

## Police Station Advisory Committee

### FINAL REPORT TO THE SELECTMEN

August 15, 2009

In April 2009, the Town of Antrim Board of Selectmen appointed the following community members to serve on this committee: Chris Salmay (chair), Wes Enman, Marshall Gale, Kathy Kimball, Dave Walsh, and Dan Wasieleswski.

During the initial meeting with the Board, Committee Members were charged as follows:

*“To determine the physical plant needs for the Police Department and review all options and recommend a location and plan to meet the needs now and into the future.”*

Also at that initial meeting, the Committee was instructed to submit a report to the Board of Selectmen no later than August 15, 2009. Following is that report. It contains an explanation of each of the itemized recommendations that the Selectmen requested, as well as numerous attachments, including copies of

- The Committee Charge (1 pg.)
- Potential Site Review List (4 pgs.)
- The Location Survey for the public
- Location Survey responses (6 pgs.)
- Committee Meeting Minutes – May 11, 2009
- Committee Meeting Minutes – July 21, 2009
- Committee Meeting Minutes – July 28, 2009
- Committee Meeting Minutes – August 4, 2009
- Local Media articles (Monadnock Ledger-Transcript & The Villager)

## 1. Recommendation of the space needs of the Police Department.

The Committee recognizes that there are several specific space requirements that are unique and essential to ensure a safe, secure and professional Police Department for employees and citizens. Some of these requirements are also mandated by law. For example, being ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant, having sight and sound separation between juvenile and adult suspects who are in custody, separation of all suspects from the general public, security of evidence and all juvenile files, as well as, fire/safety code protocols.

After touring the existing police facility, several space needs stand out and should be addressed in a future station. These include:

- Public lobby area
- Secured administrative area
- Secure booking area/holding cells
- Secure evidence area
- Secure operational data processing area
- Private interview space
- Secure armory space
- Squad room/training room

Therefore, the Committee's conclusion is that the current 1,800 square foot police station is extremely limited and inadequate in its ability to conduct safe and effective day to day police business.

Refer to *Attachment #5*, Committee Meeting Minutes- May 11, 2009 for a more complete breakdown of the current space limitations.

## 2. Recommendation of possible use of present town buildings either for the Police Department, or the use of the space when the Police Department moves.

The Committee feels that after initial conversations with other town officials, that all existing space is currently being utilized to maximum capacity and therefore, cannot handle any additional functions. As to the future use of the current Police Department space after it is vacated, the Committee would defer to the town.

### **3. Recommendation of possible use of present town-owned land.**

Review of all town-owned land or properties suggests one practical option and that is the Fire Station property located on Route 31. This property provides the town with the opportunity to condense two of its most important departments into a central location in the form of a safety complex. However, the costs associated with new construction to provide the minimum space requirements for a police station could negate the advantages of having a safety complex.

See *Attachment #2* for Potential Site Reviews Pros/Cons.

### **4. Recommendation of possible land or building purchase for a Police Station.**

All of the properties, including foreclosures that were publicly listed and unlisted properties that we reviewed were either unavailable, too costly, not properly located or impractical for a police station with the exception of the Mill Property on 42 Main Street.

This existing building located downtown is structurally sound and could be renovated to satisfy current and future operational needs. Costs for this project could be eligible for funding from various grants, including TIF monies, and therefore, not be a tax burden on the community.

See *Attachment #2* for Potential Site Reviews Pros/Cons.

### **5. Recommendation of general building size.**

After review of all the information compiled to date, it is the Committee's conclusion that any space less than 5,000 square feet is not only insufficient to satisfy current needs but it is inadequate for future expansion. The Mill Property as proposed would allow for approximately 7,600 square feet (including a secure area for indoor cruiser parking and associated mobile equipment storage). This proposed space would also include a large meeting room that can be utilized by both the Police Department and/or the community.

See *Attachment #2* for Potential Site Reviews Pros/Cons.

## 6. Comparison of estimated costs for viable plans.

Without garnishing bids and proposals for all of the various options, the Committee feels that buying an existing building with a Class A superstructure is much more advantageous in the long run for the town than trying to build from scratch while including all of the unique and necessary components required for a Police Department.

## 7. Recommended process for proceeding with project.

### ***FINAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:***

*It was the Committee's charge to determine the physical needs of the Police Department and recommend a location to meet the needs now and into the future. Committee members proceeded to gather information from citizens, town officials, realtors, property owners, government departments and the Antrim Police Department. Properties were examined, opinions were gathered, data compiled and sorted and a recommendation was created.*

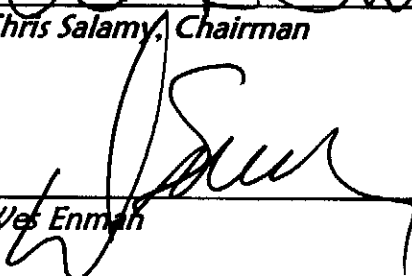
*The decision to keep the location of the station downtown was reached partly because of the overwhelming expression by citizens to do so. But it was also in part due to the conclusions drawn from an extensive compilation of the Police Department's statistics. A map of the town was used in representing the locations of Police Department calls for service over the past two and a half years. The map shows that about half of the calls originated within a half mile radius of downtown, a heavily populated area of town. The other half is spread throughout the rest of the Town of Antrim. One interpretation of these results is that since approximately 50% of the incidents take place within a small geographic area, reason would dictate that the police station should be located as centrally within this area as possible. So we are recommending just that.*


