

FARMINGTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Tuesday, August 9, 2022

The conduct of the meeting included remote access by telephonic, video, and electronic means. The public could attend in person or by viewing the live stream at <http://mtbluetv.org/program-live-stream-farmington-selectmen.html> or Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/MBTV11/> or calling 778-5874.

Chairman Matthew Smith called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. with the following members: Joshua Bell, Scott Landry, and Byron Staples. Stephan Bunker was unable to attend. Town Manager Christian Waller, Executive Assistant Nancy Martin, MBTV Camera Operator Lilli Clark, and members of the press and public were also present.

ITEM 1: Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Chairman Matthew Smith led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ITEM 2: To allow Lifeline for ME, LLC Owner/Clinical Director Amanda Ricci to address the Board regarding the Franklin County Recovery Housing Project.

Ms. Ricci stated that she is not asking the Board for anything tonight. If Lifeline for ME (LFM) is successful and moves forward with its proposal, it will meet with the Planning Board and Code Enforcement Office.

Ms. Ricci reported she was scheduled to go before the Franklin County Commissioners (FCC) on August 19th, but the FCC decided not to meet with her next week; they are waiting for information on other proposals before hearing from LFM.

Ms. Ricci stated that Franklin County has no recovery housing or recovery center like the other counties. She said there is a significant increase in overdose deaths and a substantial need in our small rural areas to have treatment services and housing for people in recovery and reentering the community from incarceration. This project addresses some of those needs in our area. Farmington is relatively central; it is on the Western Maine Community Action bus line; there are providers that treat people in recovery and reentering, and there are advocates here. Farmington seems like a good place to get something going in Franklin County. The proposal was based on using the Holman House; LFM hopes the FCC will help them purchase the home and fund the first two years. If they could buy the Holman House, it would be a twelve (12) bed sober living environment. The residents would be required to work and pay \$500 monthly rent. The home would be a peer-led model. Everyone would have a roommate, and peers would staff it. There would only be one paid position, unlike a treatment center requiring much more. Ms. Ricci stated that she owns Lifeline for ME Behavioral Health Services in Livermore Falls and is familiar with what is available. Not only does this address recovery and reentry, but it also reduces recidivism, reduces the number of calls to the police and EMS, takes some of the burdens from our emergency rooms, takes away some of the obligations from our jails when people continue to go in and out of the revolving door. The home will help with the homeless crisis in the state because our homeless people will have a place to go. It is challenging for someone to focus on recovery when they do not have a roof over their head. When the work component comes into play, it gives people in recovery a purpose. Ms. Ricci provided a copy of the FCC Office American Rescue Plan application in which LFM requested \$602,000 for a first recovery residence and the initial year's costs:

ITEM 2: To allow Lifeline for ME, LLC Owner/Clinical Director Amanda Ricci to address the Board regarding the Franklin County Recovery Housing Project. (continued)

- \$495,000 property purchase
- \$ 60,000 first-year salary/stipends
- \$ 4,000 furnishings
- \$ 3,000 insurances
- \$ 20,000 rental subsidy for zero-income residents
- \$ 20,000 admin/overhead/startup

Scott Landry stated he applauds the mission and wishes her luck. He asked if the Commissioners had given any indication. Ms. Ricci reported that she met with them informally in May, but she did not receive much feedback other than they were looking for a one-time proposal. It’s not something they want to fund year after year. The LFM is open to other ideas, such as leasing vs. purchasing. Mr. Landry indicated LFM might run into a brick wall when it comes to the Holman House and the community. Ms. Ricci said she is familiar with the history and did some research. The Holman House is not restricted by zoning. A recently passed law says the recovery house is considered a single-family residence. She acknowledges there may be some work with the “not in my backyard” crowd, but LFM is prepared.

Ms. Ricci answered the Selectmen’s questions regarding security elements, length of stay, testing and evictions, employment oversight, potential Holman House repairs, future funding, and recovery house operational experience.

Dennis O’Neil stated that drug addicts are already here, and we should not get hung up on the security aspects. He said this seems to be a positive step forward for the community.

ITEM 3: Town Manager to discuss Capital Improvement Plan process

Christian Waller showed the Selectboard a copy of the Twenty-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) spreadsheet he created and forwarded to the department heads. The CIP spreadsheet Mr. Waller, the department heads, and Marc Roy will meet on September 9th to review and discuss the CIP process. The CIP sheet provides an easy way for oversight and allows prioritization so the Town can target its resources vs. being reactionary. The CIP will be implemented into the 2023 budget process. In response to Joshua Bell’s question, Mr. Waller stated the CIP would be available mid-December.

ITEM 4: To Approve the Minutes of July 26, 2022

Joshua Bell moved to approve the Minutes of July 26, 2022; Byron Staples seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 4 ABSENT 1 MOTION CARRIED
(Bunker)

ITEM 5: To Discuss Other Business

- A. Christian Waller reported that he and Marc Roy are working on a budget flow process. They are pulling together core ideas and flow and will ask for the Boards input. They’ve been researching budget committees from different towns and what they do. Byron Staples recommended the Town take a fresh look at the road program. Matthew Smith reported the Board looked at the road plan last year. Mr. Waller said as part of the budget process; they will look at roads. He said PWD Director Phil Hutchins and Assistant Director Leia Durrell have been working on the

