

MINUTES
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING
SELECT BOARD
AND THE
COMMITTEE FOR THE FUTURE
OF THE THOMPSON COMMUNITY CENTER
TUESDAY, MARCH 29, 2022
WILLIAM L. PULLEN MUNICIPAL BUILDING MEETING ROOM
and ZOOM
6:30 p.m.

Select Board present: Jim Justice, Martha Johnston-Nash, Bill Lombardi, Josh White, and Adam Fuller

CFTCC present: Rebekah Smith, Erik Amundsen, Gail Hawes, John Mountainland, Abraham Knight, Greg Grotton, Mike Beardsley, Martha Johnston-Nash (Select Board Representative), and others

Others present: Jay Feyler (Town Manager), Carol Watier, and others

1. **Call Select Board Meeting to Order:** at 6:33 p.m. by Adam Fuller.
2. **Call Committee for the Future of the Thompson Community Center to order:** at 6:33 p.m.
3. **Pledge of Allegiance:**
4. **Discussion of the Thompson Community Center:**

CFTCC Chair Rebekah Smith thanked the board and the committee for its tremendous amount of work in a short time. She noted the board had received a bound copy of CCFTCC's report and data. They started meeting a year ago. They divided into four groups, one for each of the four options, including demolition which the Select Board asked them to come up with. This is what they know right now, with due diligence to come depending on which option is chosen. She delivered an executive summary.

Option 1: Retain and renovate the buildings

The town would retain ownership and oversee the TCC through a hired building manager position or potentially something like the TMA (friend group, nonprofit, etc.). With TMA in there now rather than TCCA, they have gained much more information on the building and also on what it could look like with a different entity running the building.

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Estimated total renovation and repair costs would be \$890,000 to \$2 million. Rental income is currently estimated at \$100,000 to \$165,000 per year but would grow as repairs are completed. Cost to maintain and run the building is estimated at \$168,000 to \$196,000 per year. Grants that could offset some costs are in the packet. TMA has been incredibly helpful.

Option 2: Senior Housing with Community Center

This option is sale or lease to a senior housing entity. The town could potentially retain ownership of the building or part of the building or have access to certain spaces in the building. There is flexibility with the two developers who were contacted. CFTCC thinks the cost of sale or lease would be zero though there may be a cost to maintain insurance if leased. Annual income if leased is estimated at \$15,000 to \$20,000. Anticipated sale price would be slightly under market value. More documents are expected including architectural design possibilities. Options include the ability for the town to retain spaces such as the gym, museum, and thrift store as part of the negotiation for either sale or lease for continued community use.

Option 3: Sale of building

- 1) To a rehabilitation specialist – sale to a developer with covenants to retain historical aspects and restrictions. Current sales estimate to a rehabilitation specialist is \$100,000 to \$200,000. This figure requires additional research. The town could set some limits, retain some community space; this would be more of a partnership than sale on the open market.
- 2) Sell outright on the open market – One broker who did a pretty extensive valuation came in at \$595,000 to \$695,000, while another broker who did a much less extensive review came in at \$150,000. A third broker has been contacted. Rebekah said the town's current tax valuation is \$5.57 million.

Option 4: Demolition of both buildings or demolition of only the yellow building

They got three estimates for demolition of both buildings ranging from \$201,000 to \$498,000. Demolition of the yellow building only ranged from \$135,000 to \$270,000. Maintaining just the brick building, which creates a bunch of logistical issues as the buildings are tied together, was an estimated \$1 million. The 2018 report estimated the cost of building a new brick building at \$4 million to \$4.6 million.

Gail Hawes shared information from the report onscreen and explained the tiered format of the data. She noted TMA hit the ground running; heat and electric costs, thrift shop profit, etc. are based on the last three months. Revenue estimates are conservative. There is a grant potential section, for planning as well as construction.

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Each of the four options was discussed. The original developer on Option 3 is still interested, and his proposal is included in the packet. The only option that the committee thought did not make a lot of sense was a partial teardown then renovation of the brick building; the 2018 report stated the yellow building was quite structurally sound.

Further discussion focused on drafting the wording of the warrants, the importance of getting all this information out to voters before town meeting, and the TCC property size and boundaries to which Jay replied it is currently all one property. Jay added that the tennis and basketball courts were built with federal money, with X number of parking spots, so the town would have to retain or perhaps share some of that.

Adam thanked the committee for its ton of work. He was impressed by the estimates they were able to get, among other things, and feels their report – with its organized data and real numbers – provides a strong foundation for us as a town to have a rational conversation at a public hearing. He praised committee members for setting aside their personal opinions and doing the work. He also thanked them on behalf of the taxpayers as they “just saved a ton of money.”

Jay mentioned \$500,000 Maine State Housing grants that are simple to apply for and being turned over very quickly. He meets with Roger in a day or two. The CFTCC report will be posted on the town website. Other information distribution efforts were discussed such as videos and newspaper articles. Jay said the TCC vote cannot be ranked choice, as that would have to be voted on at town meeting.

John Mountainland said he would like to keep a performance bond in place whichever option the voters choose. Jay said it is required by state law over a certain amount, and any grants must have performance bonds also.

John asked about the Fire Marshal report. Abraham Knight said it hasn't come in yet. Adam said there was not the vibe of “shut it down and lock the doors” but definitely concern about future usage.

Bill thanked the committee and praised the work they've done. He has reviewed the IRS 990 forms of TCCA, noting it is public info if anyone wants to look. He will send them to Rebekah. He finds the CFTCC rental estimates conservative.

In answer to Rebekah, Adam said he hopes that after we hear from the voters, the CFTCC can morph to dive down whichever direction we want to go. There will be a lot of work no matter which option is chosen.

In back and forth about board and committee members getting the word out on this important issue, Jay reminded that according to the Maine Municipal Association, “if you're an elected official you're speaking as a board member.”

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Abraham said he hopes if the vote is a lease with another nonprofit there would be controls over that nonprofit. Rebekah concurred saying any such lease would be a traditional lease at market value, with town access, transparency, etc. Adam echoed there is no appetite to go down that road again.

5. Adjourn Select Board:

Motion by: Bill Lombardi
2nd by: Jim Justice
5-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Adjourn CFTCC:

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Abaldo
Secretary