*In discussions with the current owners of the Mill Property during the site review, it became apparent that an environmental Phase 1 has been conducted and mediation steps have been taken to abate any concerns. This space, as proposed, also takes into consideration the future growth and needs of the department well into the future. These were additional important considerations addressed by the Committee as the process unfolded.*


*As a Committee, it is our unanimous recommendation that the Town of Antrim proceed with purchasing the space located in the Mill Building located at 42 Main Street for renovation to suit the needs of the Antrim Police Department.*


*Respectfully submitted,*

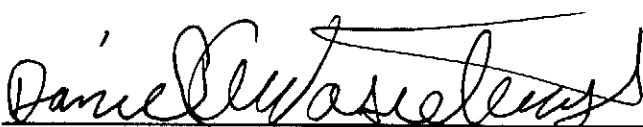
  
Chris Salamy, Chairman

  
Wes Enman

  
Marshall Gale

  
Kathy Kimball

  
Dave Walsh

  
Dan Wasielewski

Submitted August 15, 2009

**Town of Antrim  
Office of Selectmen  
Police Station Advisory Committee  
COMMITTEE CHARGE**

**Purpose:**

To determine the physical plant needs for the Police Department and review all options and recommend a location and plan to meet the needs now and into the future.

**Timeframe:**

A report should be submitted to the Board o Selectmen no later than August 15, 2009.

**Structure of Committee:**

The committee shall consist of five members appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The Selectmen will designate a Chair and minutes shall be kept of all meetings. All meetings shall comply with the provision of NHRSA 91-A.

**Items in Report:**

The report should include, but not necessarily be limited to:

1. Recommendation of the space needs of the Police Department.
2. Recommendation of possible use of present town buildings either for the Police Department, or the use of the space when the Police Department moves.
3. Recommendation of possible use of present town-owned land.
4. Recommendation of possible land or building purchase for a Police Station.
5. Recommendation of general building size.
6. Comparison of estimated costs for viable plans.
7. Recommended process for proceeding with project.

Potential Site Review:

Mill Building  
42 Main Street  
Antrim, NH 03440

PROS

Existing building

Historical building potentially eligible for TIF money and/or other state and federal funding

Downtown location

Structurally sound; brick walls address security issues vs. cost of potential new construction to address security

Satisfies current space requirements and 10-20 years' future growth

Currently ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant under current proposal

Would allow for under cover parking of Cruisers, particularly in inclement weather

Existing new sprinkler system

Existing connection to town water and sewer

Some on-street existing parking with large lot located across the street

Access to High Street allows for safer egress from station when responding to calls

CONS

Old building with potential future maintenance issues

Parking across street needs pedestrian cross walk on crest of hill

If town purchases some of mill space, it would not own attached structures

If condos built, there may be concern for some owners reference potential noise created by emergency response from station

If town purchases some of mill space, it will cause some reduction of tax revenue

Potential Site Review:

Fire Station Property  
Route 31  
Antrim, NH 03440

PROS

Town owned land

Excellent entrance & egress on  
Route 31

More centrally located (geographically)  
in town

Would be part of a “safety complex”

Building would be constructed for  
future expansion (upward)

Fire department members are  
receptive to having the police  
department on the same property

No loss of tax base

CONS

Not in immediate downtown

No existing water or sewer for  
new building

Cost to build with necessary  
security and safety features, &  
to be ADA compliant

TIF grant would not apply

Square footage of new building  
would probably be less than what  
is currently available in mill  
building

**Potential Site Review:**

**Gas Station Property  
Main Street  
Antrim, NH 03440**

**PROS**

Downtown location

Town water and sewer

**CONS**

Small lot size for project

Costly environmental cleanup of site from gas station use

Concerns for future health hazards for employees from site

High cost to build with necessary features

Parking could be an issue for department vehicles & employees

Other sites considered in town by committee members:

Property located at the corner of North Main Street and West Street

Property located at the corner of Concord Street (Route 202) and entrance to Fox Forest

At the time they were considered, private citizens made offers on these foreclosure properties and they were no longer available for consideration.

Land:

Property located at the corner of Concord Street (Route 202) and Elm Street (This land adjacent to Tyler's)

This lot was deemed to be too small to meet the needs of the police department. The lot also contains a small amount of wet lands that would have to be dealt with.

**Town of Antrim  
Police Station Advisory Committee  
Location Survey**

The Police Station Advisory Committee was established by the Board of Selectmen to review options as to the location of a possible new police station. Gathering public input is an important part of the task of the committee.

To share your opinion, please complete the following survey and return it to the Town Hall (PO Box 517, Antrim, NH 03440) or e-mail your opinions to:  
[antrimaccpay@tds.net](mailto:antrimaccpay@tds.net)

THANK YOU!

**1. Do you have a preference for where a new Police Station should be located?  
(Choose one)**

- a) Within a ½ mile radius of the Town Hall.
- b) Within a one mile radius of the Town Hall.
- c) Doesn't matter.

**2. Do you feel we should build:**

- a) On existing town owned property
- b) On property that we identify and purchase
- c) Renovate an existing building that we purchase

**3. Comments.**

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**2. Do you feel we should build:**

- a) On existing town owned property
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**3. Comments.**

I don't think we need another station. A place to store records can be rented but is police act judiciously, the current site is ample. As to privacy, as everything winds up in the paper, this is not a valid issue

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THANK YOU!

