



**TOWN OF  
BROOKLINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

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***Facilities Study Committee 2011-2012  
Police Facility Evaluation  
Wednesday, July 6, 2011***

Present: Peter Cook/chair, Ann Somers/secretary, Chris Adams, Brendan Denehy, Francis Gavin, Dennis LaBombard and James Sartell

Not present: Clarence Farwell and Bill Atkinson

Also present: Gerald Roche, Jr., Judy Cook and Loring Webster

Advisors (not present): Chief Bill Quigley, Ambulance Director Wes Whittier

The meeting opened at 7:03.

Reporting on the previous meeting's walk-through of the PD, **Peter** said that at the very least, things at the current PD need fixing. **Chris** said that no issues from 2002 have been addressed, and he is pursuing shelving in the evidence room. He asked about using the "Annex." (former Ambulance facility). He noted that we have short-term and long-term issues. **Peter will arrange for a walk-through of the Annex. Ann** noted that there has been some mitigation of issues at the PD, with records in the 2008-09 committee minutes, which she will provide to members. **Brendan** said the facility has been outgrown, but it could be used more effectively than at present; for example, a white noise generator might help with some of the sound issues. But he said that fixes would only be "Band-Aids."

**Jay** said that pressing needs should be addressed, but we don't want to waste money. We need short-term and long-term plans, with or without a new building. He suggested we talk with Bill about what plans he may already have. He spoke of the liability of tolerating foreseeable risks. He spoke to the challenges of evidence storage, the variability of length of time it must by law be held (it can be as long as seven years in some cases), the care we must provide to return sometimes-valuable possessions in proper condition.

We determined that we don't need to plan other PD visits, as the documentation from 2007-08 provides the education necessary. We do need to consider what changes have taken place in technology and practices since that time. **Jay** noted that he could see some "outdated fads" in the existing floor plan. **Peter** noted that we have determined that providing for a future dispatch center is unnecessary with the technology of today and the future.

**Chris, Judy** and **Jay** spoke of off-site secure storage, and whether it could be made available in the near term. It was agreed it would be useful and desirable for some types of items, but not suitable for evidence. In the longer term, the off-site storage of some town files must also be considered to free up working space.

We spent some time looking over various drawings. **Brendan** said that we need to address first the question of whether in fact this is the right time to build a new police facility. **Ann** asked Chris whether the Finance Committee would support it, or would consider the possibility of supporting it. **Chris** spoke for himself, saying that he is not at present convinced that a new building is necessary. He believes that space can be used more effectively within the Town Hall building than is currently the case. He is concerned about the economic climate and expects public opinion to be negative this year. **Dennis** said it's essential that we establish the needs, establish where we don't meet them, and prove whether we do or do not require a new building.

**Francis** asked what sort of guidelines we are following. **Jay** responded that there are various levels of authority, ranging from "best practices," through Federal legal requirements invoking liability.

**Chris** suggested the top floor of the Town Hall could be made into offices. **Brendan** noted that the building was given to the town to provide a school, town offices, and a cultural venue. The top floor provides the cultural portion. The question was raised whether this was by common agreement or by legal provision.

**Jay** said that we must address our tasks by doing a comprehensive report on the pros and cons. The minutes of **Ben Cargill's comments from August 7, 2008 are a resource**. We must also address the space needs of all the elements currently supported at Town Hall, including the Annex. **Peter** noted that we need to contrast the cost of short-term efforts to the cost of completing the Safety Complex with the PD.

**Town Clerk/Tax Collector Patti Howard-Barnett** took us downstairs to see inside "The Vault," where some Town Clerk and other records are currently held. Patti needs routine access to the records; off-site storage of Town Clerk records would be very inefficient. The space is under the front porch, damp and unventilated, served by a dehumidifier that must be emptied by hand.

**Chris** and **Francis** spoke about the likely or possible effects of technology on storage needs. While paper remains essential for some uses, many records can be stored electronically. **Francis** suggested the use of off-site electronic storage via a document management company.

**Jay** asked whether the LGC has done a study on the required ratio of square feet needed to support a given population.

There was discussion about how to move forward using subcommittees. Issues are short-term/long-term, new building/no new building, how/what to do to optimize the current location. **Ann** mentioned the 2008-09 General Government Buildings Space Needs report, which may be useful to the committee. **Brendan** noted we need to move quickly to meet our goals and should draw up a timeline. **Peter** said we must identify the problems, and the risks of not addressing them both short-term and long-term, and let the voters decide. We spoke of alternative warrant articles, one for a bond to build, one for mitigation in place.

**The minutes of 6/23 were accepted as amended** to include mention of the maturing bonds. (Brendan/Jay, unanimous)

**The minutes of 6/29 were accepted as amended** to insert the word "probably" between "will" and "need" regarding splitting the current Town Clerk/Tax Collector position into two separate jobs. (Brendan/Jay, unanimous)

**Moved by Chris, seconded by Jay, that we break into two subcommittees, one to evaluate the needs at the PD and one to evaluate those of the other services that use the Town Hall building.** Voted yes unanimously. The PD group will include Jay, Chris, Francis and Bill. The Other Town Hall Services group will include Peter, Brendan, Dennis, Clarence and Ann. These are information-gathering groups. Both groups will report their findings at the next meeting

We will visit the Annex at a time to be determined.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m. The next meeting, 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 20th, will be held at the Safety Complex.

Minutes submitted by Ann Somers