

## Capital Building Committee December 13, 2023

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Minutes of the Capital Building Committee of Wednesday, December 13, 2023. The meeting convened at 6:07 p.m. in the Police Station Community Room, 1700 GAR Highway, Swansea MA 02777.

Present at this time were Mr. Marc Lapointe, Mr. Robert Alford II, Mr. James Carvalho, Mr. John Salzillo, Mr. John Hansen, Mr. Paul Burke, Mr. Derek Heim, Ms. Sarah Carlson, Mr. William Anderson, Mr. Chris Hajder. Absent at this time was Mr. Ryan Pacheco.

Also present at this time were:

Mallory Aronstein - Town Administrator  
Kevin Sullivan - Project Manager, CHA Consulting, Inc  
Joe Sullivan - Senior Project Manager, CHA Consulting, Inc  
Peter Turowski - T2 Architect  
Libby Turowski - T2 Architect  
Brian McCusker - Weston & Sampson - Senior Project Manager  
Geraldine Mullaly - Resident of Swansea  
Jim Pelletier - Resident of Swansea  
Steve Mello - Resident of Swansea  
Luiz Porto - Resident of Swansea

At 6:07 p.m. Mr. Derek Heim called the meeting to order.

The Committee reviewed the meeting minutes for October 25, 2023.

Mr. Marc Lapointe **MOVED** to approve the minutes of October 25, 2023. Seconded by Mr. John Hansen and so voted. Lapointe, yes; Carvalho, yes; Salzillo, yes; Hansen, yes; Burke, yes; Heim, yes; Carlson, yes; Anderson, yes; Hajder, yes; Alford, yes; Pacheco, absent.

Mr. Kevin Sullivan reviewed the biweekly update with the Committee. As a result of the town vote CHA, T2 and Weston & Sampson have come to a pause on the Town Hall/DPW/COA project. The finalized documents & contracts are being submitted to the town. Next steps and alternatives are being discussed. A more formal memo will be presented in two weeks.

Ms. Aronstein stated she had emailed the Committee a memo with some potential ideas on how to move forward and is hopeful to get the Committee's recommended course of action.

Mr. Alford states a Town Hall and DPW is still needed. After hearing the public does not want one big project, they want it to be split up, he recommends that the Town Hall should be looked at for the Town Meeting in May. He said the Bark Street School area should also be looked into further. With the plans that the Committee already has, certified free cash, money from the Assessors' overlay and money within the budget should be bale to fund at least the Town Hall.

Mr. Salzillo asked about the Library Project. He said there have been rumors of some setbacks on this project and is questioning whether or not the Town can get their money back. Mr. Salzillo stated he feels that the majority of the Town is against the Library Project and if that money is returned the residents of Swansea would reconsider moving forward with the Town Hall/DPW/COA project.

Ms. Aronstein stated that the grant through the Commonwealth for the Library Project has already been allocated and it is not going to fall through. The project is moving forward.

Ms. Carlson disagreed with Mr. Salzillo about the library project. She said the town voted for the Library Project and was voted more than 2/3rds in favor. Ms. Carlson also stated she does not believe that the Town Hall/DPW/COA project was too big of a project to do at once and moving forward the DPW is equally as important as the Town Hall and the conditions that the DPW workers have to work under need to be addressed. The COA can be restored and use the space that we have.

Mr. Lapointe stated now that we have the attention of the town residents, the Committee and the residents need to work together, look at our options and move forward with a plan.

Mr. Hajder stated he is extremely upset with what transpired at the Town Meeting, and moving forward he would like to see more accountability from everyone coming to meetings and less on social media.

Mr. Anderson stated that the town's immediate needs should be the Annex trailer, and the Town Hall. Although the DPW building does not work for the town's needs, the staff will continue to make do with what they have.

Ms. Aronstein stated if the Town Hall is brought to the October Town Meeting instead of May, given the projections it is likely the Town Hall could potentially be paid for in cash. Mr. Alford agreed.

Mr. Hansen asked Mr. Alford in his opinion why he thinks the Town Hall and Annex had failed in the past and why he thinks it will pass this October. Mr. Alford said he believed it had failed in the past because it seemed to the townspeople that it was rushed, and many questions could not be answered at the Town Meeting. Although he is not positive it will pass this time an attempt needs to be made.

Mr. Carvalho stated if it is brought to the Town Meeting in October it needs to be explained thoroughly to the residents how it will be paid for.

Mr. Burke stated that the townspeople will support a good plan, a good need and a financial plan that makes sense. He believes that the plan was not prioritized and too much was put on the table at once. He disagrees with Mr. Anderson, and thinks the DPW should be first on the list to fix and Sears Road should be considered. Next should be the Town Hall and the Junior High School should be looked at again and considered for this. Mr. Burke also discussed the different ways this project could have been financed and presented. He also stated the Committee could have used more support from the Selectmen. He also believes this project was not supported by the seniors of the community or the residents that feel strongly about building the school first.

Ms. Aronstein stated that the Committee received correspondence regarding a proposal about taking up space at the old mall property and that each member has received a copy of this correspondence via email.

Mr. Jim Pelletier expressed how he feels the DPW should be addressed first as the heart of our community. He said the free cash should be used to fix what we have. Moving forward he also believes that the Police Department, Fire Department, and School Committee should all work together and join to make these projects happen.

Ms. Geraldine Mullaly asked about a statement that was made by the Superintendent of schools regarding the 33 acres from the feasibility study and whether that will be used for the school. She asked if the Capital Building Committee will be relinquishing the thought of building anything on that site in the

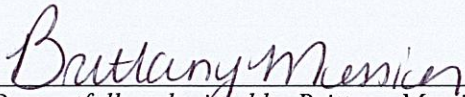
future. Mr. Heim states this is the first he has heard of this statement so cannot answer that question at this time. Ms. Aronstein said that question can only be answered after the Committee decides how they are going to move forward. Ms. Mullaly asked about a statement made regarding the school being in good shape. Mr. Carvalho said that although the school building is in good shape it is not meeting the needs of a school.

Mr. Steve Mello said he witnessed Charlton Hospital being renovated and how quickly the remodeling was being done. He expressed how he agrees that the town should use what they have and renovate the buildings they are in. He also stated that he has heard from the Community that the DPW renovation or relocating will not be supported.

Mr. Luiz Porto asked Ms. Aronstein about the remaining funds left over from the Town Hall roof repair. Ms. Aronstein states she has decided to keep it open until all issues pertaining to the roof are resolved.

At 7:34 Mr. Hajder **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Alford and so voted. Anderson, yes; Carlson, yes; Heim, yes, Burke, yes; Hansen, yes, Salzillo, yes; Carvalho, yes; Hajder, yes, Lapointe, yes, Alford, yes; Pacheco, absent.

Next meeting to be determined at a later date.



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Respectfully submitted by Brittany Messier, Minutes Clerk for Capital Building Committee

*Documents:*

*Minutes of 10/25/2023*

*Memorandum from Mallory E. Aronstein regarding Alternative Courses of Action*

*Correspondence – Letter from George McLaughlin Group and Letter from Richard Finlaw*