

Town of Farmington  
Board of Selectmen Public Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, December 27, 2023  
356 Main Street-Farmington, NH 03835

**Board Members Present:**

Gerry Vachon, Chairman  
Charlie King, Vice Chairman  
Ann Titus  
Doug Staples  
Penny Morin

**Others Present:**

Ken Dickie, Town Administrator

**1). Call to Order:**

Chairman Vachon called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

**2). Pledge of Allegiance:**

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3).Public Input:** None

**4). Old Business:**

**Encumbrance from the Undesignated Fund Balance for Recycling Building-** Mr. Dickie said initially he thought this would carry over because it wasn't part of the budget it was in the undesignated fund balance but in talking with Town Attorney Keriann Roman, she said they would have to encumber that so based on that that is the main reason they are having a meeting tonight. He said they used \$5,534.73 of that \$100,000 and that was to relocate the cans and get them out of the way to get clearance to start with the foundation which is supposed to be starting soon. He said they need to encumber \$94,465.27.

**Motion:** (Vachon, second Staples) to encumber \$94,465.27 from the undesignated fund balance for recycling building project passed 5-0.

**Heating System for the Municipal Building-** Mr. Dickie said he communicated with Construction Manager Jeff Greenhalgh and he provided 5 proposals and they narrowed it down to the Daikin system is strained and we haven't even hit the cold period of the season and they've already been a week using electric heaters trying to keep the building somewhat comfortable enough for the workers to come in. He said what happened with the system downstairs was the control board in the outside unit got wet in the hard driving rain that we had and the moisture burnt out the board. So, we had to replace the board and now that's functioning and the downstairs is okay for now he said.

He said upstairs that unit had faulted out so there was no heat in the whole building at one point. He said they came in and replaced the condensation pump that takes the moisture and

pumps it outside as that had faulted out and shut down originally the whole system upstairs. He said they unwired it, got it going and it was working great. He said they came in and replaced the condensation pump plus some filters then it faulted out.

Mr. Dickie said when they came in to fix the board, they reset the upstairs because they needed to change some parameters for the condensation pump, they got it working, everything was good and when they had been gone about 15 minutes, he went upstairs it had faulted out again.

He said it keeps coming up with the "JU-2" fault which has something to do with the compressing pump outside. He said they came back, reset it and everything was good. He said he told Bldg. Insp. Ron LeMere to shut every door, leave the classroom open and leave the bathroom open so if it does fault those rooms will be warm knowing we have kids going in there once a week so nothing freezes if we have a cold snap. He said they did that and when he came down Saturday it had faulted out and that's when he let Mr. Vachon know that the upstairs unit had already faulted out.

Mr. Dickie said he didn't know what the cost is going to be if it ends being the compressor on the outside. I think it's going to be expensive but that's just my guess I don't know and we'll have to get an estimate on that he said.

Mr. Staples asked if he knew if it was a 22 unit or a 410.

Mr. Dickie said it's a 410 and one is a 35 amp and the others are both 50 amps. He guessed that it will be \$10,000 or more just for that to fix the upstairs for the electrical system. He said they will have almost \$5,000 for the downstairs between the boards and them coming in and fixing everything so it would work but none of the controls are even close to even working.

Mr. King asked if that was for the heat pump for the downstairs.

Mr. Dickie said yes and that Joy's couldn't begin to figure it out. He said he showed them the master and they needed somebody else to come in so they were forced to call Daikin to have them come in because they were the only ones that could work on it. That's where we're at with the electrical side of it he said.

He said going through that week trying to keep the building heated with space heaters was a stretch. He said at zero degrees or below this system is only going to be about 70% efficient and he got that from Daikin themselves.

Mr. King said that is if it stays running.

Mr. Dickie said for the oil-fired steam boiler he thought the 2 boiler systems were a viable option when he talked to Mr. Greenhalgh but he didn't realize what was proposed was 2 residential boilers and as soon as he heard that he called him and told him we were not going down that path. He said if anything happens with a residential boiler in a commercial building would not be covered by their insurance.