**1. Do you have a preference for where a new Police Station should be located?  
(Choose one)**

- AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE*
- a) Within a ½ mile radius of the Town Hall.
  - b) Within a one mile radius of the Town Hall.
  - c) Doesn't matter.

**2. Do you feel we should build:**

- a) On existing town owned property
- b) On property that we identify and purchase
- c) Renovate an existing building that we purchase

*OR WHATEVER IS MOST COST EFFECTIVE AND SAFE*

**3. Comments.**

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- c) Renovate an existing building that we purchase

**3. Comments.**

~~(D)~~ Doesn't matter

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**2. Do you feel we should build:**

- a) On existing town owned property
- b) On property that we identify and purchase
- c) Renovate an existing building that we purchase

**3. Comments.**

I would like to see the Police Station remain downtown on Main St., preferably in an existing structure, and one highly visible to passers-by and accessible to residents.

## Nancy Torres

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**From:** Matt M [comeonstart@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 26, 2009 8:42 AM  
**To:** antrimaccpay@tds.net  
**Subject:** Police Station.

Hello Folks,

The town absolutely needs a police station and I'm guessing not many people would disagree with that. It seems to make sense for it to be located within a mile of the downtown area, but I think the deciding factor if this is to happen any time in the near future is cost. Given the state of the economy and how shaky folks' jobs are I think it would be unwise to start a big project that will require lots of money and make property taxes go up.

Respectfully yours,  
Matt Mair  
157 Clinton Road, Antrim.

**Police Station Advisory Committee  
Minutes: May 11, 2009**

**Present: (Committee Members) Chris Salamy (chair), Kathy Kimball, Dan Wasielewski, Marshall Gale, Dave Walsh,**

**Guests: Chief Scott Lester, Selectman Gordon Weber**

**Meeting called to order at approximately 6pm at the Town Hall.**

**After brief introductory remarks from Chris Salamy, Chief Lester was given an opportunity to also make introductory remarks. He then offered to take committee members on a tour of the existing police department facility. Following is an overview of the tour:**

- **Lobby area- not ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant, no room for seating for anyone waiting**
- **Booking area- inadequate and not secure**
- **Reception area/Officer work space- very limited in space, lack of privacy, one computer for three (3) full time officers and three (3) part time officers; open to "Sergeant's Office" work space with no privacy walls**
- **Chief's Office- often used for an interview room because it is the only space in the department with actual walls for privacy**
- **Records storage- currently in hallway, inadequate space requirements and safety issue**
- **Officer's locker area- extremely small space offering little privacy and storage space; also used to store office supplies**
- **"Back area"- contains the only ventilating window in the entire police department, currently used for multiple purposes (finger printing of defendants, supply storage, kitchen/break area, among others), this area also contains a single bathroom without shower facilities)**
- **Basement- moisture problems, various security concerns and storage issues**
- **Rear of building (exterior)- concerns about police vehicle security when unattended and winter weather exposure issues if emergency response is needed**

Following the tour, Chief Lester reviewed a proposal for a new facility created by BTR Building & Remodeling, Manchester, NH. The proposal was for a building 56' x 36' (4,400 square feet) that was stick built and designed as a sloped building. The design includes:

#### Lower Level

- Two (2) garages and one (1) access door, a booking and holding area that is compliant with state law regarding the detention of juveniles; an Evidence Room; a small conference/training room; men's and women's locker rooms and a utility room

#### Upper Level

- A Lobby area with a small interview room adjacent to it; receptionist's office, squad room; a second interview room; Sergeant's office; Chief's office; records storage; rest rooms, small break room and a garage

The estimated cost of this proposal was stated as being \$625,000 - \$700,000. Chief Lester advised that the proposal includes approximately 90% of what he thinks should be included in the police department facility.

When asked what items or features he would like to see on a "Wish List", Chief Lester stated a workout space for the officers and that the building originally be built to accommodate future growth by building upward over an existing footprint and overall, more space. A photocopied attachment was provided to committee members.

A short discussion ensued regarding State and Federal regulations for any future building. And, it was mentioned that there was a possibility of applying for a grant from federal stimulus money. This is currently being looked into by N. Cass. Chief Lester also provided some initial cost estimates for specific line items that would be required in a new building.

Prior reports regarding recommendations for the police department were also discussed. The sources of these reports were:

- Local Government Center (2006)
- Former Antrim Police Chief Todd Feyrer (2007)
- Interim Chief Mike Healey (2008)

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:10 pm

Minutes submitted by Kathy Kimball

Police Station Advisory Committee  
Minutes: July 21, 2009

Present: (Committee Members) Chris Salamy (chair), Kathy Kimball, Dan Wasielewski, Wes Enman

Guests: Neal Cass, Peter Moore, Chief Scott Lester, Leslie and Paul Belliveau

Meeting called to order at approximately 7pm at the Town Hall.

Kathy Kimball and Dan Wasielewski explained the research that had been done regarding the police department's calls for service in town over the past two and a half years. The information had been compiled with assistance from Chief Lester and then applied to two different enlarged town maps for a visual representation of the data. The first map shows the breakdown of calls on the various roads. The second map shows the percentage of calls in the various geographic locations around town. The map shows these percentages within a half mile of the immediate downtown area, a mile out, two miles out, three miles out and beyond. The purpose of the research was to establish an idea of where the calls for service have been over the recent past. The result indicates that approximately 55% of the calls are in the downtown area and 45% are in the rest of town. Discussion of the data ensued and questions were answered.

