

Building and Facilities Committee

Minutes of 11-12-20

DPW Office; 9:00 a.m.

Members Present: Bowers, Hogle, Cross, Cannon, Bianchi, Sherman, Cardillo; Absent: Beasley

Guest: Bob Harrington, Director, DPW

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting of November 5, 2020, were reviewed by the Committee and were then approved unanimously.

2. Presentation by Bob Harrington, DPW

The Chair thanked Mr. Harrington for meeting with the Committee, and for his report on space needs (attached hereto, and made a part of these minutes). Mr. Harrington first discussed issues related to the transfer station. There is a storage problem for recyclables. They are first baled at the transfer station, and then moved to the DPW site, where they are stored until market conditions allow for their sale/removal. This is not a major problem at present, but could become one both at to space utilized and the space currently used for plastics storage, which is now in a two-bay garage which could be used for other DPW purposes. There is also a continuing traffic problem in that vehicles parked to unload narrow the available travel lane, and sometimes vehicles park in this travel lane, preventing flow of traffic. He did not feel making part of the space in the "circle" available for parking will solve the problem.

He noted that the transfer station study (which will be re-sent to Committee members) concluded that if the Town could acquire the land owned by the State between the transfer station and I-89, there would be sufficient space to solve these problems, and perhaps move the brush and metal disposition to this site, thus relieving the DPW of the need to have a person on site at the stump dump. This person would then work at the transfer station. Phil Sherman inquired about the effect on personnel and costs, to which Mr. Harrington stated that would stay about the same, with perhaps some increase in time, which may

be true in any case due to increased activity at the site. There are currently 17 employees of the DPW.

Mr. Harrington stated that even if additional land could not be acquired for the present location of the transfer station, it would be best for it to remain in that location, and not relocated to another site. There might be advantages to removing the “cottage,” at the transfer station, currently used for records storage, recyclable storage, and a bathroom for employees; and construct a new building for recyclables, and a new bathroom there or at some other location. There is little room on the site for expansion of buildings or services.

Mr. Harrington then turned to a discussion of the main DPW property, and noted that the salt “shed” is a portion of the sand storage building, and that the salt should be relocated, as it mixes with the sand to some degree, and this is not good. There are places on site where this could be accomplished. He also noted that the sewer building “office” space is now used by Matt Grimes as his carpentry shop. This was necessary as Mr. Grimes was using his own shop and equipment and traveling back and forth as the needs dictated. The supplies that were stored in that location by the Recreation Department have been consolidated into one small area and walled off to separate the areas of use. If Mr. Grimes’ shop were moved to the main DPW complex property, it would require a new, separate building, as there is not enough room in the current structures, and they cannot be expanded due to the utility easements on each side of the main building, and the wetlands south of the vehicle storage building. He would also like to be able to store the Town roller inside a building, but currently cannot do so. Inside storage prolongs the life of equipment substantially.

He feels the DPW needs a larger meeting room/lunchroom. They currently use garage space with tables in order to safely distance due to Covid. There is a conference room next to his office. He also feels a new bathroom should be added.

He stated that file storage is not an issue, as there is not presently a huge volume of storage required. Sewer department files are stored in the office space of the sewer department at the sewer building, with current files requiring

frequent access stored in two or three files in the office space of the DPW. There are DPW files in his office, with a cabinet or two of additional files in the garage area, against the far wall.

Committee members inquired about a “facilities manager” for Town buildings, and Mr. Harrington reported that they are in the process of setting up a system for this purpose. He has asked Mr. Grimes to start a file on each Town building, and begin to accumulate records relating to each, such as when and what additions were made to buildings; the dates of installation/repair/replacement of roofs, and other items requiring such attention; a schedule for checking furnaces, generators, and other such equipment on a regular basis; and all information on the contractors and contracts related to those tasks. His plan is that he, as DPW director, and any future directors, will oversee the process to make sure it is being adequately compiled as a reference tool, and is being timely followed with problems addressed immediately and efficiently; Mr. Grimes, in this new role, would attend to the details and carrying out of all requirements and tasks; and administrative Assistant Nancy Barthol would maintain the records, spread sheets, calendaring, and reports related to all of this.

The Committee expressed its gratitude in starting this process, and offered the assistance of the Committee and its members, some of whom who have expertise which would be helpful in setting up what needs to be done, and establishing what will be required to carry it out. The Committee asked Mr. Harrington to keep it informed of his progress, as it sees this as essential to proper care and attention to all Town buildings and facilities.

There was discussion of the different requirements in these areas, in that the Library and the Fire Station do much of this record keeping and work independently. The Committee and Mr. Harrington were in agreement that the DPW should work out this relationship with those entities, but that in any event, if those two departments continued to attend to these needs on their own, all repairs, alterations, purchases and the like necessary to a proper record and accounting as to those buildings should be fully reported to the DPW Director for inclusion in the records being maintained by the DPW for this purpose.

The Committee then discussed the recent inquiry of Bob Brown, Chair of the Conservation Commission, via Kim Hallquist, Administrator, as to whether the purchase of land abutting the DPW property to the west would have value to the Town and to the DPW. The Conservation Commission would be interested in that portion abutting Lyon Brook, and wished to know if the Town was interested in the remainder of that property for possible future expansion or for other developing needs of the DPW. The Committee toured the remainder of the DPW property and looked at the parcel in question. The DPW property is constrained from future expansion/development due to two utility easements on the north and south, and wetlands to the south and west. The Committee was of the consensus opinion that the purchase of this land in conjunction with the Conservation Commission made eminent sense, as it would provide for the possibility of future expansion/development of the DPW, and would avoid the need for the Town to look for an entirely new site for the DPW if expansion/development became necessary. The Committee asked the Chair to convey that consensus to Ms. Hallquist and to provide assistance in looking into this possibility.

3. *Other items to come before the Committee*

a. None.

4. *Action Items.*

a. The Chair to contact Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator regarding the possible purchase of the abutting parcel.

The next meeting is at Whipple Hall, on Thursday, November 19, at 6:00 p.m., or as otherwise determined.

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Bowers, Chair

ATTACHMENT

Memo

To: Building Committee

From: Robert Harrington, Public Works Director

