

D R A F T

## Board of Selectmen

### Listening Session

May 3, 2014

The Board of Selectmen met on Saturday, May 3, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. at the Bow Community Center, located at 3 Bow Center Road, Bow, New Hampshire to hold a Listening Session to hear the Town's citizen's thoughts and ideas on how they would like the Town to house its Public Safety Operations and Recreational Resources.

For the record, the following individuals signed the sign-in sheet: Bob Arnold, 24 Dow Road; Susan Belair, 8 Edgewood Drive; Chuck Douglas, 10 Stonesled Lane; Fria Doucette; Glenn Dugas, 7 Crockett Drive; Don Eaton, 2 Allen Road; Bob Eldredge, 13 Meadow Lane; Steve Elgert, 47 Putney Road; Tom Fagan, 29 Brown Hill Road; Barbara Francis, 4 Bow Center Road #F3; Tom Francis, 4 Bow Center Road #F3; Harold Gates, 4 Woodland Circle; Bill Gerrard, 5 Turee View Drive; Mike Hansen, 11 Briarwood Drive; Robert Hollinger, 6 Sharon Drive; Edythe Hunt, 132 Page Road; Stetson Hunt, 132 Page Road; Christopher Johnson, 18 Quimby Road; Faye Johnson, 110 Knox Road; Ray Johnson, 110 Knox Road; Lee Kimball, 32 Ridgewood Drive; Jeffrey Knight, 2 Peaslee Road; Meredith Kropp, 21 Jonathan Lane; Denise LeBlanc, 11 Clough Road; Ralph Longfellow, 45 Brown Hill Road; Sue Marcotte-Jenkins, 11 Hope Lane; Rick Minard, 93 Page Road; Donna Morrison, 7 Birchdale Road; Tim Morrison, 7 Birchdale Road; Maurice Nepveu, 7 Clough Road; Gary Nylén, 112 Knox Road; Paul Roy, 42 Woodhill Road; Mike Sampo, 64 Woodhill Hooksett Road; Dick Siciak, 7 Branch Londonderry Turnpike-West; Alna Stevens, 75 Branch Londonderry Turnpike – East; Dick Stevens, Bow Center Road; John Urdi, 51 Putnam Road; Mark Vincent, 104 Brown Hill Road; John Violette, 12 Woodland Circle; Mary Beth Waltz, 25 Stack Drive; and Ned Woody, 11 Stack Drive or 3 Timmins Road.

#### 9:00 – 9:15 AM – Introduction and Overview

Selectmen Eric Anderson called the gathering to order, invited everyone to bring coffee or snack to a round table, asked that four to six people gather at each table in order to facilitate a good lively healthy discourse and stated that Gary Nylén asked for a moment of personal privilege.

Gary Nylén stated "I'm back!" and thanked everyone who signed the get-well poster at Town Meeting noting that it was the first Town Meeting he missed in forty five (45) years. Mr. Nylén thanked everyone for their support over the years and is glad to see people sitting in the same room to iron out this situation so we as a Town can go ahead with what we need to do that is in the best interest of the Town and the finances of the Town's people.

Not Official until reviewed, approved and signed.

D R A F T

Mr. Anderson welcomed everyone to the first of two planned listening sessions. As advertised, the Board of Selectmen wants to hear from the people, specifically to hear your ideas and thoughts on how to house our public safety operations and our recreational resources as a result of this year's Town Meeting. Mr. Anderson introduced: Selectman Jack Crisp, Selectman Colleen Hunter and Selectmen Harry Judd, noted that Selectman Chairperson Jill Hadaway was in Europe and would be at the second session, Town Manager David Stack, Fire Chief Dana Abbott, Assistant Fire Chief and Health Officer Dick Pitsey, Emergency Management Director Lee Kimball and Recording Secretary Louise Knee. It was noted that the Police Chief was not present and that several Members of prior Public Safety Committees were present.

Mr. Anderson stated that the Selectmen want to hear from everyone. A packet of materials has been prepared that includes the Agenda, background information to give an idea of the core related issues as well as the functional issues that the Board of Selectmen have been trying to address over the past several years, a worksheet to assist documenting ideas and thoughts to share, a couple of articles that appeared in the Concord Monitor, and finally a Volunteer Form. Mr. Anderson stated that he cannot emphasize enough the importance of Town Government and the responsibility each of us have to make our community a better community. Procedurally, round tables have been set up to ease the exchange of ideas and thoughts in a smaller group for brainstorming various options. Each table should elect a spokesperson and noted that on each table there is a sheet for the spokesperson to jot down the ideas generated. At 10:00 AM, the spokesperson from each table will present your ideas, which will be recorded on the flip charts for future consideration.