Discussion then followed on obtaining public input regarding the location of a future building for the police department. Dan W. posed three suggestions:

- 1) Do you have a preference for where a new Police Station should be?  
Choose one:
  - a) Within a ½ mile radius of the Town Hall
  - b) Within a one mile radius of the Town Hall
  - c) It doesn't matter.
  
- 2) Do you feel we should build:
  - a) On existing town owned property
  - b) On property that we identify and purchase
  - c) Renovate an existing property that we purchase
  
- 3) Comments

The suggestions were approved by the committee and with assistance from Neal Cass and local newspapers, they will be posted on the town website and published in upcoming stories for a public response.

A presentation was then made by Chief Lester regarding the possibility of Leslie and Paul Belliveau entering into a sales agreement with the town for a portion of the existing mill building currently located on Main Street to be renovated in

order to house a new Police Station. The plan would involve slightly over 7,600 square feet on all three floors of the building. Architectural drawings were presented with possible floor plans of the space that would satisfy the current and future needs of the Police Department. It was noted that it is an historical building in the downtown area that would qualify for TIF and stimulus monies. The current structure is constructed of brick and therefore, meets security needs for the department. Because there are entrances on each level (floor) of the building, it is ADA compliant. The majority of the space in the building is currently wide open and this would allow for low cost renovations. It also has an existing sprinkler system and it is connected to town water and sewer. It would need interior cleaning, electrical, plumbing, heating and mechanical equipment as part of the renovation process. Leslie and Paul B. provided input to the committee on this property and answered many questions.

The next committee meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, July 28<sup>th</sup> at 4pm at the mill building in order for committee members to conduct a site review.

A public input meeting with the committee has also been scheduled for Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the Town Hall.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9pm.

Minutes submitted by Kathy Kimball

Police Station Advisory Committee  
Minutes: July 28, 2009

Present: Chris Salamy (chair), Kathy Kimball, Dan Wasielewski, Marshall Gale, Wes Enman

At approximately 4 pm, the above committee members met with Leslie and Paul Belliveau at the site of their mill building located at 42 Main Street, Antrim, in order to walk through the building areas that may provide a viable space for a future police station. Committee members were given the opportunity to ask questions and view the space.

At approximately 5 pm, committee members left the mill building and had a brief meeting at the Town Hall. We had a chance to express our opinions and observations regarding the mill space. We also discussed the upcoming public meeting scheduled for Tuesday, August 4, 2009 and the drafting of the report requested by the selectmen.

The meeting ended at approximately 5:45 pm.

Minutes submitted by Kathy Kimball

Police Station Advisory Committee  
Minutes: August 4, 2009 – Public Input Meeting

Present: (Committee Members) Chris Salamy (chair), Kathy Kimball, Dan Wasielewski, Wes Enman, Marshall Gale  
Public: 8 attendees, including Chief Scott Lester

Meeting called to order at approximately 7pm at the Town Hall.

Opening comments and introduction of committee members to the public were made by Chris Salamy. He then provided an over view of the selectmen's charge to the committee.

A list of the various potential sites for the future location of a police station were identified by the committee and presented to the public in attendance. The pros and cons of each potential site were reviewed with the public and discussion followed.

The results of the questionnaire developed by committee members for public input were reviewed. The questionnaires were available on the town's website and at the town hall. They were available for two weeks and information about their availability was advertised on the website and in the Monadnock Ledger-Transcript. Only 6 questionnaires were filled out and provided to the committee. Respondents indicated that they would like to see a new police station located in the downtown area and the majority want the town to purchase the space and renovate it to the needs of the department.

Members of the public were then asked for their opinion of the potential sites that had been presented to them earlier in the meeting. The consensus opinion was for the town to purchase the mill property located at 42 Main Street and renovate it.

Members of the committee will now prepare a final report to be provided to the Board of Selectmen in time for their August 17, 2009 meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8pm.

Minutes submitted by Kathy Kimball

In response to concerns of nearby residents, the Select Board plans to install new signage on West Street near the intersection with School Street.

BY JOSH BOND

Monadnock Ledger-Transcript Staff

ANTRIM -- In response to concerns of nearby residents, the Select Board plans to install new signage on West Street near the intersection with School Street.

Police Chief Scott Lester met with the board to present his endorsement of a proposed stop sign at that intersection for eastbound traffic on West Street.

"I couldn't find a reason why not," said Lester. "Do I feel it's a major need? No, but I don't think it's a major hindrance either. If we prevent one serious accident, we've done our job."

West Street resident Steve MacDonald offered Lester a reason not to install the signs.

"I feel on principle the solution to any problem should be the least restrictive," said MacDonald. "I think we should increase enforcement first and then try a stop sign."

Lester said he had spent some time researching the area by simulating the traffic flow with a stop sign. During his research, he stopped a few teachers for speeding, he said. A stop sign, said Lester, would be an effective way to refocus drivers who may have become comfortable speeding through the area, which is a 20 mph zone during school hours.

"I've done a little traffic analysis myself," said Selectman Gordon Webber, who said the sign would only address a small area of the road. Webber said drivers could easily begin speeding again after stopping at the sign.

Lester said that, although speed is an issue, the main concern was the danger of the intersection for pedestrian crossing.

Lester and the board took the opportunity to propose other solutions, such as a reversal of the one-way loop on School Street or a reconfiguration of one-way traffic in the area. Chairman Michael Genest proposed a yield sign at the intersection. Lester agreed a yield sign could serve to refocus drivers, but changed his department's enforcement options.

