

**ROCKPORT SELECT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY DECEMBER 18, 2017
7:00 P.M.
ROCKPORT OPERA HOUSE
GEOFFREY C. PARKER COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM**

Present: Chair Kenneth McKinley, Vice-Chair Owen Casas, Douglas Cole, Thomas Gray and Mark G, Kelley. Also present: Ben Blackmon, Library Director; Ann Filley, Chair of the Library Committee and several members of the public.

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER – Ken McKinley, Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on a snowy evening.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Richard Cadwalder, Amsbury Street - I listened to the minutes from the last meeting and it is clear to me that there are hazards that lie ahead they may not be obvious to everyone. Bonnie Gibbons said “we need a design to knock us out of the ballpark.” Owen said “how can we figure what the citizens want?” “We attempted but we failed.” Tom Gray was “worried that we will be unsuccessful again.” Ken stated that “this process has been imperfect.” “Thanks to all of you for doing what you do. You are doing an amazing job with your time.” Everyone has one thing on their mind and that is that the design will be approved. I was disappointed with Dick Reed’s design and it failed. The whole Board and the citizens are concerned about the design, the budget and the rent. You should not choose one architect. You are headed to the same recipe going with Steve Smith and rushing the process. You need to set up a pitch. Give them a design model and let the citizens choose it. Every architect hates a pitch. Whoever is on the short list should be given a chance. I know Priestley and his design. Is someone working against him? He is the best choice in my opinion. I strongly recommend that you include him. I feel that you should not have one person. Put it out for public review.

Owen –a pitch doesn’t take time or money?

Richard – I would suggest that you give them two weeks. If you do this you will get a better result.

Nick Ruffin – I don’t think that you have to go that far. By having the survey, you have a budget idea and size of the building. You have made a lot of progress. Steve Smith is a local person and he was the second choice last time. I am not saying anything about Priestley. Reed mostly has done renovations and a new building is not his strength. I think what happened aside from the budget was that the building design was not compatible with the Town and it didn’t stand out.

Allen Mitchell – this is the only project in twenty years that the Building Committee has not been involved in. We were involved with the Town Office, the Harbor Building, the Opera House renovations and the renovations to the Public Safety Building. You should reconsider

that the Building Committee be involved with the project.

Richard – why hasn't the Building Committee been involved?

Ken – I have been here five years and usually there has been an ad hoc committee formed.

Mark – I remember the Building Committee's involvement with the Town Office, the Harbor and the Public Safety Buildings.

John Priestley – the ultimate goal seems to be to have a June vote. If you do one design, you could have the same result as last time. If it passes by a small vote there will be bitterness. You need to ensure that the best design is presented to the voters. You could request one design from each of the four architect and have them present it to you in three to four weeks. It will help to ensure a more positive vote. You should give the voters a chance and this will help to ensure a positive vote. The renderings of the proposed library could be at the Library, the Town Office, etc. and let the residents cast a vote for the design they like best. You could have the rendering on a poster size board and in black and white. Citing the Charter, "the duty of the Select Board is to execute the will of the people."

Helen Shaw – her interest is because of the budget. "Don't make me write another Sisyphus letter. It is time to move forward."

Sally – I respect John and his friend. He was one of six architects from last time. The Committee's top choice was Reed and Steve Smith was second choice and is the only one that got applause for his design.

Ken – John was included on the list of four for this round.

III. ROCKPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY – DISCUSSION OF ARCHITECT SELECTION

a. Discussion of interviews and presentations from previous selection process

Ken – hopefully you have listened to the reviews from the last pitch. I would open the conversation to the Board.

Doug – a couple of the speakers have talked about the Select Board's responsibility to do the job. It should be what is best for the Town. I was unhappy with the last board and their inability to make a choice regarding the library. This is why I was elected. I am not a fan to put it out there for more discussion. I am comfortable with any of them and feel that they can do the job. I am willing to vote for my choice.

Owen – I listened to Steve and John's interviews. Did I miss anything?

