemed to agree that the Richmond Historical Society and Community Senior Center, while separate nonprofits, are important community organizations that provide unique services to Richmond. There was broad agreement that preserving them in the building was preferred. Laurie observed that their space needs are fairly

minimal and is general office, meeting and storage space. Laurie also mentioned that tenants with specific “fit up” needs should be required to fund that fit up and that it should be reversible. There was also general agreement that the Town doesn’t want to become a landlord for market rate tenants.

- **Town Staff on one floor or two** – John & Andrew would like to have a decision about whether Town Staff **must** all be on one floor.
- **Basement** – John just stated that we all understand that the basement can only contain storage (or parking). Not really a decision to be made.
- **Post Office** – Laurie observed that we do need to communicate with Post Office officials regarding plans that would affect their operations. John felt that we can start with the Richmond Postmaster. Issues include raising the floor of the post office above the flood plain—more information on this will be included in the elevation survey results. Some design plans also included taking a small portion of the Post Office’s floor space for mechanicals—John said this could be changed. If we explored adding a second floor to the Post Office, that would necessitate them moving out during construction. Hopefully the local Postmaster can provide information on communication with federal officials.

**b) Discussion on what to include in the Town Report**

Laurie will draft something for that simplifies Jeff’s Selectboard presentation and will send to Jeff for review and editing. This is due to Linda by January 11.

**c) Minutes of the Dec. 1 meeting**

Minutes from 12/1/22 meeting were approved.

**d) Consideration of skipping or rescheduling the Dec. 29 meeting**

The committee will not meet on December 29, the next meeting of the committee will be on January 12, 2023.

**e) Agenda for January 12 meeting – Note earlier start time of 6:30 p.m.**

**6:30-7:15 pm**

- Review the elevation survey results and input from Kevin Worden
- Draft a more specific schedule and milestones to take us to a Bond Vote—based on input from Linda on requirements.

**7:15-8:30 pm**

- Discussion of Police Department needs with guests

**f) Other business**

- Laurie mentioned that the RFP on the Library building projects has been reissued with a bid opening date in January.
- Josh mentioned that the Library Heat Pump on the first floor (from the Breadloaf project) failed 3 months after the 1-year warranty expired. JJ from Breadloaf has been contacted and is working on resolving this issue.

**The next meeting of the Committee will be January 12, 2023 from 6:30-8:30**