The board ultimately agreed to install two signs on West Street. A "yield to pedestrians" sign will be placed west of the intersection and a "school crosswalk" sign will be situated at the intersection.

In other business:

\* Lester also spoke with selectmen regarding the police station research committee that would be formed if Warrant Article 5 were approved. The article was recently amended from \$25,000 to \$12,500 and only authorizes the town to purchase the preliminary design plans for a new police station.

It would also call for the creation of a committee to assess the town's current and future law enforcement needs, said Lester. With that data, the committee would then review the cost, design and location of the station in order to present a comprehensive proposal at the next town meeting for the construction of a new police station. The Select Board would appoint the committee and its final report would be due in August of 2009.

Lester said he had received feedback from residents about the possibility of building a new police station.

"I haven't heard that there's no need," said Lester, "I've heard 'why now' and 'we can't afford it.'"

In an effort to cut costs, the station would likely be built on town-owned land near the current fire station, said Lester. If this year's article is approved, and a proposal for a police station were approved at town meeting next year, the first bond payment would be due the year after the last payment on the Town Hall bond, said Lester.

\* Luke Johnson, \_\_\_ of troop \_\_\_ presented his plans for an Eagle Scout Leadership Project at Governor Goodell Park. Johnson's plan centers around a historical plaque mounted on a stone. Nearby granite benches will offer residents a place to reflect beneath the shade of two proposed apple trees, which are historically significant to the park and its namesake.

Johnson estimated the materials and associated landscaping would cost approximately \$1,320. He hopes to complete the project by the end of June, depending on his success of his fundraisers and the participation of donors and volunteers.

Residents approved all but one article Thursday at a two-hour Town Meeting Moderator Robert Flanders called surprisingly easy.

BY JOSH BOND

Monadnock Ledger-Transcript Staff

ANTRIM -- Residents approved all but one article Thursday at a two-hour Town Meeting Moderator Robert Flanders called surprisingly easy.

"Tonight could have been a very difficult meeting," said Flanders, who has presided over 39 Antrim Town Meetings. "But it didn't turn into one. This was a great meeting."

Richard Loveland, a recent addition to the Antrim community, said he felt townspeople took the long view by approving every expenditure presented to them.

"If you don't invest in the town, you pay for it later on," said Loveland.

When the budget came before voters, Selectman Gordon Webber offered a surprise amendment targeted at the 2 percent wage increase for non-contractual town employees. Webber proposed reducing the budget by \$12,477.

"With the economy the way it is, I'd like to give everyone the opportunity to decide whether or not to give raises," said Webber.

The amendment was a surprise to those it would have affected. Road Agent Bob Varnum said he felt employees in his department deserved the raise and that it was the first time he had heard about a proposal to do away with it. While some employees were confused, others were downright displeased.

"Mr. Webber," said William Gutgesell, Highway Department employee, "I'd like to invite you during the next snow storm to come out with me in the plow truck for 30 hours and then you can ask for 2 percent."

Voters overwhelmingly opposed the amendment, which would have saved 4 cents per \$1,000 on their tax bills, and went on to pass the budget.

\* Despite reservations in light of recent overruns at both the White Birch Point and North Main Street bridges, the town approved both articles related to coming bridge projects.

Selectman Steve Schacht said the \$570,000 price tag for a new bridge on Water Street represented a more realistic estimate than had been used on the other two bridges. Those projects had been put out to bid based on very low, generic figures from the New Hampshire Department of Transportation. He said the DOT figures initially priced the Water Street project at \$210,000.

The repair of arch and slab culverts on Depot Street may move forward as planned after voters approved \$160,000 for those projects. The costs of the Depot Street bridges -- not including the bridge over the Contoocook -- will also be covered by 80 percent state bridge aid and \$32,000 from town capital reserves.

Schacht informed residents that overruns on the North Main Street Bridge had resulted in no significant cost to the town. State bridge aid covered 80 percent of the extra costs and the amount that would have been due to the town was covered by town gravel used for the project.

Residents also approved a three-part capital reserve allocation that included an additional \$155,000 for the Bridge Maintenance fund. Including this deposit and both withdrawals approved at Town Meeting, the balance of that fund is approximately \$240,000.

\* The only article voted down was clouded with ambiguous legal ramifications. Article 19 asked if the town should spend \$8,000 for an operation to repair an injury sustained on the job by EMT Chris Salmon. The article would seem to violate a provision of the state constitution that prevents municipalities from spending public money on private interests. Salmon argued his operation would provide a public service by allowing him to return to full service with the Antrim Ambulance, with which he has volunteered for 25 years.

Salmon sustained the injury in 2006, and has since been turned down by the town insurance provider Primex, the New Hampshire Labor Board and the state Supreme Court. Salmon said emergency volunteer workers assure their families that the town will take care of them in the event of an on-the-job injury.

"Over the long ordeal I have been forced through to get a minor, half-hour out-patient surgery to remove the lifting restriction, I know that there has been a cold chill in that kitchen table discussion," said Salmon. "'Why are you exposing our family to these risks?' is now the question. After my experience of being treated like a workman's comp cheater, what is the answer to that question?"

Salmon said he decided to take the question to the townspeople, who voted 70 to 56 against the article.

"I want Chris to know the town does support him," said resident Mary Schacht after the vote. "And if there is a fundraising drive for him, I would assist with that."

Schacht's comments were followed by a round of applause.

