

Notes of the Bethel Town Hall Restoration Committee  
May 26, 2010, 7:00 PM  
Bethel Library

In Attendance: Heidi & Nick Nikolaidis, Kevin Flynn, Joe & Carol DeFreitas, Janet Burnham, Rick Benson, & Geneva Gaiko.

Joe Opened the meeting at 7:06 PM

In Neal Fox's absence Joe started the meeting by addressing the recent emails making the rounds that were questioning the amount of space that would be allocated to the Bethel Historical Society, should they be selected as tenants for the street level portion of the Bethel Town Hall. The first concern was the amount of space at issue, and that has been calculated to be +/- 45% of the ground floor. The second concern was that this was "dedicated" space if the BHS established itself there. No matter who/what tenant eventually occupies that area, it will be dedicated space and the chances of them wanting to share a space that they are paying rent and insurance for is very slight. Whereas the BHS would be much more amenable to sharing should the occasion arise.

Overall, the feedback to the Select Board in response to their letter/email sent out to concerned parties, was very positive and contained many excellent suggestions that will be taken under consideration. It was suggested that anyone who is interested in following up on these concerns, please attend the next Select Board meeting June 14th, at 6:00 PM. It was noted that, unfortunately, The Town of Bethel did not have a Herald reporter for an extended period of time, therefore, many of the issues and discussions that may have been addressed involving the Town Hall, were not reported in a timely manner as they normally would have had there been a reporter present.

Joe reported that the Select Board has drawn up a preliminary generic lease agreement for the Town Hall and he suggested that anyone having questions or suggestions pertaining to the lease agreement, to please attend the next Select Board meeting.

The color scheme for the downstairs walls has been changed from tan and beige to a cream color to increase the available light and it will also serve as a projection screen until we can afford to buy one for the Conference Room area.

A folding partition to divide the Conference Room area in half to accommodate simultaneous meetings will be something the Committee would like to see installed along with a track all around the room that would enable the Conference Room to be used for Art and Photography exhibits.

The Conference Room should also be wired for the Internet for renters who may need the Internet for conferencing.

The upstairs heat was discussed as initially the Select Board would have liked to have radiant heat, however, the engineers felt that it would eventually warp the wood floor and it would take too long to heat the building on start-up. Baseboard was also a non-consideration as it was felt that would also be inefficient. The final decision was to go with the old fashioned type of steam radiators under each window that would be covered with a

decorative grill to protect anyone using the Hall from getting burned by the radiators as they reach 180°F.

The location of the sprinkler system has been a problem as it would have required the sprinklers to hang quite a distance down from the ceiling in order to get by the sunken beams in the ceiling. They will come down inside the casing on the beams and protrude slightly below the beams.

There is an area on the Hall level, under the balcony that required additional laminated beams and supports that had not been anticipated in the initial plans. This required additional monies to rectify, however, it does leave an opening that is about 6'+ over head that could be used for a display area.

Joe noted that we may not have as much money left over as we had expected as there have been several areas in the restoration that required more time and stock than anticipated in the initial plans. This will make our fund raising efforts even more critical.

Heidi was wondering exactly how many round tables could be fit into The Hall in order to figure out how many people would be allowed under Fire Codes to use the function facilities. Joe suggested that she go see Del Cloud and ask for a copy of the plans showing the dimensions as he didn't have them with him.

Nick suggested that we should concentrate on getting the items first that would get our Hall up and running as quickly as possible and those items included (12) Round tables, (12) 6' rectangular tables, chairs, 4-6 burner commercial gas stove, sinks, fridge and dish washer. Nick suggested that the tables be purchased from Bethel Mills/Central Supplies as they gave the best price and they are local. Nick and Heidi also said they would contribute some kitchen equipment, i.e., pots, pans, utensils.

Janet suggested that we have a plaque or granite engraving dedicated to the men and women of Bethel who served their country through all of our wars. There was formerly a memorial to the war dead in front of the BTH but it has disappeared and no one seems to know where it is.

Additional discussion was made regarding acknowledging people who have donated to the BTH project and Mary Floyd's idea of the Tree with engraved leaves was the most favorable.

A joint luncheon was discussed for the employees of the E.F. Wall Co. and potential contributors to the Town Hall project. This would be coordinated by Rick, Janet & Neal. Heidi and Nick said that they would supply the food.

The next BTH Committee meeting will be on June 24th, 2010, 7:00 PM, at the Library.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:00PM.