

TOWN OF BRISTOL

(DRAFT)

**Fire Facility Site Selection Committee
Minutes of July 8, 2013**

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. at the Town Office. Present were committee members P.J. Ryan, Diane Cushman, Chris Griggs, Brett LaRose, Kevin LaRose, Gerry Slager, Liz Herrmann, Shawn Oxford and Alan Huizenga. Also present were Town Administrator Bill Bryant, Porter Knight, Neil Shuman, and Joanna Etko (filming for NEAT TV).

1. This being the first meeting of the committee since its appointment, Bill Bryant opened the floor to nominations for Committee Chairperson. Kevin LaRose nominated Shawn Oxford to serve as Chair, seconded by Gerry Slager. Shawn asked about the role of Chair and there was discussion. It was agreed that it would be helpful to have a vice-chair or co-chair to serve when one person is not available. Kevin LaRose amended his motion to nominate Shawn Oxford and Brett LaRose as co-Chairs of the Committee. Gerry Slager seconded and the amended motion was unanimously approved.
2. There was discussion about minute taking for the Committee. It was felt that it would be helpful to the group if this did not have to be done by one of its members in order to facilitate the active participation of all members in discussions. It was suggested and agreed that the co-chairs will solicit others who had been interested in serving on the committee to see if one of them would be interested in serving as committee clerk, and failing that would seek a volunteer via Front Porch Forum.
3. There was discussion about meeting schedule. It was felt that productive meetings should work toward a goal of no longer than one and a half hours in length. Mondays at 7:00 p.m. works for the members. The group agreed to meet on the opposite Mondays from the Selectboard and to meet at the town offices. The next meeting will be on July 22nd, followed by the next meeting on August 5th. The schedule will be every other week to begin with.
4. There was discussion about setting goals for the committee. It was agreed that the list of "Criteria for Siting the Fire Station" prepared with public participation at the May 4th facility planning meeting should be followed and that the site evaluation matrix used by consultants Pacheco Ross in an earlier review also provides a very helpful model. It was agreed that whether to recommend a single first choice of a site or a small group of finalist sites will be a decision to be made later after site review is further along. It was noted that a thorough review of each site should be made for the record even if it appears clear to the committee that some sites are unsuitable – documenting the reasons why for the public will be important. The committee spent some time reviewing the "Criteria for Siting the Fire Station," generally concluding that the list of 39 criteria had been appropriately broken down into categories of "very important, important and not important" though it was agreed that "not important" would be better described as "less important." It was noted that criteria #13, phases, may merit moving into the important category, and also noted that stormwater issues are missing from the list. Focus of the discussion shifted to establishing a mission statement for the committee. Meeting the needs of the Fire Department, keeping the project affordable for taxpayers, and finding a site where a facility can fit in well with the neighborhood and community were recognized as important components of the mission. Liz Herrmann agreed to work on a draft

mission statement for consideration of the committee at the next meeting. Porter Knight suggested that an important part of the committee's mission is to respond to the March vote on a facility and to keep the public better informed and involved as the project is re-started.

5. There was discussion about gathering of basic site information for the committee's consideration. Information such as tax map, acreage, lot dimensions, recorded surveys, grand list value and lister card, would be useful for consideration of all parcels under review. Kevin LaRose, Liz Herrmann and Diane Cushman agreed to serve as a subcommittee to gather this information from town records.
6. Bill Bryant reported on responses received to letters sent to property owners whose properties were identified during the public planning meetings as possible sites for a fire facility. The list from the meetings included 33 such sites and was identified on a map prepared by Regional Planning Commission staff. At the public meetings, one site was crossed off the list due to its being developed for housing since it was first considered a number of years ago (#8 Lawson-Hammond property corner of Liberty and Pine), and three others were removed at the request of the property owner (#5 Thad's Automotive, #21 American Legion – former veterinary clinic, and #31 Roy's Auto). Since the letter was sent, three other property owners have requested removal of their sites (part of site #4 Brown and Blair; #27 Devino, #28 Bryden). There was discussion and it was felt it would be helpful to speak directly with the remaining owners to ascertain the level of their interest before proceeding with deeper review. Alan Huizenga, Shawn Oxford, Gerry Slager and Bill Bryant volunteered to split the list and make phone calls to these owners.
7. Public Forum – It was noted that each meeting agenda will include a specific time for public comments, but that the meetings would be conducted in a manner in which the group would work to accommodate a reasonable level of public participation throughout the meetings. Neil Shuman told the committee that he prefers site #13 Bouvier located at 130 North Street after driving around and looking at many of the sites. He does not like the West Street options for traffic reasons, and he likes the idea of a combined police and fire facility.

Motion was made by Diane Cushman, seconded by Kevin LaRose and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bill Bryant