\* By approving both Article 3 and Article 4, voters decided to effectively withdraw \$150,000 from the Recreation Land Purchase capital reserve fund to be placed in the general fund for the purpose of offsetting taxes.

Article 3 dissolved the existing \$250,000 recreation land fund and Article 4 opened a new fund with a \$100,000 balance. In the run up to Town Meeting, Recreation Commission members had lobbied for both articles to be removed from the warrant, arguing that the failure of Article 4 could completely deplete the reserves. While the worst-case scenario was averted, the approval of the article is bittersweet for commission members.

“\_\_\_\_\_” said \_\_\_\_\_

\* Peter Lamb, member of the Conservation Commission, fielded a dozen or more questions before voters approved \$21,000 for the purchase of a Parks and Recreation tractor. The cost includes a compact tractor and turf aeration attachment that Lamb said will allow the department to better maintain athletic fields and the town beach.

**\* The town will set about appointing a police station research committee to determine the current and projected needs of the Police Department. The committee will then select the most ideal and cost-effective location and design for a police station. Design plans and bidding specifications will be put out to bid with the \$12,500 approved at Town Meeting. According to Police Chief Scott Lester, if a police station design were approved at next year’s Town Meeting, the first bond payment would coincide with the retirement of bond payments on the Town Hall.**

\* Residents approved a \$6,000 article for the Grapevine Family and Community Resource Center’s Avenue A Teen Center. The money will cover about 15 percent of the annual operating costs for the center, which coordinates social and volunteer programs for teens.

“We might have called that good clean fun a few years ago,” said Kristen Vance, Grapevine’s executive director.

BY JOSH BOND  
Monadnock Ledger-Transcript Staff

ANTRIM -- The Select Board greeted the newly formed Police Station Advisory Committee Monday and reviewed the group's objectives, which are to be completed by August 15.

The Select board has tasked the PSAC with submitting a report to determine the current and future needs for the Police Department and the most economic plan to meet those needs. According to a foundational document, the report should address the viability of town-owned land, current town buildings, potential land or structure purchases, building specifications and estimated costs for the police station.

"It seems like an ambitious agenda to accomplish by August 15," said member Kathy Kimball.

Steve Schacht, chairman of the Select board, said that date would enable the board to order professional design plans, solicit bids and present a comprehensive package to voters by the next town meeting. Schacht said the timeline would be ideal because an approved bond for the police station would replace the retiring Town Hall bond, preserving budget neutrality.

Selectman Michael Genest offered some background about previous investigation into potential police station sites. According to Genest, the town had previously considered the Frameworks building on High Street and the derelict gas station on Main Street. The town had even applied for a Brownfields grant for the gas station, which would have rehabilitated the property and any hazardous materials at no cost to the town.

When Police Chief Scott Lester joined the department in October 2008, he proposed building a new station on town-owned land near the current site of the fire station. According to Genest, residents have been divided about that proposal.

"The concept of a police station downtown is very appealing," said member Wes Enman. "I love to see the cruisers sitting out front."

However, Enman said the free land and open space for a building and police equipment at the fire station was appealing as well.

The committee may decide to hold a public hearing to gather input from residents. In the mean time, the committee will meet again on \_\_\_\_\_. All committee meetings are open to the public. The committee is composed of seven members. In addition to Kimball and Enman, members are Chris Salamy, Marshall Gale, Neil Sharby, Dan Wasielewski and David Walsh.

In other business:

- Selectmen reviewed a draft of the job posting for the Road Agent position in anticipation of the retirement of Bob Varnum in November.

According to Selectmen, Varnum was the last Road Agent to be elected in 1986, the same year the town voted to make it an appointed position.

"The town has been really good to me," said Varnum. "I have no complaints. I hope they treat the next guy the same."

- The Select Board will meet with a collection of volunteers and department heads at 5 p.m. on their May 18 meeting to thank them for their work during the December 2008 ice storm. The meeting will also serve as an opportunity to collect feedback about the town's response and any suggested changes.

- On May 5 at 5:30 p.m., a balloon test will be conducted to simulate the height and location of a proposed cell tower at 22 High Street on the property of John and Wendy Dunlap.

BY JOSH BOND  
Monadnock Ledger-Transcript

ANTRIM -- The recently formed Police Station Advisory Committee met Monday with Chief Scott Lester, who detailed the shortcomings of the current police station.

"It just doesn't work," said Lester, who joined the department in October.

Lester said that throughout the station are issues that compromise confidentiality, the security of evidence and essential paperwork and officer and civilian safety. In addition, said Lester, the only ventilating window is in the rear of the station, cruisers with more than \$35,000 of equipment inside them are stored outside and the station has only one small refrigerator, which is often used to store temperature-sensitive evidence.

"I don't like evidence going in with what the guys are going to eat," said Lester.

With regard to cramped quarters, Lester cited a recent scenario in which an officer stopped a vehicle and arrested a number of juveniles. The officer brought the suspects to the station, where they were immediately in reach of sensitive materials on the desks of officers and the secretary. When parents arrived, some with spouses and siblings, there were more than 10 people in the station, said Lester, with a bail commissioner attempting to work in the same room.

"Some of them were yelling at their kids, some were yelling at the officer," said Lester.

A Hillsborough officer assisted for a short time, said Lester, but he was soon called out to an accident, leaving the Antrim officer alone.

"When something happens, it happens all at once," said Lester.

Sgt. Kathy Kimball, detective with the N.H. State Police Troop B and PSAC member, said the lockup at the Hillsborough Police Department might seem like an alternative to overcrowding the Antrim station. However, law dictates that the arresting officer must stay with the suspect until they are processed.

