

**Town of Boscawen  
Select Board Work Session  
MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, March 28, 2024, at 5:00 PM**

**In Attendance:** Lorrie Carey, Bill Bevans, Matt Burdick, Katie Phelps, Gary Moore, Timothy Kenney, Jason Killary, Mason Donovan (remote), David Collins and Shawn Brechtel.

**Roll Call:** Completed

Chairwoman Lorrie Carey called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Chairwoman Carey began the meeting by noting that this is a work session dedicated to discussion of the future of the Torrent Station.

Chairwoman Carey requested that we start the meeting with a statement of needs from the Penacook Rescue Squad (PRS). She asked what space they are currently using that could be displaced, what are their storage and parking needs, and what is the anticipated timeline for outgrowing the current space.

Shawn Brechtel, Chief of Penacook Rescue Squad, spoke about their space needs. They are currently using minimal space on the second floor of the Torrent Station to store supplies, uniforms, and filing. They are using that space because there is no additional storage space on their side of the building. They will require additional storage space, preferably onsite, as they restock their trucks with medical supplies. In terms of parking needs, they currently have two to three staff members working 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There would be, at minimum, two or three cars, with potentially up to six at any given time or with shift changes. Discussion ensued. Chief Brechtel said in terms of when they will outgrow the facility, he would argue that they have already outgrown it. There is no storage space. If Canterbury, Salisbury, and Boscawen were to decide that they wanted a second ambulance staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, it would require a third ambulance and there isn't another bay to store that ambulance. The Torrent Station bay is too small to fit an ambulance.

David Collins, Trustee of Penacook Rescue Squad, noted other concerns they have. There is a trash dumpster that Penacook Rescue Squad pays for that takes up space. It's a landlocked piece of property. A big concern they have is that they pay to have the site plowed and the Town of Boscawen Public Works crew hauls the snow offsite with a loader because there isn't room to store the snow. Mr. Collins was concerned about the plan for the building and whether Mr. Donovan planned to have tenants in the building. The Penacook Rescue side of the building is similar to a fire house. The alarm could go off multiple times a day and into the night. There will be alarm sounds, sounds from people coming down the stairs and garage doors opening and closing. There is a lot of disruption. That may not affect things during the day but could adversely affect tenants at night. Discussion ensued.

Chairwoman Carey asked if Penacook Rescue Squad has already outgrown the building and an opportunity presented itself to move to a bigger facility, would they take it? Mr. Collins asked what the option would be. PRS do not have the funds to build a large complex. The current situation may not be opportune, but it fits the people and the trucks. Their challenge is money. They are a non-profit organization funded by three towns. They have never asked the towns to fund their building. They built that into their costs of doing business or organized fundraising. They built the building and have maintained it. He noted that there is a bigger need, but the money needs to come from somewhere. Discussion ensued.

Chairwoman Carey recognized Fire Chief Tim Kenney and noted that he's been working for the past several years to expand the current Fire Station to include sleeping quarters, and bays for Penacook Rescue to be incorporated in the future. Chief Kenney said a shared space with shared utilities would keep costs down for the town. Selectman Burdick said the key to that is funding.

Mr. Collins noted that another issue is insurance for the building. That building as a whole is town property and there is no delineation between Torrent and the Penacook Rescue side of the building. Penacook Rescue and the Town of Boscawen have both been forced to pay insurance on the entire building. There would need to be some provisions in the deed to delineate the spaces. They are willing to pay for their side of the building but are unwilling to pay for the Torrent side. Chairwoman Carey said that would need to be a question for legal, but she sees it set up as a Condominium where each unit pays for their insurance, utilities, etc.

Chief Brechtel said that he hasn't seen the plans for the Fire Station but in his opinion, you would build a complex that will be adequate for the next 50 years and not right now. When thinking about the number of bays needed you would want to estimate a higher number to allow for growth. Chairwoman Carey said the Fire Chief does have plans for a bigger facility that he would be willing to share. Chief Kenney said they would need adaptation at this point.

Chairwoman Carey asked if PRS would consider offsite parking. Mr. Collins was open to options but noted that some staff come in for 911 calls and having to run down the street to get to the ambulance isn't feasible. Chief Brechtel said due to staff working 24hr shifts they bring a lot of personal items with them for shifts. Discussion ensued.

Chairwoman Carey asked Mason Donovan for his input regarding parking accommodations, space accommodations, renovation timeline, and investment return considerations.

Mason Donovan said that he understands how vital Penacook Rescue Squad is to the community and wants to ensure that any direction they go doesn't hinder their operations. The end goal for Torrent Station is residential and commercial use. He sees the second floor as a one-bedroom residential unit. He would be willing to delay the timeline to allow Penacook Rescue Squad to utilize the second floor of Torrent for storage space. When it comes time to rehab the property the parking needs during the project will be significant. There will be construction dumpsters and construction crews for up to 4 months. He said for the residential portion of the building they would need assigned parking and look to paint out the parking spots. He noted that he is flexible

and open to looking at potential storage space for Penacook Rescue but would need to cover his costs. There is a garage in Torrent station that could house the pick-up truck, giving more space in the bays. He would like to support Penacook Rescue but also get a return on investment.