Mr. Anderson stated that after the second Listening Session, this Friday evening, 5/6/2014 at 7:00 PM, the Board of Selectmen will appoint the 7<sup>th</sup> Design and Building Review Committee to develop recommendations for the Board of Selectmen to consider for presentation at the Annual Town Meeting in 2015.

Mr. Anderson outlined a few ground rules. First, everyone is entitled to speak. Second, be respectful. Third, please keep your ideas brief and to the point. Fourth, the Selectmen and Public Safety Officials are available to answer questions. Mr. Anderson thanked everyone for giving up their Saturday morning to join in the solution. Lastly, please introduce yourselves to your fellow tablemates and plan to reconvene at 10:00 AM.

#### 9:15 – 10:00 AM – Round Table Discussions

Attendees engaged in discussion. Table A had six people. Table B had no people. Tables C& D each had six individuals. Tables E & F each had four individuals. Table G had five people and Table H had six individuals.

#### 10:00 – 10:45 AM – Round Table Spokespersons Debrief the Attendees

Mr. Anderson reconvened the meeting and raised a colander in the air as a symbol of the next step in the process, which is to sift through all the ideas and come to a solution. Mr. Anderson stated that in the interest of fairness, a table will be drawn at random from the colander to present their ideas and asked that each speaker state their name and address.

TABLE G – Spokesperson Dr. Steve Elgert

- Prioritize Fire as most important
- Okay to put Community Building on hold for now considering the Baker Free Library Lower Level Project
- Ask for bids from private developers – might be willing to build a building and lease it to the Town for the Fire Department – having a building privately owned and renting space to the Town eliminates the need for a bond – the lease could become part of the Operating Budget – and the Town will receive taxes from the building
- Such a building could also include Police and/or other commercial enterprises
- Town could even lease the land for the building

TABLE A – Spokesperson Mary Beth Waltz

- Most liked the idea of the center across the street
- Seek volunteer engineers and architects to review the existing plans and seek cost reductions
- Need the Community Building to stay and be brought up to code and does not need to be “essential” if it does not house the Fire Department

TABLE F – Spokesperson Bob Arnold

- Town is not in a financial position to build for 30 years in the future
- Build a functional building for Fire Department first
- Keep the Community Building and upgrade later

TABLE E – Spokesperson Don Eaton

- Need fire services
- Change the phases of the current plan – build the first floor first, for Fire Dept. and add the second floor later when the Town can afford it – will utilize same plan, same basic design for the building
- Keep Police on Robinson Road until the second floor is built
- Make it affordable - pay a little now, a little later
- The Town of Hopkinton has a similar project – raising the roof and adding a second story and interestingly enough using the same construction company who designed Bow’s plan
- Recreation Center – other Towns use their school buildings, perhaps Bow can too

TABLE D – Spokesperson Faye Johnson

- Fire Station is the priority – building for Fire now that can be added on into the future
- There’s not just HL Turner, might be another option that could cost less
- Seek volunteers in Bow for contributions
- Police can take a backseat for now – for financial reasons
- Keep Community Building just for Park and Rec only and bring it to code

- Bow has many families with small children who came to Bow for our school system and retirees on fixed income who want to stay in Bow but are concerned with taxes – especially with the decrease PSNH contributes in taxes and now that Dunbarton students can attend Bow schools, a family can live in Dunbarton and pay less in property taxes and still send their children to our good schools.
- There is also a safety concern for the after-school and summer programs with no transportation from the High School to the Bow Youth Center
- Does the Fire Department building need to be “essential” by law and what does “essential” really mean?
- That when a Committee is appointed, that it move forward expeditiously and even consider holding a special Town Meeting if needed to keep moving forward

#### TABLE H – Spokesperson Glenn Dugas

- The consensus at Town Meeting was clear – “no new taxes”
- Compliant issues – what is really required versus what is desired and what is most cost effective – need answers
- Bring the current building up to code

#### TABLE C – Spokesperson Paul Roy

- Want versus Need – What can the Town afford?
- The Hughes Building could be a Safety Complex, move Fire to Robinson Road and DPW could be relocated to Allen Road by the gravel pit
- Keep the Community Building
- Site at Knox Road is very expensive to develop, just in the sitework required - is there a better location?

#### QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

Mary Beth Waltz questioned how the schools could be used for Park & Rec activities as the Community Building is used during the day and asked if Table E had a solution. Don Eaton responded that there is a beautiful Rescue Building out back that could support offices on the upper floor and the lower floor could be used for Young at Heart, aerobics and other daytime activities and added that it may not be wise to upgrade the current Community Building considering the asbestos that has to be removed, the replacement and relocation of the existing furnace, the electrical issues and the flooding that occurs in the basement. Mr. Eaton stated that this is the greatest dilemma of the Town and that consideration to separating Recreation from the Safety Municipality facilities should also be given consideration.

