

**Board of Selectmen
Special Meeting
April 13, 2021 — 5:00 PM
TELECONFERENCE
MINUTES**

Members Present: First Selectman Kevin Cwikla, Selectmen Kathleen Smith, Glen Coutu, Robin Chesmer, and Betsy Petrie-McComber

Others Present: Bernard Dennler (Administrative Assistant/Teleconference Host); Catherine Marrion (Waller, Smith, and Palmer); Jim Russo, Berkeley Nowosad, Julie Culp (Library Building Committee); Brandon Handfield (Engineering Consultant); various attendees

1.0 Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 5:01 PM.

2.0 Discuss and act upon award of Community Center Split System contract

K. Cwikla MOVED to award the contract for the Community Center ductless mini-split system to Sav-Mor for \$3,800 with funds to come from the Community Center Fund. B. Petrie SECONDED.

G. Coutu said it was not rebate eligible and recommended they enter into an agreement with Sav-Mor.

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

3.0 Discuss Library Building Project

C. Marrion provided an update on the SHPO process regarding the library building project. SHPO reported last week that SHPO is close to approving a plan regarding parking at the proposed library expansion. The plan would require some preservation commitments to be made by the Town and for there to be permeable pavers used in some parking spots to reduce the visual break between the Green and the parking lot. SHPO said they are open to permeable concrete or asphalt if the Town proposes an option that reduces the visual break.

SHPO will endorse the plan and write a letter in support to the State Librarian for the reapplication for library grant funds. If there is no state library grant, then SHPO does not have jurisdiction. However, the State Historic Preservation Council under DECD could still bring an action against the Town. C. Marrion stated a SHPO-approved library plan is not likely to be challenged by the Lebanon Historical Society or another preservation organization. Therefore, even if the Town does not go forward with state library funds, a SHPO-approved plan would be a benefit to the Town. If the Town does not get SHPO-approval and reverts to a prior parking plan without state library funds, SHPO has indicated it will “drop the boot” against the Town and enlist the attorney general and other agencies.

C. Marrion stated it may now be worth another conversation with the State Librarian about whether it is possible to retain the current grant still despite missed deadlines or if a new application under the State Library Grant would be the best way forward. The State Librarian has previously referred to a new application as a “fresh start” to the Town.

B. Petrie asked if this could be given in writing by SHPO. She said the Town has been led astray before with false promises. C. Marrion said letter had already been prepared which was read to her. B. Petrie asked if someone higher up could still pull the plug and C. Marrion said this sounds like the ordinary course for SHPO and she is confident that this is close to approval.

J. Russo said there is a condition by Uncas Health on the application drawing that there can be no traffic on the church leech field. Design team is trying to ensure parking layout does not encroach on church leech field. This is not negotiable with Uncas Health. When that is complete, he believes Uncas will sign off on the application. B. Nowosad asked for clarification if SHPO approval is not required if the State Library Grant is forfeited but that SHPO approval would help prevent future litigation. K. Smith asked J. Russo to confirm that as the parking plan is modified to satisfy the Uncas requirements that there will be no additional encroachment north. J. Russo said it would not go any further north. B. Handfield said G. Coutu raised concerns about redesigning the parking lot for a septic system owned by the church that may not be there in 10 years. J. Russo said the building committee must deal with the situation as it is now. G. Coutu said he does not think the committee should wait but the Town will have to deal with the impacts down the line.

B. Petrie asked if the modifications would impact SHPO's approval of parking plan four. J. Russo said the modifications would be consistent with SHPO's requirements which involve minimizing encroachment on the Green.

R. Chesmer asked about the State Library Grant and why there has not been any forgiveness from the state with the Town losing a year due to COVID. C. Marrion said she made that argument but COVID did not affect many of the delays facing this project. R. Chesmer noted the state court system has been held up.

J. Russo noted that the Town has until May 25 to sign the construction contract without losing the bids. G. Coutu said they may be able to move on the construction contract and wait on the site work. He also said they need something binding from SHPO in writing before they can move forward.

J. Russo said the project budget right now appears to be \$600,000 under the approved referendum amount and that includes a 10 percent contingency. He said if they wait too long and have to go back out to bid, prices could rise and eventually exceed the referendum amounts. He said it is urgent to sign a construction contract. J. Culp also stated it is urgent to sign the contract before the May 25 deadline.

4.0 Adjourn

K. Smith MOVED to adjourn. G. Coutu SECONDED.
MOTION CARRIED 5:0

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernard W. Dennler III

Administrative Assistant

Please see the Minutes of future meetings for any corrections hereto.