

TOWN OF DEERING

762 Deering Center Road
Deering, NH 03244

Board of Selectmen Final Special Workshop Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 27, 2023

5:30 P.M.

Members Present: Chair Jill Smith, Selectman Roy Watson and Selectman Steve Diers

Also Present: Town Administrator Peter Flynn, Fire Chief Jeff LeBlanc and Recording Secretary Wendy Baker

Opening of the Meeting by the Chair at 5:30pm

Chair Smith read the following statement:

A workshop is a less formalized meeting of the Board, generally conducted for the purpose of providing the Board members a more detailed understanding of a limited number of issues or to permit discussion in greater depth and is not intended to make motions or decisions.

Chair Smith stated the order of business today is a discussion on the Fire Department.

Selectman Diers said he had asked for these workshops so they could get going on some issues. He passed out a couple of charts showing Urgent/Not Urgent, Important/Not Important needs at the Fire Department as well as a plan broken into categories of Buildings, Equipment and Personnel.

Selectman Watson said it looks like the only thing we can do right now is work on buildings and the only one we can do something about is in a bad location. He said we need to figure out the steps to get from here to there and which building we may have to decommission.

Chair Smith said that when the population in town grows we should have both sides of town covered.

Selectman Watson said as Step 1 we need to identify what we are going to let go of and put fire power into other things.

Chief LeBlanc said that there is ARPA funding available that needs to be committed to by 2024 and then spent by 2026. He said we should look at the current stations and the fact they all need something. Under the Hazard Mitigation Plan it says the town needs a station on the East and West side of town. On the West side is McAllister Station and it has recently gotten some upgrades. Donovan Station has the most opportunity and Murdough Station on Old County Road is the smallest and mainly just a garage. His suggestion was to leave the East and West Stations and eliminate Murdough Station which would provide some cost savings to the town.

Chief LeBlanc presented his ideas for Donovan including a $\frac{3}{4}$ bay addition on the left and a full bay addition on the right. This would include moving the Chief's office to the first floor, adding bunk rooms, another bathroom, a complete decon room by putting a wall back up in one of the existing bays and bring everything up to NFPA Standards. These additions and re-organization will give them extra space as well.

Chair Smith suggested making the full bay addition two stories, even if it doesn't get finished right away.

Chief LeBlanc said a Homeland Security Grant could help finish the room as well as a generator and make it Emergency Operations and an emergency shelter.

Everyone seemed to agree that the renovation of Donovan would be a 15-year solution and would then give the town time to look for a longer future plan.

Chief LeBlanc talked about the ventilation system that is needed for the stations and that it is a sooner need rather than later. He also said that he is too late this year for an AFG Grant but they will reimburse the cost less 3% even after the installation is done.

Chair Smith said we also, when considering ARPA funds need to look at Highway because they have a similar ventilation issue. She passed out a spreadsheet showing all of the projects for the Fire Department and hopes that this working document will help them keep everything in line. This spreadsheet should be added to and have dollar amounts filled in.

Selectman Watson said it seems there is no pathway forward without renovating Donovan Station. We need to find out how to move forward with ARPA funds.

TA Flynn said he will research the ARPA requirements.

Chief LeBlanc said years ago there was a plan drawn up to add a third bay to Donovan Station.

Selectman Watson said he would work on a better scaled CAD drawing of the proposed additions to Donovan Station.

Selectman Diers said the Building Inspector looked the building also and added his comments to the sketch. He also talked to contractors that estimated the foundation cost around \$20,000, the framing \$34 per/sf on the high side and the roofing and siding could be a volunteer project.

TA Flynn asked if the septic was adequate?

Chief LeBlanc said he thinks so and that it is a 3 or 4 bedroom septic with a 1000 gal tank.

Chair Smith asked about the well.

Chief LeBlanc said it is a dug well and they may have to look into something more permanent for 24/7 use.

Selectman Watson suggested that someone look into the well situation now to make sure it can be done before we move forward with bigger plans.

Chair Smith asked if there is a plan for parking?

Chief LeBlanc said the lot is long and thin and could go to the left side of the station for more parking.

It was asked if TA Flynn could find a picture of the lot boundaries and where the building sits on it as well as find the previous plans for the addition.

Selectman Diers said excavation costs have not been include yet but maybe the town crew could do it. He said the roof would cost around \$15,000.

Lou Ellen Beard suggested the town appoint a paid Clerk of the Works to manage the project.

It was asked how much the large bay doors would cost? Chief LeBlanc was not sure but would check on it and it was suggested to include doors for Highway also.

Chair Smith asked if anything more would need to be done for ADA requirements? Chief LeBlanc said he does not think so since a shelter would be on ground level.

Chair Smith asked if the heating system would be adequate? Chief LeBlanc answered he would have to look into it but though some duct work could just be added and might want to get a minisplit system for the 2nd floor.

Chair Smith asked for an update on how the recruiting was going. Chief LeBlanc said he has 2 per-diem positions that can rotate around the 7 days. He said we still have openings and use different websites for advertising but every town is having a hard time filling vacancies.

Selectman Diers suggested posts on the Town Facebook page.

Selectman Watson said we could have it as an agenda item to announce and could also create a QR code.

Lou Ellen Beard suggested a boot drive with a handout for recruiting.

Chair Smith asked if the Chief could give her a copy of the Ambulance Billing Policy. Chief LeBlanc said he did not have a copy and that it should be somewhere in Town Hall.

Chair Smith asked everyone to review the spreadsheet more and fill in the holes where needed.

Chair Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:11pm. Seconded by Selectman Watson. Motion passed 3-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Wendy Baker

Wendy Baker
Recording Secretary