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Van Gyzen Hall Study Committee Meeting
Thursday, September 17, 2015
Dighton Town Hall, 979 Somerset Avenue, Dighton, MA 02715

Starting time: 6:00pm
Ending time: 7:15pm
Total meeting time: 75 minutes

The Van Gyzen Hall Study Committee held its third meeting to discuss the future of the building. All Committee members were in attendance. The Committee began by correcting and approving the meeting minutes from the previous two meetings.

The Committee spoke with the Board of Selectmen (BOS) regarding an independent local appraisal in order to know how much the building is worth (both as is and with the recommended renovations) and about the possibility of mailings in order to generate public interest and feedback. The Committee found that Mr. Dean Cronin, Chairman of the BOS, thinks the appraisal and mailings are possible and that he would check with the Town Accountant. The Committee discussed the possibility of using the mailing permit from the Prime Time account for our mailing. It was concluded that cost estimates would need to be generated before doing a mailing.

The Committee researched the precise annual costs for maintenance of Van Gyzen Hall, and they are as follows:

$171.00 – *Dighton Fire Department (DFD)*
$4606.67 – *petroleum*
$231.40 – *sewer*
$660.70 – *TMLP*
$1050.00 – *insurance*

Mr. Woody Woods, a Dighton resident, noted that the leaky pipes inside the building are resulting in more money being spent for heating and cooling. The Committee noted that the aforementioned costs could possibly be doubled if the building is occupied.

The Committee agreed to make a spreadsheet outlining the cost estimates for alternative uses of Van Gyzen Hall. The estimates will be listed by item for the exterior renovations of the building and Mr. James Aguiar, Building Commissioner, agreed to help in any way he could with estimates for the exterior.

The Committee pointed out the need to investigate how much it would potentially cost to demolish the building and how to go about doing that (if this is what the residents of Dighton eventually decide). It was stated that it could cost at least $46,000 to knock Van Gyzen Hall down, but that it could cost more than that due to the large size of the building. One member, Mr. James Ready, pointed out that selling the building would not be a huge revenue source, but that the sole benefit of doing so is that it would be done and over with.

The Committee discussed whether or not additional space is needed at Town Hall. This is pertinent to Van Gyzen Hall because, if additional space is needed at Town Hall, it raises the

possibility of using the building as a Town Annex, which the Committee has previously discussed at length. The Committee agreed not to recommend any temporary solutions, such as the use of trailers.

The Committee discussed the possibility of getting Bristol-Plymouth (BP) High School in Taunton, MA interested in helping renovate the building. It was mentioned that they might be able to help with electricity and plumbing, which has the potential to alleviate huge costs. They would not be able to help with carpentry, however. The downside is that the work would not be done quickly. Another potential problem is that the partnership is on the table now, so the Committee and the town would need to give BP an answer soon while they are not tied down with excessive electrical and plumbing jobs. The Committee was reminded that it is tasked with recommending a use before we start spending money.

With the Special Town Meeting approaching on Monday, September 21st, the Committee discussed who will speak on behalf of the Committee to let residents know we are not asking for money yet; we are discussing a plan before asking for money and putting the proverbial horse before the cart. The Committee decided to mention the mailings/public hearing at the meeting. Mr. Zografos was tasked with preparing a short statement on behalf of the Committee.

The Committee discussed previous costs for renovations of Van Gyzen Hall, including $40,000 for a new roof, of which $9,000 was covered by insurance. It was mentioned that Free Masons in Rehoboth, MA was once interested in buying/leasing Van Gyzen Hall.

The Committee agreed to hold their next meeting on Thursday, October 1, 2015.