Faye Johnson asked if the Fire Department was moved to the Hughes Building what would be the effect on response time and would it be cost effective? Mr. Eaton responded that there could be an impact on homeowner’s insurance, that the current location is centrally located and assessable to both I-89 and I-93 and added that the Hughes Building would need renovation for sprinklers, fire alarm etc. and that there was an estimate of approximately two million dollars at Town Meeting for just the Police portion of renovation.

Ray Johnson opposed the suggestion to take down the Community Building stating that the building is still a good building, the Town recently invested a new roof onto it, it would cost more to tear it down than build a new building especially considering the asbestos and that he is okay with moving the Fire Department only across the street. Mark Vincent noted that the Town owns the asbestos in the Fire side of the Community Building and the cost of its removal is the same whether the Town tears down or renovates the building. Paul Roy noted that the overhead doors in the fire side of the Community Building could be removed and replaced with insulated walls if space is converted to Park & Rec, noted that there is a cost to renovate the Police section of the Hughes Building that would need to be included in the cost of converting DPW space to Fire space as the entire building would need to be brought up to code and added that, with regard to insurance, the fire threat is in the industrial zone especially where so many building have no sprinkler systems.

Mary Beth Waltz asked that when the options are given additional consideration, that the Board of Selectmen provide cost estimates for just building the first floor for the Fire Department, the cost estimate for adding the second floor for the Police and the cost for building all at once.

Sue Sailen (?), Brown Hill Road, at Table D, stated that she has small children and cannot use the summer program at the High School because it ends at 3:30 PM and there is no transportation from there to the Bow Youth Center and even though she pays her taxes in Bow, she has to use the summer program in Hudson, where they moved from, so that her children can have all day care. Ms. Sailen (?) stated that building a building from the ground up is very expensive and asked if there was any existing building in Town that could be used for the Fire Department. Lee Kimball responded that they did look for existing alternatives in Town, but there were no viable solutions found.

Dick Siciak asked if the Fire building needed drive-through bays and Fire Chief Dana Abbott responded that it is not a need, that it offers flexibility and that eliminates the need for backing up where most of the accidents are likely to occur.

John Urdi asked if the money voted for the design work has all been spent and/or whether the Town owes the Turner Group or vice versa. Both Mr. Stack and Mr. Crisp responded that the monies have all been spent and that there is no debt to one another – the Town does not owe the Turner Group a balance and there is no money for additional work by the Turner Group.

Chuck Douglas stated that there appears to be no support for all the construction that was designed for a Town Center, as designed years ago before the recession and before the tax decrease from PSNH; that the real issue is taxes; and that a real cost to eliminate the problem with the State Fire Marshall is needed. Mary Beth Waltz stated that may be the opinion of Mr. Douglas' table but is not representative of her table's view who want a Town Center.

Jon Eaton stated that the existing Fire space at the Community can be kept as 'cold storage' until monies are available or when the Town determines what year to address it, but monies first need to be allocated to the Fire Department needs which could be the Hughes Building on Robinson Road, but monies will also be needed for relocating DPW. Harry Judd stated that the Fire

Department has to be located close to a water source and noted that the Town constructed the pond for the fire tankers.

Meredith Kropp, 21 Jonathan Lane, stated that at Town Meeting it was obvious that people worked hard to present a plan and seemed surprised by the reaction of the Town's people. Ms. Kropp stated that it is important to keep the Town Residents informed and get their feedback as the project progresses and suggested doing a survey and get an idea of what the residents are willing to pay and create a plan within that amount. Mr. Crisp acknowledged the validity of the suggestion and stated that the Selectmen had pursued it, noting the prior Town Meetings where a Town Center was voted to proceed, where HL Turner was selected to design and that concerns were raised when the estimated rough estimate of 5.8 million dollars went above 7 million dollars, people decided that was too much. Mr. Crisp also acknowledged that people's attitude may have changed over the years for reasons other than money. Ms. Kropp stated that change can happen within a year and that earlier communication is helpful.

#### 10:45 – 11:00 AM – 1<sup>st</sup> Listening Session Wrap-up

Mr. Crisp thanked everyone for attending and expressed his appreciation for their input. Mr. Judd thanked Colleen Hunter for providing the refreshments at her expense for today's session and thanked everyone for participating. Ms. Hunter thanked everyone for their input and being open to try new things and working together. Mr. Anderson also thanked everyone and sharing their reasonable and responsible ideas, noted that there are approximately twenty openings on various Town Boards and Commission and encouraged everyone to consider volunteering, that the second Listening Session is scheduled for Friday evening, 5/9/2014 and that after the Board of Selectmen will appoint a Committee to consider all the ideas presented and set a direction for the Town.

#### 11:00 AM - Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Knee for Board of Selectmen