

Building and Facilities Committee

Minutes of 10-3-19

Syd Crook Room, Academy Building; 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Bowers, Lewis, Williams, Bianchi, Cross, Cardillo,  
Beasley, Sherman

Absent: Cannon, Hogle

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

1. *Approval of Minutes*

The minutes of the previous meeting of September 19, 2019 were reviewed by the Committee, and were then approved unanimously.

2. *Reports*

Mr. Cross reported that there is no further information available regarding the issue of work done by North Branch which he reported at the last meeting.

The Chair reported that the Preliminary report was discussed at the Selectmen's meeting on September 23. He informed the Committee that Selectmen Kidder had expressed concern that the 9-5 and 9-19 minutes had not been posted as, she believed, is required; and that the Committee had not provided, as she believed they were to do, any budget requests for fiscal 2020. She noted that the Committee had received a report from Chief Andersen, and had toured the police department, and she expected that the Committee should have something to report on that for the Selectmen's meeting on September 21.

As to the minutes, the Chair explained to the Selectmen that the Committee had expressed concern after their first meeting that draft minutes had been posted right away on the Town website, and that there were numerous changes that had to be made before they were approved. The Committee had, therefore, asked if the draft minutes could be held, and not posted, until approved. He further explained to the Selectmen that he had reviewed the Right to Know Law, and understood from it that

minutes were to be available within five business days if an inquiry was made; that he had the draft available for any such inquiry; and that they were posted immediately after they were approved by the Committee. He also stated that the minutes for 9-5 had in fact been forwarded to the Administrator's office immediately after they had been approved at the Committee's 9-19 meeting.

The Chair then noted that after that Selectmen's meeting, he forwarded to Kim Hallquist, Administrator, and to the Selectmen, on the day following that meeting, September 22, unapproved draft minutes of the meeting of 9-19, and inquired of the Committee whether he should continue to file unapproved draft minutes with the Administrator within five business days of any meeting. He has left to the Administrator whether the Town will post those drafts to its web site.

The Committee expressed disagreement with immediate dissemination of draft minutes which had not been reviewed and approved, and particularly disagreement with posting unapproved minutes. In response, the Chair stated that he would send out a draft proposal to the Committee, wait a day or two for immediate responses, and then send the draft to Kim to hold, with the request that they not be posted until approved.

As to the budget inquiry, it appeared that Selectmen Rollins was also concerned. The Chair explained to the Selectmen that no specific request had been made because the Committee had not reached any conclusions of specific budget issues for which it would make a request, other than as they related to the departments discussed in the Preliminary Report. He further explained to the Selectmen that the Committee had just begun to analyze the issues at the Police Dept., and though he expected a budget request would be made in the near future, the Committee was not yet in a position to do so. Chair Rollins asked if there could be a budget request by the end of October. Mr. Beasley then explained to the Selectmen the status of the Committee's review of the Police Station and Buker building, and offered that he believed the Committee would be in a position to make a specific request by the end of October.

Mr. Bianchi also explained to the Selectmen that the Committee had been meeting almost every week, which is unusual for committees, and that it had made great headway in looking at all the issues to date.

The Chair also noted that he explained to the Selectmen that the charge to the Committee had been to address the issues of all buildings and facilities in the Town, and not just the Buker building; and, that the Committee had started with five departments and three buildings, which required a bit of time.

He concluded his report by telling the Committee that he is working on a Supplemental Report #1 to include additional requests from the Committee that may arise out of this meeting. These budget issues are an agenda item to follow the Buker building discussion. Mr. Sherman expressed concern that the Committee should not be making piecemeal recommendations, and that it should complete its review before making specific recommendations. He further noted that the budget statements in the Preliminary Report were requests made by department heads, and simply noted by the Committee, with no analysis or review by the Committee as to the expressed need as a budget request.

Finally, the Chair noted that he was scheduled to present this second report to the Selectmen at its meeting on October 21. He encouraged all members who are able to do so to attend that meeting, to respond to any additional inquiries the Selectmen may have. He thanked the members of the Committee who attended the last meeting, and felt it was important that they had done so.

He then reported that he had sent the inquiry the Committee had requested to Harriman, through Kim Hallquist, requesting the supporting data and reasons for the sq. ft. requirements adopted by Harriman in its report. A copy of this request was sent to all Committee members at the time it was sent to Ms. Hallquist. Although he requested of Harriman that they respond if at all possible by the date of this meeting, 10-3, he had not as yet received any response.

*3. Discussion of Buker building issues and Police Dept. space needs options.*

Mr. Beasley presented a revised analysis of the options settled on by the Committee, with substantial additional information included. There was general discussion on this topic. There was a general sense that a decision and recommendation should be made to the Selectmen of which of the options was favored by the Committee. This will be the subject of the next meeting, with a hope that a clear decision will be stated.

There was discussion as to whether Harriman was appropriate to do any additional analysis needed, with regard to the second Option. There was also discussion regarding retaining Mires Architects on this issue. No conclusion was reached, with Mr. Beasley noting that the primary goal was to have a process expert and architect, or those roles combined into one professional, to determine what could be done in the existing building to increase efficiencies while examining the needs of the Police Dept. in conjunction with working directly with the Police Dept. on these needs, and the necessary choices to be made with regard to competing stated needs.

4. *Discussion of budget*

Postponed.

5. *Action Items.*

- a. Chair to inquire of other towns in Merrimack County as to the number of full time officers employed and the gross sq. ft. of their police departments (held over from the last meeting, and not yet accomplished).

The next meeting is scheduled to be held in the Syd Crook room on Thursday, October 10, at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Robert Bowers, Chair