

**SPECIAL LIBRARY MEETING
ROCKPORT SELECT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY APRIL 13, 2017
7:00 P.M.
ROCKPORT OPERA HOUSE**

Present: Chair William (Bill) Chapman, Vice-Chair Kenneth McKinley, Geoffrey Parker and Owen Casas. Also present: Richard C. Bates, Town Manager and Ben Blackmon, Library Director and members of the public including Ames Curtis, Stevie Kumble, Pat Messler, Paul Charbonneau, Linda Posson and Christine Sady.

- I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER – Bill Chapman, Chair called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M.
- II. PUBLIC COMMENT
- III. CONSIDERATION OF HOW TO PROCEED

Kenneth McKinley moved to rescind considering the six finalists. Owen Casas seconded the motion.

Comments about why the vote on a new library failed. Reasons: #1 money, \$4 million too high of a cost, unattractive, no curb appeal, too large, too small, not enough parking, parking unsafe and inaccessible, and taxes

The Board – We don't disagree with anything about Dick Reed. We wanted him to have the first choice of when to meet with us. Other architects told us that we needed to contact Reed before we contacted them. We were scolded. Some of them are not interested in continuing if we consider others first. We need to decide if Dick is not first. He is willing to wait if we want to have some mediation. We don't want him out of the process.

Bill – agreed. It doesn't mean that we may not want to do that. We aren't shutting any doors. Dick and Cynthia made a lot of good points. We talked about possible mediation or a survey.

Geoff – the motion logically came up after talking about it at our last meeting. We have just taken a lot of criticisms. Some of it was deserved and some of it was not. He gave us ultimatums and held a gun to our heads. I think that this is not appropriately timed.

Owen – what motion will follow this motion? I am happy with Reed and Company. I am very impressed with their candor. Do we need to name them as our preferred company?

Bill – it is procedural if we don't rescind the motion. We need to follow the motion.

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Rick – we have a contract with Reed. He is our architect. The others had a problem because we still have a contract with him.

Ken – I don't think that it is necessary to reappoint Dick. The motion is to put the brakes on the process.

Owen – I don't find any merit to entertain a motion to table the motion.

Kenneth McKinley moved to table the motion to the end of the meeting. Owen Casas seconded the motion. VOTE: 4 FOR – 0 OPPOSED.

Ames Curtis – commented about their thoughts on the process. The elephant in the room is accessibility. The size is too small, the site is not right, the Select Board's letter showed no enthusiasm. She scolded the Board and said that they did not do a good job promoting the vote to build a new library. You need to be transparent in whatever you do. They talked about the June 2016 vote and the November 2016 vote. She also scolded them for not giving the Ad Hoc Committee praise for all of their work.

Linda Posson – commented that she did not disagree with what Ames said.

Bill – we could go to mediation or have a survey. Will it do any good? Where do we find a mediator that will be fair and not biased?

Ken – we need a process to find common ground. It needs to be less contentious. There is a lot of division in the town. The question is do we need a new library?

Geoff – we are taking this in the wrong order. It is imperative to find common ground.

The Board discussed having a survey.

Ken – the survey can be a part of the mediation.

Owen – what is in our budget to pay for a survey?

Rick – we don't have any money set aside for a survey.

The Board talked about a timeline and then about possible mediation.

Paul C. – what is your purpose? Based on how many people in the room, the cost would be a minimum of \$2,000 to a maximum of \$10,000.

Stevie – the Library Committee has some money in their Putnam Funds and they have talked about using funding from there to pay for this.

Rick – we have one chance to do this right. The cost could be \$10,000 to \$20,000.

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Owen – the group that is against taxes going up, will be upset by the cost of a survey or mediation. What if we send out a survey and then roll into mediation?

Geoff – a survey is for feedback. The next step would be when all of the surveys are back. What deadline would we want? Everyone is good at having a mouth, but not at listening.

The Board suggested starting with a concept and to add \$20,000 to their budget to cover the cost.

Bill – what is the consensus to do a survey? Does someone want to construct it? How do we get the ball rolling?

Geoff – should we take a vote?

Owen – I am a visual person and need to see the survey. When do you want to get it done by?

Geoff – I would propose that we can list our priorities and then become aligned with a team to do the survey. “I am not looking to duck and cover.”

