

Bennington Board of Selectmen
December 1, 2022 6:00 PM
Meeting Minutes

Present: Chairman, James Cleary, Tom James, David Foster

Others Present: Town Administrator, Deb Davidson, Shelly Griswald, Bethany Craig, James Craig, Scott Liljeberg (arrived later)

New Business: To discuss installing closets on the stage at the Town Hall Gymnasium

Chairman Cleary called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Chairman Cleary opened the meeting saying he had spoken with Arnold Cernota, President of the Historical Society who expressed he was not happy with changes to the gymnasium.

Bethany Craig discussed that this project has been discussed since 2016 and at that time, the closet was given to the Town Clerk for storage. In 2017 they were going to do similar changes. Bethany stated she had spoken with the recreation committee and the concert folks, everyone seemed ok with this change.

Chairman Cleary stated that yes, this has been discussed many times over the years, but it was never voted on. The historical aspect of this is not acceptable, it could jeopardize LCHIP funds and other grants that could be obtained. Chairman Cleary further stated he wished it had been discussed with the Board, the current Board knew nothing about this. He wishes more communication had taken place, lots of people are not happy with this change.

Bethany stated this is all temporary and can come down to make room for the stage if needed in the future.

Selectman James stated to him, it is not a big deal if, as Bethany stated, this is temporary. We need to discuss somewhere else that storage would work.

Bethany said the things that are stored, are items that are used regularly. She also explained how it has worked in the past and her reasoning for this change.

Resident, Scott Liljeberg stated his concerns were the integrity of the historic building and that needs to be addressed appropriately. If we need to build something on Town property, that should be discussed. The History and Heritage of the building needs to remain, not using 1/3 of the space should not be used for storage. Newhall field had a building built and if he had known

it would've worked to enlarge that building. Suggestions of a shed on the corner of the Town Office property, one that looks nice. Pierce Elementary School could be a great option.

Deb Belcher was present, due to Town Clerk hours, she offered the closet she is currently storing election items in to the Recreation Department. She would move to the third floor if necessary.

Chairman Cleary stated that he thinks the workmanship is a good job, but that the Selectmen should have been notified of this and voted to approve the change.

Motion by Chairman Cleary to have the stage closets removed at this time. The Selectmen will discuss this at a later date and come up with alternative storage. Motion was seconded by Selectmen Foster & James. All in favor – motion passed.

Selectmen will look at alternatives for storage, they will begin this after the elevator and sprinkler system is completed. Discussion regarding PES usage in the future for some of the items followed. No decision on that was made at this time.

Selectmen discussed possibly removing the hoops, no decision was made.

Reusing the lumber and paying the invoice was discussed and agreement by all three Selectmen to do this.

Deb D., Matt, DJ, Cathy and Deb B. will work on reorganizing the 3rd floor and see what can be utilized for storage going forward.

With nothing further, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm. The next Selectmen's meeting is scheduled for December 6, 2022 at 6:00 pm with the Budget Committee being the priority.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Davidson, Town Administrator