

Town Hall Preservation Committee

June 27, 2023

Committee members present: Paul Baines, Brad Foley, Sarah Stapler, Betsy Steen, Rachelle Tome, Nicole Briand

Selectboard member: Peter Feeney

The Committee was called to order by Chairman Paul Baines at 4:34 pm.

Minutes for May 30th were distributed and reviewed. Motion to accept from Sarah S., seconded by Brad F.; Passed- unanimously.

Next Steps:

Chairman Paul Baines shared information related to Elizabeth Barrett and funding a grant writer as a donation to the Town Hall project. It was suggested that this effort be completed through the Historical Society, checking with Betsy Steen for next steps. Recent presentations could be used to inform grant applications. Committee members agree with the concept of having this initiative proceed through the Historical Society.

Paul pointed out that the Town currently has a line in the budget earmarked for upkeep of the Town Hall and Town Office. Town Manager Nicole Briand shared that the money has been used. Paul wondered if separate lines might help make funding for each building clearer. Nicole outlined some of the larger projects looming ahead for the Town Office. Paul shared an observation regarding the difficulty in gathering funds for large projects. Funding reserves have always been a challenge. He continued to discuss the financial commitment needed for the future, avoiding the Band aid approach. Nicole suggested that we explore ways to move forward with some necessary pieces now, with the goal of doing more later.

Selectperson Pete Feeney shared that Kenny Vorhees may have some contacts who could evaluate the report from Preservation Timber Framing in order to determine what we can do now. Nicole indicated that there were no "small bites". Every component needed to support restoration of the Town Hall has a significant cost close to \$50,000. In order to minimize costs, some personal contact with those willing to help would be needed. Paul outlined his background with building restoration and indicated that he agreed with the findings of the report. He invited the input of others and indicated that the building work group had started to explore potential contacts. He also shared a concern about what needs to be done and how, outlining the impact of some of the previous repair efforts. He advised the group not to over simplify projects, i.e., fixing one area, such as the roof, may not address other issues with the foundation or structural needs. He concluded that there may be a number of potential ways to approach the restoration. Discussion continued with Paul and Selectperson Mark Favreau outlining different ways to repair and paint the roof.

Nicole suggested that the committee frame out a step-by-step plan and indicated that Federal funding may be available in the spring. It was suggested that two plans be developed. Plan A would approach the work in a piecemeal fashion, starting with the roof. Plan B would identify an approach which provide addressed larger funding allowances. This might include a scope of work for 10 years (Plan A) and 2 years (Plan B). There is hope that the videos will help explain the need. One current possibility for funding is the Maine Preservation application for an Endangered Historic place. Members of the Finance work group agreed to explore this grant.

Motion to adjourn by Sarah S., second from Brad F., approved unanimously at 5:52 pm

Next regular meeting: Tuesday, 7/25/23 at 4:30 PM in the Graduate Room. The public is welcome.