Mr. King asked if there was an alternative 2 commercial boiler system that could be proposed. Mr. Dickie said there and he could ask for the price for that but it would be north of \$30,000.

He said he asked for a boiler similar to what we had at the Town Hall because the floor space is about the same and he said a 6 panel boiler would more than handle it and that is what they have up there. He said with the 6-panel boiler you still need to replace the burner because the burner is for a 10 panel and that's too big for a 6-panel boiler. He said it's around \$42,000 if you elect to go that route just taking that old one out which is \$10,000...

Mr. King asked about the cost to repair the chimney.

Mr. Dickie said that's done and they had to fix that to get the furnace hooked up downstairs to keep the pipes from freezing and all that stuff is done. He said all the electrical has been fixed down there and there are no more hanging boxes and that nightmare has been taken care of. He said it's ready now to just take the old boiler out and whatever we decide we want to do to go forward with. He said on the Rinnai units he and Mr. LeMere had a conversation with Mr. Greenhalgh about using propane and they would have used an outside wall with a direct vent. He said the struggle they have there is how to heat the main lobby and they will have to figure that side of it out. He said Mr. Greenhalgh was thinking a 15,000 unit BTU's was about \$1,500 and double that it's about \$3,000 a unit to hook them up so he was taking what he knew down here and just the classroom and one other room would be about \$30,000.

He said he told him the other ones don't need to be up to 70 degrees because they're storage but he would like to have some sort of heat in there to keep the cold air from coming down through the ceiling and trying to work this stuff as well.

Mr. King asked from what room.

Mr. Dickie said the front corner upstairs where the old Superintendent's office used to be is the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's storage area. He said where the conference room in the SAU used to be is storage for planning and in the back room is storage for the Police files and then you have the old conference room, the weight room and the upstairs classroom where the kids are.

Mr. King asked if the cold is coming down.

Mr. Dickie said the cold will come down through the ceiling.

Mrs. Morin asked why they are storing Police records here.

Mr. Dickie said it is all their personnel files. He said in his office right now it's cold because you have cool air coming up from the floor and cold air coming down from the ceiling.

Mr. King said and there is no insulation and he didn't think there is any in this building.

Mr. Dickie said no and there is basically a brick and there is not much in here. He said after they went through all that Mr. Greenhalgh said if it were him knowing what he knows about the building and how it's laid out and you already have all the infrastructure he would just replace it with another steam boiler.

Mr. King asked for Mr. LeMere's thoughts on that.

Mr. Dickie said he was concerned with the propane knowing the size of the room and that we'd have to totally relocate furniture and move radiators and they would have to bury the propane tank because they would need to upsize what we have and once you do that you need a 25 ft.

offset and if you bury it you need a 10 ft. offset. He said they would have to go in from the parking lot between Rick Moulton's property and the building that's the only place where they could get the 10 ft. offset. He said Mr. Greenhalgh said that's an additional cost and it didn't include the piping going from the tank into the building or up the building it was just getting the unit in and hooking it up and that was his \$3,000 per unit. He said you're going to have the additional cost on top of that just hooking it up so quickly that \$30,000 could probably double. Mr. Vachon asked if his suggestion was to go with the \$42,000 6 panel system.

Mr. Dickie said that's what he recommended and he got that from Mike and he wanted a price so he could give the board a price and he can also call him back and figure out what the 2 commercial boiler price would be but the one 6 panel boiler was around \$42,000.

Mrs. Morin asked if that was the installed price.

Mr. Dickie said it included the installation, re-piped it so it's not draining hot water on the floor, and eliminate the circulation condensation pump so it comes right back down to the boiler.

Mr. King said there would still need to be a condensation tank in the system.

Mr. Dickie said he was sure there needs to be but it's all included in that price.

Mrs. Morin said he said something wasn't included and they would have to change out something that was meant for 10.

Mr. Vachon said that was the burner.

Mr. Dickie said that price was with the new burner. He said it also includes him coming up here and setting the controls so it's heating adequately upstairs and downstairs to minimize hot and cold rooms.

