

Rowe Gracy House Committee
September 10, 2019
6:00 P.M.
Rowe Town Hall – Meeting Room 1

Present: Chair Joanne Semanie, Loretta Dionne, James Lively, Ellynn Packard (arrived at 6:08), Mary Paige, Walter Quist
Other Attendees: Paul McLatchy III, Administrative Assistant to the Boards
Audience of Citizens: None

Call to Order: Lacking a chair, Ms. Semanie called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M., a quorum of the committee present.

Elections: Ms. Semanie opened the floor for nominations of a chairperson. A nomination was made and seconded for Ms. Semanie to serve as chair, which passed unanimously. A motion was made and seconded to have Mr. McLatchy serve as secretary. No vote was taken, but members voiced support for this.

Purpose/Background: A number of things have come up with the Gracy House over the last year, primarily a mold issue which has forced the building to be closed to the public. The Department of Public Health went through the building and issued a report for remediation. Executive Secretary Janice Boudreau obtained quotes, and a special town meeting appropriated \$58,000 for work based on these quotes. Members discussed how (or whether) this money should be spent.

In addition to reviewing the mold issue, members will also take into consideration other work that will need to be done in the coming years, including but not limited to, a potential new roof, a potential septic replacement, second floor usage, etc. Chair Semanie estimated that a new septic alone will cost nearly \$40,000, and until it's replaced, the building would be limited in use to a certain number of people to not overtax the system.

Mr. Quist opined that the committee's job would be to compile information and present options to the Board of Selectmen, who would ultimately make the decision about which option(s) to present to the voters at town meeting. Right now it seems like the town has five options: let it sit (do nothing), only fix the mold issue, fix everything that is needed, sell it, or totally demolish the building.

Right now the building is used primarily for Council on Aging events, and occasionally by other departments and private use. It was estimated that it is used for less than 30 days out of the year. A question was raised about whether the town is obligated to provide a space for the Council, and it was pointed out that a number of alternatives have been offered. Ms. Packard noted that any option has to include a kitchen.

Finances: Currently the Gracy House's expenses run about \$2,500 a year for utilities, as well as any additional expenses for special projects (i.e. upgrades, replacement of equipment, etc.) It was noted that other than the large amount of work done to bring the building to its current state, little has been done in the last ten years or so in terms of upkeep. Ms. Paige asked if there were CDBG funds available that could be used to help make upgrades to the building. This will be looked into.

Next Steps: Members seemed to be in agreement that they would like to have the building evaluated by a local contractor that knows how to examine a building of this type (age, location, style, etc.) before any major

decisions are made. Chair Semanie will work on putting together a framework for the next meeting so that members can be assigned tasks. A public input session will also be held relatively early in the process so that voters have a chance to be a part of the process.

Next Meeting: The committee will meet for a walkthrough of the building on Tuesday the 17th at 2:00. No business will be discussed. The next official meeting will be Tuesday the 24th at 6:00.

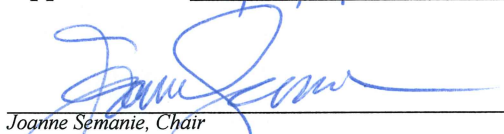
Adjourn: A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously to adjourn at 6:55 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

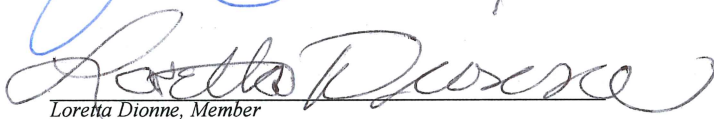
Paul McLatchy III

Administrative Assistant to the Boards

Approved on: 9/24/19



Joanne Semanie, Chair



Loretta Dionne, Member

James Lively, Member



Ellynn Packard, Member

Mary Paige, Member



Walter Quist, Member