"People here in town might say, 'just take them to Hillsborough,'" but it's not that easy," said Kimball.

In the basement, where there are low-hanging pipes, moisture issues and no ventilation, police store evidence, records and equipment, said Lester. Ideally protected by an alarm system and proprietary locks, security is weak, he said. Some former and current town officials have keys that would grant them access to areas they shouldn't have access to.

"Some keys get returned, some don't," said Lester.

The basement is also where the department stores seized weapons, which are often seized by the dozens. The department is responsible for such property, said Lester, and the moisture can rapidly damage weapons and other valuables.

"What if there's a fire?" asked PSAC member Dan Wasielewski, facilities development director at Maharishi Academy.

"Everybody gets out," said Lester. "We lose everything."

Lester then presented the committee with the tentative design of a new police station. Lester said the floor plan and approximate size are patterned after the Wilton police station, and would serve Antrim's needs for 25 to 30 years. In that time, Lester said he could see the department growing to eight full-time officers with 24-7 coverage, roughly the size of Wilton. The state standard, he said, is to have one full-time officer per 500 residents.

"In my mind, this is the absolute minimum we would need," said Lester of the 56-foot by 36-foot two-floor proposal.

The design assumes a sloped landscape, such as Lester's proposed site near the current Antrim fire station, with first floor access in the front and basement access in the rear. The more than 4,000 proposed square feet include three garage bays, which would allow the department to store cruisers, radar trailers, bicycles and four wheelers. This will reduce the likelihood of vandalism and will prevent officers from either idling cruisers or having to remove snow and ice before responding to a call.

Inside, the floor plan allows for the safe and secure processing of criminals, said Lester. In the event of multiple people inside the station as in the scenario above, Lester said an officer would have secure rooms for suspects and a separate upstairs lobby for parents and civilians.

"If you spread things out, an officer has more ability to control the situation," said Lester. "He can always shut a door."

Selectman Gordon Webber also attended the meeting and offered his thoughts on the station.

"When I first got on the board, I said I was going to slash the police budget. Slash, slash, slash," said Webber. "Then I took a tour of this place and said, 'we need a new police station.'"

Having outlined his needs, Lester then offered some of his wants. He said he hoped to design the building so that in 30 years the roof could be removed and a second story added. In the mean time, he said he would like to put some weights and a small workout area in the unfinished attic space, along with additional archive space.

The meeting with Lester was the second full PSAC meeting, all of which will be public. The committee was formed after voters approved a \$12,500 warrant article in March for the purchase of design plans for a new police station. The committee is tasked with reviewing all potential sites, sizes and future needs of a new police station. They will also offer suggestions for possible uses of

the current Town Hall space. Their report is due to the Select Board on or before August 15, which will allow the town to solicit design plans and other information for a warrant article next March.

BY JOSH BOND  
Monadnock Ledger-Transcript

ANTRIM -- Police Chief Scott Lester said he has changed his mind about the viability of the Antrim Mill building as a future police station.

When former police chief Todd Feyrer and former Town Administrator Bill Prokop initially explored the option a few years ago, the building, located at 42 Main St. next to the Avenue A Teen Center, was to be leased by the town. Lester said he did not consider that a sustainable arrangement and had instead favored the construction of a new police station on town-owned property near the fire station. However, after touring the mill building and learning that it could be bought outright, Lester said it could be a cost-effective option.

Lester and Paul and Leslie Belliveau, the owners of the Antrim Mill, met Tuesday with the Police Station Committee, which has been tasked with reviewing the options for the size, location and cost of a new police station. Voters at town meeting approved \$12,500 for design plans for a future police station, to be purchased at the conclusion of the committee's work. The committee is scheduled to present a final report to the Select Board by Aug. 15.

The Belliveaus are the former owners of the Contoocook Mill in Hillsborough and were drawn to New Hampshire after experience with mill restoration elsewhere. Paul Belliveau said at the meeting he was prepared to sell a portion of the building to the town at low cost. Numbers were not discussed, but Lester said the cost to purchase and renovate the building would be "much lower" than the estimated \$600,000 to \$750,000 cost for a new 3,000 to 4,000 square-foot station on town-owned land.

Lester outlined a floor plan for a three-story, 7,600 square-foot portion of the Antrim Mill building that took advantage of the basement's built-in security. The building would include three garage bays, holding cells, male and female locker rooms, a kitchen and a multipurpose room that could serve as a town meeting space or emergency operations center.

The interior of the building is wide open, said Lester, and would require only the installation of partitions, electrical, plumbing, heating and ventilation as necessary. Lester said the department could move in to the space in six to eight months if voters approved it at town meeting.

"It's downtown, there's not a lot of renovation to do, it's visually appealing and there's plenty of space," said Lester. "That looks clear into the future."

Sprinkler systems have already been installed throughout as required for the creation of the Avenue A Teen Center, which will remain undisturbed. Because there is ground-level access to the building on all three floors, the building is already compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Belliveau said it would be up to the town to either condominiumize the property or subdivide it entirely. He said he plans to develop the rear portion of the building into townhouses. Because it is in the historic district, the building would be eligible for special grants and restoration funding, said Belliveau.

Police Station Committee member Wes Enman questioned Lester and Belliveau before offering his support.

"I think it's fascinating," said Enman. "I don't need to be sold anymore."

