

**Selectmen's Charge to the Community Center Study Committee
May 20, 2014**

Charge

The Community Center Study Committee (CCSC) is being formed by the Board of Selectmen to assist the Board in evaluating options for addressing the short and long-term facilities needs of the Council on Aging, the Parks & Recreation Department and a number of smaller community organizations that currently utilize Bemis Hall, the PODs and other facilities for programming and/or storage. The CCSC will have the data and analysis from several previous studies available as a resource and baseline. The CCSC will evaluate the options that were developed during the fall, 2013 State of the Town Meeting, and any others the Committee believes to have merit.

A budget of \$75,000 has been approved by Town Meeting. The budget will enable the Committee to retain architectural and engineering support. The Committee will organize its work in a manner that provides multiple opportunities for input from a diversity of town residents. It is the intent of the Selectmen to present the best options to the Town, so that the Town may make an informed decision.

It will be left to the Committee to determine how best to structure the meetings, hearings and discussions with the Town, however, the Selectmen seek to use the fall, 2014 State of the Town Meeting to provide a status report and to elicit the Town's input. The Committee's final report and recommendations will be submitted to the Selectmen not later than February 1, 2015 to provide sufficient time for the Selectmen to prepare their findings and any recommendation to the Town which will be presented during the March 28, 2015 Annual Town Meeting.

Background

The Lincoln Council on Aging (COA) currently conducts most of its programs and services at Bemis Hall, 15 Bedford Road. Bemis Hall was built in 1892 as a Town Hall and lecture hall and, while it meets many of the needs of the COA, it has significant deficits that negatively impact the safety of Lincoln elders using the COA, especially those who are frail and most in need of assistance, and limit the programs and services that can be offered. Specifically, there is little parking around the building, and backing into or out of spaces can be hazardous. In addition, elders who use additional parking across the street must cross a busy road to get to Bemis Hall. Areas of the building are not accessible. Finally, the space does not allow for congregate meals, a significant drop-in area, adequate and confidential office space for staff and volunteers, or as much programming as will be needed to meet the needs of Lincoln's growing population of older adults.

Lincoln Parks and Recreation currently operates out of "pods," formerly temporary classrooms, on the Lincoln school campus. While the square footage of the space is adequate for the programs, the Lincoln schools own and control the space so it is uncertain how long Parks and Recreation may have use of the facilities. In addition, the spaces have minimal cleaning and capital improvement and are in need of upgrading and repair. The buildings, including the bathrooms, are not ADA-compliant and can be difficult for adults to use due to child-size fixtures. IT support is split between the Town and the Schools. Parks and Recreation has no capital budget to maintain and upgrade the space.

Both the Council on Aging and Parks and Recreation hold a number of programs outside of their primary buildings in spaces owned by the Town and private organizations.

Lincoln has a vibrant community life, with many organizations offering educational, cultural, and civic programs and activities for residents. These are generally housed either in space currently occupied by Lincoln Parks and Recreation or the Council on Aging. These sites have the same limitations in terms of parking, accessibility, and square footage for community groups as they do for the two Town departments.

For all these reasons, the Town of Lincoln has sought to determine the best way to ensure adequate and appropriate space for the Town departments and community organizations. Previous studies conducted include a 2006 evaluation of Bemis Hall with a 2008 update, a 2006-2007 evaluation of the school campus and buildings, and a 2012 community center feasibility study that evaluated space and programming needs and did a preliminary evaluation of some potential sites.

Tasks

- ◆ Interview consultants and recommend a preferred individual or firm to the Board of Selectmen.
- ◆ Oversee and manage the work of the consultant in support of the Committee's activities.
- ◆ Review, refine, and confirm the programmatic and space needs of the Council on Aging and Parks and Recreation Department as determined in the 2012 study.
- ◆ Review, revise, and confirm criteria to be used to evaluate the options identified at the 2013 State of the Town meeting for housing the Council on Aging and Parks and Recreation, and any others that may emerge during the work of the Committee.
- ◆ Evaluate the benefits and challenges inherent in each option.
- ◆ Prepare a detailed evaluation of those options the Committee believes to have merit applying the agreed upon criteria , and provide rough site plans, concept designs, and cost estimates for each.
- ◆ Provide multiple opportunities for input from a diversity of Town residents, as determined appropriate by the Committee, which may include public meetings, workshops, other forums, surveys, and interviews. It is expected that the Committee will make an interim report at the fall 2014 State of the Town Meeting, and will assist the Selectmen in the presentation of findings and recommendations to the March, 2015 Annual Town Meeting.

Membership

The Committee will have 6 members, comprised of the following:

1. 1 member of the Board of Selectmen, designated by the Board (Renel Fredriksen).
2. 1 member of the Council on Aging, designated by the Council (Dilla Tingley)
3. 1 member of the Parks & Recreation Commission, designated by the Commission (Doug Carson).
4. 3 At Large Members, selected by the Board of Selectmen:
 - Penny Billings
 - Steve Gladstone
 - Nancy Marshall

The Committee shall elect its own Chairman.

Supporting Resources

Several data collection efforts and preliminary studies have been completed and will inform the work of the Committee. In addition, \$75,000 was appropriated under Article #9 of the March 29, 2014 Annual Town Meeting, for the purpose of providing the necessary architectural and design support services to the Committee. The Town Administrator, COA Director and Parks & Recreation Director, will support the Committee as ad hoc members.

Timetable

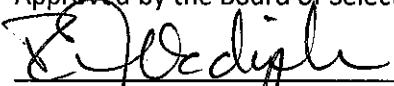
The Selectmen intend to form the Committee in May; interview and retain consultants in /June/July; carry out the work of the Committee, including multiple public input sessions, from June through January/February 2015; in time to present final recommendations to the Selectmen to inform the Board's presentation to Town Meeting in March of 2015. It is anticipated that an interim report will be presented during the State of the Town Meeting likely to be held in late-October/early-November.

Open Meeting & Public Records Requirements

The Committee, acting as an advisory special committee to the Board of Selectmen, is subject to the requirements of the Open Meeting Law. The Committee shall conduct its affairs in an open and transparent manner, will post notice of its meetings (including an agenda), keep minutes and maintain its records in accordance with the provisions of the Open Meeting and Public Records laws.

Approved by the Board of Selectmen

Date: June 9, 2014



Renel Fredriksen, Chairman

D. Noah Eckhouse



Peter Braun