Tom – I am looking at this with a clean slate. I listened to all of them and feel that it is a difficult choice. Doesn't know why the overwhelming choice is Steve Smith. He did not stand out to me. I was impressed by Brecker and liked his presentation. Why Steve Smith?

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Doug – did not find Brecker’s design aesthetically nice. The other one was overkill and lost the local touch.

Ken – Steve’s presentation carries some weight with him because the Ad Hoc Committee and the Town Manager recommended him. His was the best organized.

Owen – one thing stood out and that was that Limerock was rerouted through the park. Mr. Priestley would have us move the sewer and water and that would be costly.

Ken – the State has been positively inclined that we should change the traffic island.

Mark – the prior group’s work did not go unnoticed. We cannot do it justice. I am inclined to go with that group’s second choice. The manager made that recommendation as well.

Ken – last time they were paid to make their pitch. We are not picking a design, but we are picking an architect.

Doug – John has done this work and I have felt bad about not contacting him. We are not ignoring him, but didn’t ethically feel that we could contact him.

Ken – the biggest reason is because until last month we were with Reed.

Owen – I have one question, are we confident that the team is still the existing team of twenty-two months ago?

Ken – Rick reached out to each of them and only four of them responded.

Mark – when we talked about \$3,000,000, we need to keep in mind that 5-10% will be held for contingency. That gives us \$2.7 to \$2.8 to spend. I am just verifying my thoughts.

Ken – yes, it is a common practice.

Owen – I trust what the Ad Hoc Planning Committee recommended. It swayed my decision that there was a distinct second choice.

Tom – we need someone we can work with and is willing to take directions.

Ken – “it is on our shoulders.” “It is critically important to have the public’s input.” We want people to feel that they had a choice.

Owen – we need to do our due diligence to see which one resonates more. I feel that we have to have a timeline.

- b. Vote to authorize the town manager to negotiate a contract with an architect

Doug Cole moved to authorize the Town Manager to negotiate a contract with Steve Smith and Associates for a design and construction of the Rockport Public Library. Mark Kelley seconded the motion.

The Board discussed having one person. The timeline will be tight.

Mark – the group may be divided, but we need to move forward. “It is a hard choice.” “We need to move forward and to stop prolonging this process.”

Doug – “we need to make a decision, we need to take the heat.” “The architect fairy is not going to land and tell us what to do.”

Ken – Rick will bring us something to sign at the next meeting. He is listening and has made some comments to me via text.

VOTE: 5 FOR – 0 OPPOSED

IV. ROCKPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY – NEXT STEPS

- a. Selection of Select Board Liaison(s) to design process

Owen – I nominate Doug Cole.

Ken – I would suggest two liaison members along with the Town Manager, Ben, the architect and a member of the Library Committee. Also since Tom is already the liaison for the Library Committee, he should be one of the choices.

Owen Casas moved to nominate Doug Cole and Tom Gray as the Select Board’s liaison to the design process. Mark Kelley seconded the motion. VOTE: 5 FOR – 0 OPPOSED

Doug – I am comfortable working with Tom,

Tom – and I am comfortable working with you.

Ken – if one of you cannot make the meeting, let me know and one of the other of us will go. Ben will need some alone time with the architect as well.

Ann – I just want to say thank you for reaching a decision. I will probably be the person chosen from the Library Committee. We need to make sure that Ben is leading the process and he is the champion. We may have to rein him in when he gets a little excited. He knows the world of libraries and I support him.

- b. Determine preliminary time line for the process

Ken – presented a timeline to the Board.

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Helen – has Rick set up the budget meetings or has Megan set them up yet?

Ken – I need to check with her and will talk to her tomorrow. We have deadlines to meet. “We will be seeing a lot of each other over the next couple of months.”

Doug – I am optimistic about the project. Ben has already done a lot of the work last time.

c. Schedule workshops and public meetings

Ken – we don’t have to do this tonight.

Owen – I would like to thank Mr. Priestley and everyone for all of their work helping to get us to this point.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Thomas Gray moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Owen Casas seconded the motion. VOTE: 5 FOR – 0 OPPOSED

Respectfully submitted,

LINDA M. GREENLAW
TOWN CLERK as RECORDING SECRETARY