



Town of Effingham
Selectmen's Office
68 School Street
Effingham, New Hampshire 03882

Board of Selectmen's Work Session Minutes
November 10, 2023

Present: Chairman Espie, Selectman Racine, Selectman Seamans, Susan Slack, Jason Earle, Chuck Fuller, and Administrative Assistant Pitts

Chairman Espie called the Work Session to order at 9:00 am

Chairman Espie made a motion to approve the Friends of Effingham Library Raffle Request, seconded by Selectman Racine. Motion passed (3-0).

Chuck Fuller stated the tickets will be created and cut and they will be drawn December 16 at noon.

Jason Earle discussed 'Lord's Hill Tavern' and the interested parties that have contacted the former owner and would like to take the next steps for a walkthrough of the property.

Chairman Espie asked if there had been further conversation with the '7 to Save', Earle stated Susan would be able to provide more information.

Selectman Racine recommended having one or two Selectman present during the walkthrough of the property.

Chairman Espie asked Administrative Assistant Pitts if there has been interest through the office, Pitts confirmed.

Earle explained the Preservation Alliance has received a few calls and have recommended to contact the Board of Selectmen's office with any questions.

Susan Slack informed the Board with options to take if there is no response from the previous owner to buy back the property and explained each scenario is different pursuant to specific RSA's. Slack provided an example if the Town wanted to retain the property and it would need to be voted on during Town Meeting. Slack stated that if the Town is deciding to sell the property, they could put out Request for Proposal's requiring the owners would need to follow Local Regulations and maintain the Historical Aspect of the building. Slack recommends the Board contact the Town Attorney with questions.

Chairman Espie stated the former owner has yet to submit via certified mail the intent to buy back the property. Slack explains the Town is required to send a certified notice to the previous owner 90 days prior if the Town chooses to move forward and within 30 days the owner must notify intention to repurchase the property and have funds available within the 30 days after.

Slack mentions the letter already sent out to the previous owner and suggests obtaining legal advice to confirm it does not commit the Town to anything and also recommends looking back at the minutes to see if the Board authorized the letter to be sent out. Resident Chuck Fuller recalls

the discussion and it was recommended to have Town Counsel look at the letter. Chairman Espie stated the letter was waiving the penalties and that it wasn't going to be waived a second time, Earle asked if the previous owner was aware. Pitts stated she had talked to a potential buyer working with the previous owner and informed them the penalty was not going to be waived. Selectman Racine asked the approximate total to buy back, Pitts stated approximately \$33,000-\$35,000 with the penalty. Selectman Seamans recommends having the question to retain the property for Town purposes at Town Meeting, and if the Town disagrees to move forward. Slack confirmed that if the Town were to sell the property the Town would only get is owed to them including; taxes, interest, penalties, and legal fees. Selectman Racine asked Susan if she could draft the questions to Town Counsel and asked Pitts to document the legal expenses.

Slack recommended getting the questions to Town Counsel now and asked the Board if they wanted her to contact Town Counsel, the Board approved.

Chuck Fuller recommended informing the interested parties that the Town is contacting Town Counsel and to expect it could take 2-3 weeks for a response and if there is multiple interests to set a walkthrough date.

Slack suggests if the Town obtaining the property is not feasible and the previous owner does not redeem the property to have the Town put out RFP's and reaching out to a Real Estate Broker or Historic Preservationist to look at the property and recommend costs.

Selectman Racine questioned the personal belongings left behind and recommended contacting Primex. The Board discussed sending a letter to the previous owner requesting a time to schedule to pick up the personal items.

Slack discusses holding a meeting with the Historic District and NH Preservation Alliance to discuss options. Slack explains they have helped the Town of Orford in the past with a tax deeded property with placing a preservation easement to preserve the historical features and adds the benefit of having interested buyer who would enjoy the preservation.

Slack mentioned how a Town had gone door-to-door to raise money for the Stewardship fee throughout the Historic District. Selectman Racine asked the cost of the Stewardship fee, Susan stated the Stewardship fee is paid up front.

Selectman Racine recommends waiting on a response from Town Counsel and setting up another meeting.

Earle stated he had examples of RFP's and will send them to Pitts.

Selectman Seamans recommends waiting 30 days for Counsel response before allowing walkthroughs.

Selectman Seamans asked the timeframe to meet with the Preservation Alliance, Earle answered they could come when the Town wants. Slack states the Alliance is dedicated to the properties on the '7 to Save' list.

Slack recommended coordinating a message to residents on what is being worked on and listening to what the residents would like to benefit the Town.

Selectman Seamans announces the addition of a name to the Veteran's Honor Roll on Saturday for an Effingham resident at 2:00 pm with a small ceremony at Lord's Hill.

Chuck Fuller announces the Library's new website has been created with the funds from the grant and is working with Theresa Swanick to update the link on the Town's website.

Chairman Espie asked about the Weather Station, Fuller answered that it is great and on the homepage.

Fuller mentions there should be an announcement in the next weeks regarding the LCHIP grant.

Fuller mentions the future repair of the bell tower with proceeds of the grant.

The Work Session adjourned at 9:55 am

Respectfully Submitted,
Caitlyn Pitts

Dated: November 16, 2023

Leonard Espie

Chris Seamans

Leo Racine