

Town of Hartford, Vermont

Pool Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 15, 2018

Present: Chris Hamilton, Steve Lagasse, Skip Nalette, Hilde Ojibway, David Sherman, Scott Snyder, Kim Souza (Selectboard Liaison), Joseph Trottier, Mike Vanesse (Field Use Committee Liaison)

Unable to attend: Scott Hausler, Joe James, Brett Mayfield.

Meeting commenced at 7:30 p.m. at Town Hall.

Introductions

Brief introductions were made.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the meeting May 7, 2018 were approved by motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried.

Review of Agenda

Mr. Nalette questioned whether Item 5 (Alternatives to the pool for the next two summer seasons) is outside the scope of this committee's charge.

Review the Pool Committee Charge

Discussion began with the question of which members of the committee are voting members. According to the Charge, liaison members can vote and the only non-voting member is the Director of Parks & Recreation. Ms. Souza will verify her voting status as Selectboard representative.

The phrase "based on the support from the community" was discussed next, with various interpretations offered. While all agreed on the desirability of engaging the community, the committee members expressed different priorities for how to go about it.

Do we need prices before surveying the public? Mr. Sherman held that the committee should present clear prices associated with any options. Mr. Snyder noted the effort involved in estimating prices may not be justified if certain options are determined to be of no interest.

What is best way the committee can seek public input? Ms. Souza noted that the RFP responses included community outreach as an option. Limitations of the pool committee's \$8,000 budget were discussed at some length. Can the committee afford even the first task in its Charge, i.e., comprehensive evaluation of the existing pool?

Given the many tasks and limited resources, Ms. Ojibway suggested the committee divide into three subgroups to make progress in parallel on: 1) community input, 2) repair and upgrades to existing pool, and 3) "other options".

More discussion followed about those subgroups and about whether it would be appropriate for the committee to split up.

Conversation returned to the question of how accurately costs need to be estimated before seeking public input. Mr. Hamilton suggested a preliminary estimate to rebuild the pool in its existing site may be on the order of \$360k. Mr. Trottier mentioned that a perimeter gutter could add as much as \$200k to the cost, a filtration system yet more. The Parks & Rec presentation to the town December 19, 2017, estimated fixing the gutter and repairing the existing pool to cost \$320k. It was not clear how the figures in the presentation slides were calculated, and committee members agreed they should not rely on the accuracy of those estimates.

Mr. Sherman reiterated that residents will want to know how any options will affect their property taxes.

Review the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Pool Assessment.

Mr. Hamilton reflected on missteps that Dartmouth College took with some of its pools, making the committee wary of fixing the wrong problem. It was noted the SE Group proposed a line item to evaluate the existing pool conditions for \$3,450.

Committee members expressed a desire to follow up with the firms who bid on the RFP, potentially offering a narrower scope. Mr. Nalette mentioned we may want to consider issuing a new and revised RFP.

Mr. Lagasse asked how other town RFPs have worked, such as for the hockey arena or town garage. Mr. Nalette explained that, unlike where we are with the pool, those projects had more clearly defined parameters when RFPs were issued.

New business

Ms. Souza mentioned that the Planning Commission will be holding public meetings that may be a good venue to solicit input from community members who attend, in addition to any survey. Means and methods to conduct a community survey were debated.

Mr. Lagasse recalled that in recent years voters strongly supported large bond issues (e.g., Town Hall renovations, playing fields) indicating desire to invest in town amenities.

The committee tentatively identified two groups to be formalized next meeting: an “internal” group focused on technical issues of assessing what’s needed to repair or rebuild the existing pool, and an “external” group to address a survey and other means of community outreach.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Respectively submitted by: Scott Snyder, Recording Secretary