

Sterling Senior Center Design and Building Committee

Butterick Municipal Building - Room 201

April 11, 2013 - 6:30 pm

MINUTES

Present: Jack Chandler, Maureen Cranson, Ronald Cote, Richard Maki, Peter Watson, and Weymouth Whitney. **Ex Officio:** Karen Phillips (A-7:08). **OPM:** Frank Kennedy and Joseph Homyak (A-6:55). **Absent:** Terri Ackerman.

Open Meeting: Co-Chairman Cranson opened the meeting at 6:32 pm.

Minutes: The minutes of March 28, 2013 were approved following a motion by Mr. Chandler and second by Mr. Whitney. Vote: YEA = 6, NAY = 0. The minutes of April 3, 2013 were approved following a motion by Mr. Chandler and second by Mr. Whitney. Vote: YEA = 6, NAY = 0.

Public Comments: Ms. Arden Sonnenberg and Mr. Kevin Beaupre remarked about the cost of construction of the proposed senior center. Ms. Sonnenberg wanted a more detailed accounting for the \$275 SF projected cost and sought a projected budget for operational expenses in the future (Est. \$36,000 for first year of operation). Mr. Beaupre said he was "close" to supporting the project cost (\$2.5M), but was hopeful that the project would not use all of the contingency allotment, resulting in a lower total cost. Before "full support", Mr. Beaupre wants the final total cost of the construction project to the taxpayer.

Post Op of Community Meetings: The Committee reviewed audience comments from the two public sessions conducted on April 3, 2013 including a desire by an audience participant to use as examples, smaller centers that more closely resemble Sterling. There was discussion of another community meeting prior to the ATM, but following the April 29, 2013 meeting with the selectmen, Council on Aging, and the finance committee.

Response to Community Questions: During the discussion about providing finite details of the project budget, Mr. Kennedy cautioned the Committee to avoid specific items lest the ability to benefit from the competitive bidding process be lost. Potential vendors could review Committee documents and tailor their bid submissions to their advantage. Focusing on the Warrant Articles, Mr. Whitney suggested that the Committee remove Article #14, which requests funding for \$250,000 to furnish and equip the proposed center. Other said funds could be raised privately within the community and, in any case, would not be needed until construction was completed more than a year from today.

Media Package: A press release written by Mr. Kennedy has been sent to local media outlets. The document informs the public about project details and explains the construction costs, professional fees, projected operating expenses, and a tentative building schedule. Ms. Cranson will request of the ATM moderator, approximately ten minutes to allow Mr. Kennedy to explain the project and related expenses and tax implications to Sterling households. Mr. Kennedy said that the community *PowerPoint* presentation is available on his company website, www.dpm-inc.com. Select "FTP", login as "Sterling" and use the password "guest".

New Community Meeting: The Committee will present another community information meeting on May 6, 2012 at 7:00 pm in the Council On Aging room. Mr. Kennedy will present an abbreviated *PowerPoint* presentation that will be similar to that planned for the ATM. In preparation for future meetings, Ms. Phillips will identify funds previously expended by the COA in pursuit of a new senior center. There was discussion about the total space utilized by the seniors in the Butterick building. Past reporting to the Commonwealth only included the COA room, director's office and kitchen, yielding about 1,850 SF. More complete figures (~3,650 SF) include the bathrooms, hallway and staircase storage, the selectmen's room, and meeting space for SHINE and medical counseling. Ms. Cranson will request that the Town treasurer provide the actual tax implications of the anticipated annual \$36,000 operating budget increase.

Next Steps: Ms. Cranson will accomplish the identified action items and Mr. Kennedy will refine the presentation to be used at the April 29th meeting and the ATM. Members will consider the implications of removing Article #14 from consideration at the ATM.

Adjournment: Following a motion by Mr. Chandler and seconded by Mr. Whitney, the Committee voted to adjourn at 9:32 pm. Vote: YEA = 6, NAY = 0.

Respectfully submitted by

Richard H. Maki
Richard H. Maki, Clerk