Mr. King asked what they would do for thermostats to make sure they're not heating spaces they don't need to.

Mr. Dickie said first they would get the ones behind him set and those are supposed to be the controls and see how that works.

Mr. Vachon asked how readily available is a 6 panel and if it was sitting on shelf somewhere or they would have to wait 10-15 weeks.

Mr. Dickie said it would take 10 weeks.

Mr. King said that's for the manufacturer they were looking at and depending on the manufacturer they might have comparable boilers where this one is 10 weeks and another one might be 3 weeks.

Mr. Dickie said probably his worst-case scenario was 10 weeks.

Mr. Vachon said so it might be fired up by April here then.

Mr. Dickie said if that's the case he would put a Sunbelt heater in here if the system goes. I need heat and I'm not going to go to zero degrees with these (space) heaters here he said.

Mr. King said that could be a fire hazard.

Mr. Dickie said he was coming in at 6 a.m. to plug everything in and then he would go to the Highway, Sewer and Police Depts. and then come back down here and when he got here it was

about 60 degrees and when he came back it was about 65 degrees. He said then we had that one cold night where it went down to about 14 degrees and he came in here and it was 55 degrees and when he came back from doing all that it was about 59 degrees.

Mr. King asked if they getting 5 degrees an hour.

Mr. Dickie said basically and at 14 degrees he could get the building up to 68- 69 degrees max.

Mr. King said he is going to have to continue working on a solution, find a 6 panel boiler and see if he can hunt around for a comparable manufacturer and put it on the agenda for next week.

Mr. Vachon said they are not meeting next week unless they have to.

Mrs. Titus asked where they were taking the money out of.

Mr. Dickie said there is \$23,000 in the ARPA funds they can use and he can keep scrubbing.

Mr. King asked about using the funds in the undesignated fund balance. He said they didn't buy down the taxes they just left it there.

Mr. Dickie said they could use some of that and there would be about \$400,000 available before they get down around 8% (of the regular general fund operating expenditures).

Mr. King asked if they need to earmark it before the end of the year.

Mr. Dickie said no and they could do it with a warrant article.

Mr. King said they could take \$23,000 from ARPA and they'll have to take the rest from the undesignated fund balance.

Mr. Dickie said yes.

Mr. Vachon said if the warrant article passes.

Mr. King said he didn't think they needed to go to a warrant article they could just take it out of the undesignated fund balance. He asked Mr. Dickie to ask Att. Roman if they need to do that or if they could just allocate it.

Mrs. Morin said today it is not undesignated it's still part of the operating budget and asked why they couldn't just use it or encumber it.

Mr. Dickie said what they could end up doing is they could put money in the Building and Repair Capital Reserve Fund and then they could put it out from that to pay for it.

Mr. King said they could do that through a warrant article.

Mr. Staples asked how much is in the CRF right now.

Mr. Dickie said there is about \$3,000 in the CRF after they pulled about \$30,000 out of it to pay for the Town Hall boiler.

Mrs. Morin asked if they can't encumber the funds now for that purpose.

Mr. Dickie asked if they have a line in the budget to encumber it to.

Mr. Vachon said it's a bottom line budget so as long as they stay under budget once it's voted in the Board of Selectmen can spend it as they need to.

Mr. Dickie said they could put it on the Build and Repair line knowing they have enough money this year they can pay for whatever the difference is between ARPA and over expend that line.

Mrs. Morin asked if they were going to require 3 bids.



Mr. Staples said they don't have time.

Mr. Dickie said they did that when they did the Town Hall and Mike Vachon was by far the cheapest.

**Motion:** (King, second Titus) to authorize the Town Administrator to continue to proceed seeking a viable replacement for this boiler and over spend the Building Repair line as required to accomplish the project;

**Discussion:** Mr. Staples asked Mr. Dickie if he was comfortable that they would be okay over spending that line with the bottom line.

Mr. Dickie said right now they're sitting at around 24% residual through Nov. He said if they encumber the \$350,000 which is about 4% it will bring us down around 18%-20% so we will still have money in there.

