Membership in attendance: James Sullivan, John Giotas

Staff in attendance: Dean Shankle, Jr., Diane E. Boyce, Bruce Thomas, Matthew Lavoie, Nick Germain

Meeting began at approximately 4:30PM.

Topics Discussed

Resignation of Committee Member

Kathie Northrup, Chairwoman of the Town Hall Preservation Committee, was noted by Mr. Sullivan to have submitted her resignation. Described reasons include struggling to maintain personal membership over the past year and thinking the present was a good time to take a break. Her e-mail expresses a hope that, “… qualified and committed ‘lay’ people can be found to serve. It’s such a wonderful project.”

New Town Engineer

Bruce Thomas, the Town of Hooksett’s new Staff Engineer, was introduced to the committee membership. Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Giotas asked about Mr. Thomas’s work background and expertise. Mr. Thomas noted although he isn’t a building engineer, through his extensive experience working for the City of Manchester, he’s directly overseen or participated in a very wide breadth of diverse projects. Mr. Sullivan concluded introductions by expressing his hope that having a Town Engineer again would contribute to the overall town hall restoration in alignment with Council’s goals.

Discussion of Current State of the Building Restoration / Way Forward

Personnel in attendance discussed where the overall building restoration stood as of the completion of the historic windows and the rejection of bids for structural reinforcement. Mr. Sullivan reaffirmed that the Council still prioritized having the building usable by Hooksett’s bicentennial, and that assistance from staff was needed to outline a clear path forward. Consensus was that although in reality a huge amount of work had been already done on the building, there were still quite a few projects needed to be completed, and that they should be listed and discussed before selecting a specific strategy.

Required Upcoming Projects

As previously requested by the membership, staff submitted accumulated information on essential projects that need to be completed before the building is suitable for intended use as a community hall. Staff specifically outlined:
- Necessary structural reinforcements in main hall / addition - estimated at around $100,000 in total from returns on the RFP put out in June.

- Building electrical – Estimated at a cost of $50,000 for completion in the Existing Condition’s Report

- HVAC – Staff acquired an estimate for $68,000 for mini-splits, which are seen as the consensus as the most efficient way of balancing building climate and preserving historic features/aesthetics.

- A list of smaller projects, such as finishing bathrooms. These were projects identified by Community Development staff as required for code purposes.

Overall, currently available evidence suggests around $250,000 worth of projects necessary to get the building within striking distance of public use.

**Structural Reinforcement Project / Rejection of Bids by Council**

Councilor Sullivan inquired first after the engineering project that was rejected by Council in June, specifically asking after its level of necessity, if the project could be broken into smaller parts, and how the work would affect pursing other projects. Staff again summarized that the work was the culmination of needs identified in the Existing Conditions Report, supplemented by a more thorough engineering survey conducted by TFMoran via contract.

Due to the level of restoration treatments applied to the building, structural reinforcements are a necessity to some extent. Project rejected in June was aimed at reinforcing or otherwise stabilizing various Old Town Hall structural components deemed needed for opening the building. Matt Lavoie, Code Enforcement Officer, noted he essentially agreed that reinforcements needed to be done, but that he would need to look at the relevant building codes to see if a reduction in occupancy would make certain reinforcement components irrelevant.

Dean Shankle, Town Administrator, submitted an e-mail from TFMoran’s Thomas Lamb. After project bids were rejected by Council, Dr. Shankle stated he asked for clarification regarding the reinforcement work. Mr. Lamb’s e-mail responded by noting that the most pressing need was for the work on the addition rafters, as the removal of the addition ceiling/attic components had made the addition structure questionable for snow loads. Dr. Shankle informed the committee members that addressing this pressing issue was staff’s highest priority as far as Old Town Hall projects. Councilor Giotas inquired after splitting up the reinforcement projects, Dr. Shankle responded that the project specifications created by TFMoran could easily be split individually, and although the rafter job would be the largest component, it would be substantially less than the $100,000 total, although bids were received in such a way that a price couldn’t be estimated for each specific component with certainty.

**Staff Recommendation**
In light of engineering priorities, membership asked about a recommendation for scheduling projects in the near future. As an alternative to relying on a large lump sum through a Warrant Article, Dr. Shankle suggested the following actions as an option:

1. Staff procures services to address the 1936 addition portion of the building structure as soon as possible.
2. The Committee membership ask the whole Town Council to add around $50,000 to the building maintenance line in next year’s budget to specifically address town hall projects.
3. Staff utilizes whatever it can of the current year default budget on appropriate extra work if possible.
4. At the end of this current fiscal year, staff bids out a suitable assortment of larger projects in a timely manner so as to take advantage of savings in Public Works.
5. Staff spends whatever funds in next near’s budget, and officials assess where the overall restorations stands thereafter.

Dr. Shankle reiterated his suggestion that getting the building usable at a baseline level is likely more fruitful than pursuing less vital, aesthetic projects or treatments at this time.

Consensus of the membership was that Dr. Shankle’s suggestion was worthwhile to explore. Mr. Sullivan stated he would bring up the plan at tonight’s meeting of Town Council, but also wanted additional information to better encapsulate where the project stood.

Assessment of Current Work Completed

Staff and the membership went through the master list of building projects identified in the existing conditions report. Projects completed or rendered as unnecessary were identified. It was apparent a very significant amount of work had already been done on the building, whether through contractors or staff time. Mr. Sullivan requested a total estimate on the amount for

Concluding LCHIP Grant Business

Discussed remaining requirements for processing the LCHIP Window Restoration grant. LCHIP had previously granted a deadline extension on completing the project due to the circumstances of the initial window bidding, and needed action on completed documents. Project Coordinator presented the draft stewardship agreement for commentary. No objections were lodged by membership or staff. Stewardship agreement basically requires the town to comply with LCHIP’s building preservation guidelines for a term of five years minimum. Stipulations include approval requirements for building projects and maintaining the building to certain basic preservation standards.

Membership voted unanimously to conclude the meeting at approximately

Submitted by Nick Germain

Project Coordinator