Chairwoman Carey asked Mr. Donovan if he saw this project being phased. Mr. Donovan said he does. He estimates demolition will take a month or two followed by the building renovation taking a couple months. He would want the residential unit to be ready by June of 2025. If in conversations with Penacook Rescue, they feel it would be a good storage space he can delay that timeline but would need to cover his costs. Discussion ensued. Mr. Donovan noted that for parking he sees spaces for Penacook Rescue on the Oak Street side of the building. He sees the left side of the building as the most valuable for residents. Parking availability and options in the local area discussed. Chief Brechtel noted that they have put no parking signs on Oak Street because they couldn't make the swing with the ambulance out of the bay. TA Phelps asked if Penacook Rescue had experienced any damage to vehicles by parking on the Oak Street side. Chief Brechtel said not since the roof was redone.

Mr. Collins asked if Mr. Donovan was comfortable from a code perspective that the second floor could be a residential dwelling. The building has always been a commercial building. Mr. Donovan said that would be part of the inspection process and what would need to be done to meet the code. Chairwoman Carey said there has been a movement in the State to redevelop historic buildings. There are ways to soundproof the interior walls.

Chairwoman Carey asked Mr. Donovan if he has any concerns to discuss. He said there are a lot of items stored in Torrent including an old fire engine that would need to be relocated. He also noted that they would be concerned about meeting the code for the building. He has no doubts he can work with Penacook Rescue and support the vital services that they provide to the town until such a time that they are able to move into another facility.

Chairwoman Carey asked Facilities Director Moore if he had any thoughts on storage. FD Moore suggested using the upstairs at the Dorval House for storage. A suggestion was made to use the Town Hall for storage. He noted that the basement at the Municipal Building is full, and he doesn't foresee any room there. The attic of the Municipal Building has air conditioning and duct work and it's a maze and would be difficult to store items there. He noted that there may be some items in Torrent that could be discarded. Chief Killary said he would be concerned about climbing stairs. He said one of his officers may be able to get a storage container for little to no cost. Selectman Burdick recommended having a storage container down by the Dorval House as most items belong to the Old Home Day Committee and their events take place at the park.

Ownership of the old fire engine was discussed. Chief Kenney said the Town sold it to ten firefighters for a dime each and they have all passed away. He assumes that it belongs to their heirs, but nothing was ever done to sell it to the Association. Discussion ensued. Ray Fisher is the only person that knows how to run the engine. The old fire engine can be stored at the Fire Station. It needs to be kept in a climate-controlled environment. Discussion ensued.

Chairwoman Carey reviewed items to be addressed and who would need to work on them.

1. Plowing – PRS & Owner
2. Utilities – PRS & Owner
3. Dumpsters – PRS & Owner
4. Torrent Space Rental – PRS & Owner
5. Cleaning out Torrent – Town of Boscawen & PRS
6. Parking Options – PRS, Owner, Town of Boscawen
7. Insurance Review – PRS and Owner
8. Storage Box – Town of Boscawen
9. Offsite Snow Removal – Town of Boscawen
10. Code Requirements – Owner
11. Move Old Fire Truck – Town of Boscawen
12. Future Safety Complex Design – PRS & Town of Boscawen

Chief Killary discussed parking limitations and overflow. There was discussion regarding local businesses and that might be opportunities to allow parking near the building.

Chairwoman Carey summarized all the areas needing review. She noted that we need to discuss the offsite snow removal aspect and whether to incorporate that into the agreement. PRS currently plows all the snow, but when Mr. Donovan takes over the front section, they would only clear snow from the bay area. Chairwoman Carey said that seeing the snow is hauled offsite that would need to be on the Town's radar. It is not part of the current agreement.

Facilities Director Moore suggested moving all items to the Town Hall to stage and go through the items to see what needs to be saved and what is discarded. Mr. Donovan will be able to proceed with a structural assessment once the building is cleaned out. The timeline for moving the items out of the building was discussed. FD Moore would want to know who has the authority to decide whether to keep or throw away items. TA Phelps recommended including Polly Dawson from the Old Home Day Committee as a lot of the items in there belong to that committee. Mr. Donovan is out of the country until June and flexible on the assessment timeline. He recommended within the next 60 days getting the items removed from Torrent and he will have the assessment scheduled within a week of it being cleaned out. Chairwoman Carey clarified by June 1<sup>st</sup> all items will be removed from the building and an assessment accomplished. Additional conversations can be had regarding the other outstanding items.

Chief Brechtel said Mr. Donovan has been fantastic and he seems easy to work with. He wondered how to get this into a form so that when Mr. Donovan decides to sell the building someday that we won't need to go through this process again. Mr. Donovan said it will be in the covenants once the property is transferred to him. Selectman Burdick said it would be in the deed itself so that it stays with the property until such time that Penacook Rescue leaves the building.

Mr. Collins asked what timeframe the Town of Boscawen is planning for a new Public Safety Complex. Chairwoman Carey said there will be a subcommittee looking into this and making

proposals as part of the upcoming 2025 budget. Many people have become involved with the Advisory Budget Committee and see the way the town has been saving and think it might not be the most cost-effective way to proceed. We are losing pace with the growing needs of the town, so it makes sense to take a deeper look at this. The town has already made an investment for a Fire Station design. It needs to be updated to fit future potential needs. Selectman Burdick said the plan is to bring something forward for the 2025 Town Meeting, but it all depends on the vote.

Mr. Collins noted that we also discussed bringing the three towns back together for a meeting to discuss the future. He suggested having the discussion within the next 90 days because that plays into the future of Penacook Rescue Squad as well. The call volume continues to increase and it's becoming a bigger need. TA Phelps has it on her list to schedule.

**Chairwoman Carey made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Matthew Burdick. All in favor. None opposed. The meeting adjourned at 5:55 pm.**

Next Meeting: TBD

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Katie Phelps*