

## Approved minutes

Minutes of the Cornish Library Exploratory Committee Meeting

Cornish General Store

July 21, 2021

6:00 pm

Members present: Laura Cousineau, Heidi Jaarsma, Caroline Storrs, Scott Baker (representing the Select Board), Kathi Patterson, Susan Chandler, Larry Dingee

Members of the Community present: sign in list to be included by Laura Cousineau

1. As it was the first meeting of this committee, members introduced themselves.
2. Laura Cousineau was unanimously elected chair. Members will take minutes on a rotating basis. Susan Chandler offered to take notes and Caroline Storrs offered to be the recorder for this meeting.
3. Laura asked the selectmen in attendance to present the charge from the Select Board. Dilly Gallagher stated that the charge was to have the Exploratory Committee present to the town either this March or next March a report or a warrant article as to the feasibility of the Cornish General Store building becoming the town library. The report should include the financial impact on the community. and recommendations. Colleen O'Neill wondered if the recommendations would include the acceptance of the building by the town. Scott Baker reiterated that the report would have a financial part, a rental part, and include any repairs that might fall on the town. Laura assumed that the duty of the committee is to answer those questions.

A discussion followed as to the timing of completing a report to the town. Heidi Jaarsma stated that the committee's information needed to be before the budget committee by January. Susan Chandler suggested that we should be optimistic about getting all of our information by January. At that time, the Committee can determine if it needs more time. Larry Dingee worried that there was not enough time, referencing Plainfield's lengthy library issues. Kathi Patterson stated that she did not feel that Cornish and Plainfield's issues were comparable.

Larry asked whether our charge was renovating this building or looking at the old library building and its needs. Scott wanted to look at the old building and the land acquisition and what it would take to get it upgraded. Laura stated that she felt that our charge was to look at this building, not both buildings, to determine the feasibility of this building and this transfer.

Heidi stated that absolutely we can get a report ready by January 15. As to whether it would include a warrant article is questionable. Larry reiterated that he felt a need to explore the alternative of the old building, to which Heidi agreed. Laura stated that we need to define our charge. Is it just the general store option or does it include a discussion of the old building.? Discussion determined that the charge was twofold and that we would need to look at the costs of the renovations to the old building that would provide the same programs and services as a newer building.

N.B. Near the close of the meeting, Bill Caterino stated that the Committee needed to insist that the Select Board provide their charge in writing to avoid any further confusion. All members agreed that a charge in writing was necessary.

4. Ground rules were established:

Arrive at a consensus unless a vote is indicated.

Respect one another.

No time limits though fingers are crossed for a two hour meeting or less.

Five members present would represent a quorum.

Heidi asked for a Citizens Comment section be added to each agenda.

5. Caroline Storrs presented a list that she had created of 11 possibilities for sub committees:

Subcommittee for implementation as a town building: Heidi Jaarsma offered to head this committee. (this involves the mechanics of how the town would acquire the building, the timing, the process, the restrictions, the legal issues, etc.. Heidi would contact the Municipal Association and the Department of Revenue Administration, etc.. A regular strong contact with Colleen was suggested).

Larry raised the question of fire codes. The use of the building as a library along with housing two apartments would constitute a mixed use. He would be willing to contact the fire marshal as to what this change of use from a store to a library might mean to the fire code. Caroline asked to join Larry when he talks to the fire marshal.

At this time, the subject of the flood plain was also raised. Also at this time, community member Barbara Cieslicki suggested that the committee was going too far into details before major points were decided.

Subcommittee for interior use of space: to be led by Caroline Storrs with Susan Chandler, librarian Stephanie McAndrew, Kathi Patterson, community member David Aguilar and possibly Carla Boyington (not present).

Subcommittee for Exterior Architectural Design and Renovation: to be led by Caroline Storrs with Susan Chandler

Subcommittee for the future of the George Stowell Library Building: to be led by Kathi Patterson

Liaison to Friends of the Library and Colleen O'Neill: Heidi Jaarsma  
Colleen stated that whether or not this store transfer occurs, a friends group is necessary.

Subcommittee for the Community Center Integration was joined with the subcommittee for the interior use of space.

Kathi Patterson wondered if this building would be a library and a community center or a library with a community center?

Laura offered to head up a Survey Monkey type program to gather community input as well as the Community Input Committee..

Subcommittees for grantwriting, for energy efficiency, for transition from old to new, and to project future costs and revenues were not assigned at this time, although community member Judith Kaufman expressed an interest in being on the latter committee to assess start up costs, overall costs, revenues and the goal that the Friends group needs to establish.

6. How often do we want to meet? Every two weeks. Next meeting will be Tuesday, August 3, 2021, at 6 pm at the Cornish General Store

Heidi reminded us that we are a public body and, as such, we follow open meeting laws which include our use of email. Group emails can only include the sharing of dates and times.

Draft minutes of the meeting will be sent to each member. Revisions will be made at the next public meeting. A DRAFT COPY OF THE MINUTES MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE TOWN CLERK WITHIN FIVE DAYS OF THE MEETING.

The minutes will be sent to Heidi to put on the website.

Kathi Patterson moved to adjourn, Laura Cousineau seconded. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:17 pm.