**Amendment:** by Mr. King: to waive the bid policy allowing us to continue working with Vachon's Heating exclusively.

Mrs. Titus accepted the amendment. She then asked if they wanted them to look into putting in insulation in this building if they're going to spend that much money and the building is not insulated.

Mr. King said he talked to Mr. Dickie about that the other day to see about getting a quote on some spray foam in the basement or have somebody look at it and see what we can do. He said they should see about having an audit done and getting a quote but that's not going to be done tonight.

Mr. Vachon said they are authorizing Mr. Dickie to over spend that line but asked if the books close on that line on Sunday.

Mr. King said it's going to go into next year then and they have to budget for the next line so if they start off next year if it doesn't get appropriated this year, we have a budget line item for next year so they would put \$25,000 on that line and if it falls into next year, we're going to take \$23,000 from ARPA so they would start out with \$25,000 on that line. He then asked how much is in that line and if it was \$50,000.

Mr. Dickie said there is \$43,000 in that line.

Mr. King said if they do the boiler in here and potentially any insulation upgrade and whatever they need to do to tighten this building that's going to max that right out.

Mr. Dickie said the only other thing like he suggested was they could take a warrant article and put money into the Building Repair line and the CRF from the undesignated fund balance.

Mr. King said right now they could add to that and replenish it later.

Mrs. Morin said they could still do that when they come up with the warrant articles.

Mr. Vachon asked if that would be at the next meeting.

Mr. Dickie said yes. He said Feb. 16 is when they have to have everything in the budget locked up for the last day for the hearing for the Budget Committee.

**Vote:** the motion passed 5-0.

**5). Town Administrator's Business: None**

**6). Other Business before the Board:**

**Cartwright Property-** Mr. King said he got a call from Planning Director Kyle Pimental regarding the Cartwright property and he wasn't sure what their decision was regarding the trash and the old junk vehicle there.

Mr. Dickie said he told Mr. Pimental that the board wanted them to clean it up.

Mr. Staples and Mr. King said they thought we were going to clean it up.

Mr. Staples said we were going to take it like it is and clean it up because they said it was just a small illegal dump with somebody dumping trash.

Mr. Dickie said from the pictures he saw there is an old vehicle there.

Mr. King said his recollection and he said that he would confirm it tonight was they were just going to accept it and clean it up.

Consensus of the board was to agree with Mr. King.

Mr. King asked Mr. Dickie to re-communicate that to Mr. Pimental and he would also text him.

Mr. Dickie said he would e-mail him and let him know they were going to take as is. He said he told him today that Jan. 11 is the signature day.

Mr. Vachon asked if they will see the finalized deeds on Jan. 8. He said they saw the draft deeds and there was a question and Mr. Pimental never presented them back that he recalled.

Mr. Dickie said he will ask the attorney to give them the amended deeds that they're going to sign.

Mr. King said there were some last minute changes regarding hunting.

Mr. Vachon asked if they have to approve signing them.

Mrs. Morin said they authorized Mr. Dickie to sign it.

Mr. Dickie said when they saw how many they had to sign they told him he could sign it because they would get writer's cramp.

Mr. King said it was the timing also because they had to authorize the lawyer to act on their behalf and they had to authorize him to sign all of that.

Mr. Vachon, he hoped they would have the finalized deeds on Jan. 8.

**Rain Check-**Mr. Staples asked with 3 days of rain coming if the Highway Dept. was going around checking the culverts and making sure that we're not going to have any floods or failures.

Mr. Dickie nodded yes and they went around checking, patching and fixing them.

**7). Next Meeting: Monday, January 8, 2024**

**8). Adjournment:**

**Motion:** (Morin, second Staples) to adjourn the meeting passed 5-0 at 6:28 p.m.

Kathleen Magoon  
Recording Secretary



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Gerry Vachon, Chairman

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Charlie King, Vice Chairman



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Ann Titus



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Douglas Staples

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Penny Morin