Ken – “I want a new library in Rockport. I want a good library.”

Kenneth McKinley moved to direct the Town Manager to do a little research and come back to us next Tuesday with some proposed budget numbers. Owen Casas seconded the motion. VOTE: 4 FOR – 0 OPPOSED

Bill – the first motion? What do you want to do with it?

Owen – what should we do about our inability to engage with our citizenry? I would suggest every member write a letter to the editor of the newspaper to what happened at our meeting.

The Board agreed.

Kenneth McKinley moved to remove from the table the previous motion that was voted on last time. William Chapman seconded the motion. VOTE: 4 FOR – 0 OPPOSED

The Board asked Ben what his thoughts were.

Ben – I have no comment.

Geoff – we haven’t even discussed it with him.

Bill – do we want to meet Monday the 24th or Tuesday the 25th?

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Geoff – would like to discuss this at Tuesday’s meeting. Why not open up the process to the other architects? I am saying this in total respect to Dick. The new Board may see all of this differently. Dick says if we talk to the others, he will walk. We need a discussion on the site.

Owen – asked Geoff, you said why are we doing this? We did already choose 1 Limerock Street. Reed worked very hard with that site. The Ad Hoc Committee also worked very hard on this project. After the Tuesday night’s meeting, I feel more comfortable with them (Reed). We need to continue going forward with the firm and the site.

Ken – talked about mediation. I do not feel right talking to the other architects at this point. We need to step back from that process and work with mediation. The reason for this motion was because we wanted Dick to be part of this process.

Bill – I disagree with your saying that Dick does not want to be part of the process.

Ken – I think that he would decline, quite frankly.

Owen – is the conversation on the motion or about Dick Reed and Cynthia?

Geoff – I will not vote for this motion. I would be happy if we don’t talk about architects for three months.

Bill – we didn’t follow the process that we said we was going to do.

BREAK FOR 2 MINUTES: 9:05 – 9:13 p.m.

Bill – we will continue with our discussion on Tuesday night’s meeting.

Geoff – Dick Reed did a great job. Here is the good and the bad. He brought the space down to 8,750 square feet. He is good at interiors, but not at curb appeal. The exterior is one of the three biggest points that people didn’t like. Look at the opinions of the house on Pascal Avenue. His curb appeal is not that great. “He said it is not going to get any better.” I think that we are short changing ourselves if we don’t open it up to others.

Owen – he did downplay the exterior, but I feel he would review it if we wanted him to. We stressed more on what we wanted on the inside of the building.

Geoff – flipping into the PR mode. I am sorry that people don’t think that we gave the Ad Hoc Committee enough credit for what they did. They did a great job. He talked more about the exterior of the building. Something that feels disjointed, you will never enter.

Owen – it is a challenge, but you will go inside for a book.

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Geoff – feels that Dick could have done a better job with the exterior. I don't know why we are limiting our choices.

Bill – Cape Elizabeth was a redesign of the interior. We need to look at the options before we retain him. How do we get there? I got from him a sense of order. We need to figure out the budget. We need to keep the cost in the forefront of our minds.

Ken – Reed and Company does design from inside to the outside. We have to decide what we want and they can come up with the curb appeal that we desire. The motion is pushing the decision ahead a few months.

Owen – the exterior was brought up by you Geoff. It costs a lot of money for a beautiful exterior. For him (Dick) it is an afterthought. The interior is important for spacing and programming.

Geoff – we are not architects nor was our Ad Hoc Committee.

Stevie – this is so unfair. He has built thirty-one libraries. Have you seen Carrabassett's, it is beautiful. It is grossly unfair to say what he is capable of.

Bill – the motion is off the table. Any more discussion before we vote?

Owen – I felt that I saw a different side of Dick. I thought of him as quiet and reserved, but he was blunt with us. I think that this will be valuable. I am still concerned about the parking.

Bill – I will call for the vote.

VOTE: 3 FOR (McKinley, Casas & Chapman) – 1 OPPOSED (Parker)

IV. ADJOURN

Kenneth McKinley moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:43 p.m. Owen Casas seconded the motion. VOTE: 4 FOR – 0 OPPOSED

Respectfully submitted,

LINDA M. GREENLAW
TOWN CLERK as RECORDING SECRETARY