The group is working to develop a pro and con list for each of the identified options, which include the fire station property, the mill building and the former gas station just north of the Town Hall. More options could develop as they continue their work.

"I don't care where it is," said Lester. "I just need a building."

The committee presented data indicating that, in terms of service and response time, it may not matter where the building is. Members compiled and mapped the department's 3,719 calls for service for a two-and-a-half year period from January of 2007 to May of 2009. Call density was the same within a one-mile radius of the police department as it was between a two and three-mile radius of the department.

"This just demonstrates that if someone is going to say it has to be downtown, why?" said Lester. "If the majority of people want it downtown, then that's what we'll do, but where's the justification?"

Lester said about half of all calls are responded to from the road and the other half from the department. In that sense, moving the department closer to the geographic center of town could help response times somewhat, but it is largely irrelevant.

The committee has posted a short survey at the town website asking for resident feedback on the issue. Hard copies of the survey are also available at the Town Hall. The survey will remain available until Aug. 4, when the committee will host a public input session at the Town Hall at 7 p.m.

BY JOSH BOND  
Monadnock Ledger-Transcript

ANTRIM -- Residents and officials expressed support Tuesday for the Antrim Mill building as a potential site for a police station.

At an information session hosted by the Police Station Advisory Committee, a handful of residents and officials gathered to review the work of the committee, which was formed in April. The committee was charged at that time with investigating potential sites for a police station and will present their findings to selectmen on Aug. 17.

At Tuesday's meeting, the committee collected input from the audience on the top three potential locations for a police station: The Antrim Mill building, the town-owned fire station property or the site of a defunct gas station on Main Street. After committee members outlined the pros and cons of both, audience members agreed the Mill Building seemed the best option.

"This looks like a no-brainer," said resident Shelley Nelkins.

The late 1800s mill building, assessed at \$226,000, is essentially hollow and could be renovated to any interior floor plan in relatively little time, according to Police Chief Scott Lester. Despite the age of the building, committee members said they found the building in good condition with no signs of water, structural or other issues.

"Some would say the age is a good thing and some might say it's a bad thing," said committee member Wes Enman.

The building would qualify for historic building grants and any renovations would be made with an eye toward eligibility for green building grants and stimulus money, including solar and geothermal technology, according to Town Administrator Neal Cass.

Six respondents to an online survey posted by the committee indicated a desire to keep the police station within one half-mile from downtown. Respondents also favored purchasing and renovating an existing building rather than building from scratch.

Planning Assistant Diane Chauncey said she also favored the mill building.

"I went through it with the former chief and I thought it was a great space," said Chauncey.

"I think it sounds good," said resident Ben Pratt.

The committee will next present its findings to selectmen, who will decide whether to use \$12,500 appropriated at Town Meeting to secure design plans for the site. A warrant article for the purchase of the building could appear on the March ballot, but residents will see a full financial analysis of the purchase before then, said Cass, including the impact of taking the property off the tax roll and specific bids for the renovation work.

"There will be plenty of time for people to absorb it, see it and know exactly what they're voting on," said Cass.

The purchase plan could take many forms, including a condominium arrangement for just the first two floors of the mill building, or whatever square footage the town and the building's owners agree upon. No existing tenants would be displaced by any sale, said Lester.



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## Antrim eyes Mill site as possible home for police

Thu, 08/06/2009 - 19:41 Antrim

By Michael Pon

The Antrim Police Station Advisory Committee has chosen the Mill building on Main Street as the choice for the location of a new Police Department. They committee members will present to the selectmen on Aug. 17.

"This is just the first phase of many to establish what we are going to propose at town meeting," said Police Chief Scott Lester.

"What will be proposed to the town will be for the square footage the Police Department requires is a minimum of 3,500 square feet," said chairman of the committee Chris Tenney. "The Mill building is 7,000 square feet. Prices have not been negotiated. That is beyond the scope of what we are doing. That will be determined when the town decides whether they want to go forward or not."

The Mill site, where the old Chicago Cutlery was located and where the Avenue A Teen Center is currently located with several other tenants, including the Area Prosecutors Office, was purchased several years ago by the previous administration, town administrator Bill Prokop and Police Officer Todd Feyrer.

"The owners are willing to work with the town to get a sale through," said Lester. "Original option with the former administration, but they had all agreed to doing a lease. But the selectmen never voted on it, and it was only in its initial phases. But when me and [town administrator] Cass came in, we weren't agreeable with a lease. But the owners have now approached with an option to buy. We can either buy square footage or the whole building, and become a town building. But if we bought the whole building it would also be for other purposes for the town and would affect the renters currently there."

"I have heard from people there is a concern about buying part of a building, but we would look at all the options," said Cass.

"The owners have done quite a lot of work on it since they presented a lease option," said Cass. "There are a plethora of options going. It's a large building that is hollow."

"The second option, if that fell through, would be to build a brand new building beside the Mill on town land," said Chief Lester.

According to Cass, a new building would cost somewhere in the \$650,000 range. That number doesn't include land, but would not have to include land if it was built on town land beside the Mill Station.

"The Mill is more cost effective," Chief Lester pointed out. "Building a new structure is going to cost a lot more. The security we'll get from the thick brick walls and underground space is excellent for security purposes. It's very conducive for a Police Department. We would have some con

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come in and do some bidding.”

“That is one reason they are preparing in August so that we can work up firm numbers for proposal,” Cass explained.

“It seems to be a very viable option,” Lester said. “It is on the town sewer and water lines apparent to visitors to town as soon as they drive through.”

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