

TOWN HALL 3 EAST MAIN ROAD PERU, MA 01235

Building Assessment and Needs Committee

Wednesday, May 22, 2024 @ 7:00 p.m.

Town Hall Meeting Room (Gymnasium)

Bruce Cullett, Member
Justin Russell, Member
Jay Jewell, Member
Ruth Calaycay, Member
Doug Haskins, Member
Terry Walker, Town Administrator

Public Attendees: None

Item 1: Call to order: 7:03 P.M. Bruce Cullett called meeting to order

Item 2: Roll Call: Bruce Cullett present, Doug Haskins present, Ruth Calaycay present, Justin Russell present, Jay Jewell present

Item 3: State Recording status: No one is recording

Item 4: Discussion of Organization of Committee, Nomination and Vote to Designate Chairperson: Justin Russell motion to nominate Bruce Cullett as Chairman, Doug Haskins second, 5-0

Item 5: Discussion of intended mission and purpose of Building Assessment and Needs Committee: Bruce Cullett distributed the posting that the Peru Selectboard published for the Building Assessment and Needs Committee and a discussion ensued about what the intended mission was for the Committee and various goals for the Committee. The first goal being to write a Request for Proposals that can be sent to Architectural/Engineering Firms so that we can get someone onboard to determine the needs of the various Town Departments that utilize Town Hall and to provide a complete report of its existing conditions and determine the most cost-effective approach for meeting the current and future needs of the Town. In addition, the Selectboard has expressed interest in bringing the Peru Library into a Town owned building, so any renovations and/or new construction would need to accommodate the needs of the Library as well.

Item 6: Review and discussion of Town of Peru RFP for the Town Hall/Community Center Improvement Feasibility Study dated July 2022:

The objective of the Peru Town Hall/Community Center Improvement Plan (as written in 2022) was to identify the current conditions of the facility, identify modifications that would be required to achieve code compliance upon initiation of a large-scale renovation, and to determine the feasibility of renovating the existing facility. The plan was to move the library into the town hall for additional state funding. The town sent the RFP to three firms and none responded. Several reasons were cited for the lack of response when potential firms were questioned. The first was the firms were too busy at the time to take on additional work and the second was the \$28,000 budget the Town had appropriated was likely too low.

Bruce Cullett mentioned that he felt the Committee should build on the 2022 RFP. The Committee agreed that very little has been done to the building since it became the Town Hall/Community Center. The members agreed that the Town needs a written document that provides a professional opinion from a Registered Architect (RA) or Professional Engineer (P.E.) as to the current condition of the building and the feasibility of renovating the current structure to meet

the needs of the Town Departments. The Committee agreed that the Town needs this working document in order to demonstrate the Town's needs and hopefully qualify for state and/or federal funding. Cullett explained that there is an article on the Annual Town Meeting warrant for \$50,000 to be funded with free cash for the Architectural/Engineering Study. If this article passes, these funds will be available to work with engineers on the feasibility study.

- The scope depends on what we are looking for
- Needs assessment of all departments including the Library
- What the town needs to do to upgrade existing building or build a new building or a combination of both
- ADA compliance and accessibility
- Parking lots
- Cost-effective heating and cooling systems

Item 7: Review and discussion of TSB Design Building Assessment dated February 27, 2024: Shaun Batho, TSB Design, completed a walkthrough of the Town Hall and produced a document with an assessment of the current conditions. The report based on the assessment noted that it would be more costly to repair the building than the cost to build a new Town Hall. The Committee agreed that the TSB Report included a cursory inspection and documented the visual conditions that all Committee members are aware of. The Committee agreed that a complete needs assessment must also be performed and a professional review of existing conditions such as HVAC, structural, Electrical, ADA, etc. must be included in the assessment.

The Committee agreed that local firms should be targeted with the RFP, but also the RFP should go out to a broader pool of firms.

Item 8: Review and Discussion of Health Agent's memo regarding Ground Floor and Crawlspace of Community Center: On Thursday April 18, 2024, Daniel Hassett, Public Health Housing Specialist, provided the Board of Selectmen with a document with his observations and recommendations with a potential mold issue at town hall. Bruce Cullett mentioned that air testing was performed a couple of years ago as well as some specialized cleaning following the discovery of visible mold growth in the former Police Office adjacent to the crawlspace. At that time the interior levels of airborne mold were lower than the exterior ambient levels. The moisture issue from the crawlspace and lack of ventilation has not been addressed until recently. Bruce Cullett mentioned that the Board of Selectmen were working to address the crawlspace issue by sealing it off and putting it under negative pressure as well as controlling humidity levels in the crawlspace as well as the Community Center. Doug Haskins, a member of the BOS, noted that he was working to dispose of items stored adjacent to the crawlspace, especially those that are not moisture resistant.

Item 9: Discussion of regular schedule for meetings:

- It was decided the next two meetings would be on Wednesday, June 12th and Wednesday, June 26th at 7:00 p.m.
- The RFP should be ready by the end of the summer
- The RFP will be modified and move the library to town hall
- Bruce Cullett mentioned that some towns hire a consultant to write an RFP but he feels the committee can write the RFP
- Justin Russell will reach out to bigger engineering firms such as Gill.
- Town Administrator, Terry Walker, is researching grants for municipal buildings. TA Walker mentioned a Community Development Block Grant for \$500,000 may be available
- Ruth Calaycay mentioned that the library may apply for grants where 75% of the library may be funded.

Item 10: Public Input: N/A

Item 11: Adjourn: Bruce Cullett motion to adjourn meeting at 7:57 p.m., Justin Russell second, 5-0

Articles used:


Building Committee posting from Town website dated March 7, 2024
RFP dated July 25, 2022
TSB Design Building Assessment dated February 27, 2024
Daniel Hassett, Public Housing Specialist-mold issue memo


Respectfully Submitted,

Terry Walker
Town Administrator

Bruce Cullett 

Justin Russell _____

Jay Jewell 

Doug Haskins 

Ruth Calaycay 

Date Approved: 6/12/24

Received June 24, 2024, Kim Leach, Town Clerk