

Minutes October 17, 2019

Present: Tom Finnegan, Harry Nelson, Graham Gitchell, Wes Staples, Bob Bartlett, Scott Talbot, resident/firefighter Jay Prior, and Selectmen Russ Austin and Clay Stalker.

Meeting convened at 7:00 pm.

Select Board Chairman Russ Austin opened the meeting by stating the purpose of the meeting was to improve the communication between the Board of Selectmen and the FDAC. Tom then proceeded to present a list of desirables/needs for the proposed fire station which had been updated by Graham. He stated that the goal of the committee from the beginning has been to be as efficient as possible with Townspeople's money, that the list included everything a fire station should have, with the footprint in mind. It was also acknowledged that the architect will narrow the list down to satisfy fire station requirements.

The discussion that followed focused on the seventh bay listed. It was explained that in planning for the future needs, it was wiser to include the extra bay now. The topics also included the option of front-to-back storage which would allow for three drive-through bays. The footprint entered into the conversation in regards to the wetlands question. The October meeting with the Conservation Commission was discussed, as well as the follow-up plan to have a site walk done in conjunction with the committee. Support from the Conservation Commission will assist in presenting the site plans to the State DES.

The next issue raised was overall space use. Is it necessary for the EMS, the EOC, and the Fire Department Administration each to have a separate office? Could a second level be more efficient? That brought up the question of ADA compliance, and it was not fully determined whether those offices were open to the public or not. It was decided that the architect would determine that.

From here the discussion veered to the bigger question of presenting a plan that the Town could support and afford. Planning for the future of the town of Westmoreland was deemed a point of disagreement, as Clay felt there would be little, if any, growth, while the FDAC disagreed.

Returning to the issue of space in the new station, Russ listed five specific concerns:

- size of the meeting/training facility
- office for the department administration
- EMS office and storage
- EOC office and storage
- bunking space

Following his list of concerns, it was agreed that the plans would eliminate one of the offices requested, and the seventh bay would be determined by its cost effectiveness, as determined by the architect. The kitchen issue was clarified and it is to be included in the plans.

Upcoming concerns include the engineering cost of site development and the plans for a joint septic system with the town hall. It was mentioned that a new station will not only serve the town well, but will encourage recruitment and retention within the department. The suggestion was made to have a follow-up open house at the existing station after the March town meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Rachel Bartlett