

Minutes: Buildings and Facilities Committee

(former Civic Center Committee)

Wednesday, October 9, 2024

Alumni Hall, Second Floor Conference Room

- Attendees: Charlie Atwood; Burnie Allen; Art Dessureau; Rick Dente; Paula Dolan; Matt Flaherty; Sue Higby
- Not in Attendance: Jon Valsangiacomo; Brent Gagne; Nicolas Storrellicastro
- Others in Attendance: Jim McWilliam; Tom Baker

Minutes for the October 9, 2024, meeting prepared by Sue Higby. Co-chair

The meeting was called to order by Chair Charlie Atwood at 8:01AM.

1. Minutes for the September 11, 2024 meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved, with a motion by Art Dessureau, seconded by Rick Dente and affirmed by the Committee.
2. Visitors and Communications – None
3. Discussion with Barre City – Tom Baker & Nicolas Storrellicastro

First, Tom provided his key contact info: (Office) 476-0256/(Cell) 793-3392; Manager Storrellicastro was not in attendance.

Committee members discussed immediate and long-term concerns with the facilities on the hill, including:

BOR

Removal of Turf; Storage of Turf (will be on pallets, stored in NE corner of BOR); Air circulation improvements in the BOR are needed; Research and repair/replace granite plaques stored behind the bleachers; Roof repair required at locker room (potential mold remediation required); New lights to be installed; Manifold on equipment to be replaced at end of season; Alarm system (e.g., ammonia leak detection system) to be checked; Hot water heating system will be replaced in locker rooms (on-demand systems used).

AUD

One out of 2 boilers in the AUD does not function. Discussion of a contingency plan took place. Other key issues include: Electric upgrades needed (e.g., replace old panels); Heating system replaced; acquisition of A/C a priority for space; Window and door repairs; Energy efficiency opportunities assessed; ADA restrooms; Officials Rooms improved; Facelifts for the locker rooms needed.

Committee members discussed the NU Senior Project and its utility for reviewing various improvements/repairs in the AUD.

FUNDING

The Committee asked staff about who would be in charge of the Congressional funds allocated by Sen. Sanders (will be have a project planning manager?). **The Committee requested a report on this funding for the next meeting, scheduled for November 13.** The Committee learned that Barre hired a grant writer. In addition to preparing proposals, this individual, Nancy Lynch, will also take over the scheduling for the Civic

Center Complex. The Committee needs to learn more about how this new position interfaces with Jim's position.

OTHER

There remain a number of questions concerning the process for placing information on the Digital Sign located on Main Street. **Resolution of these questions is needed.**

4. Charges for the Buildings and Facilities Committee

Manager Storrellicastro has requested a written description of the new charge for the Buildings and Facilities Committee.

Committee members are unclear about the scope of the work that the newly named Committee has (now "Bldgs & Facilities"), e.g., does the work include all Barre facilities such as City Hall, the Fire & PD, swimming pool?

Next steps: Obtain a job description for Tom Baker's position to help understand the scope of work and discuss.

In addition, schedule a walk-about next month to learn more about the routine maintenance, repairs and remodeling needed in the Civic Center Complex.

5. Marketing Report – Jim

It was reported that only 1 sponsor took Jim up on the offer to use the turf (Northern Basement Systems); however this positive community outreach helped to motivate a \$2,500 banner sale. Jim and Burnie discussed the UVM open practice that took place the previous week (well attended). There will be a Norwich Univ/Johnson game on Nov. 23. Jim will be investing considerable time in November with his marketing/renewal activities. He will be adding space for 2 new banners at the BOR, and he could also imagine space for 4 more banners there with some reorganization.

The Committee Meeting adjourned at 9:20AM.

6. Civic Center Financial Review

- Dawn M provided a BOR Fund Summary. The Civic Center Operating Revenue and Expense Summary was last updated in March.
- Committee members discussed staff overburdening and lack of management oversight. They raised the question of: “Who is minding the store? Who is taking calls?”
- Charlie and Sue will schedule a meeting with the City Manager to learn more about the transition(s) taking place with director positions (Bldgs and Rec) that are associated with Civic Center performance and results.
- A specific short-term, pressing issue discussed was how to handle turf storage with the ice schedule coming.
- The Committee discussed the importance of re-opening discussions about cell tower siting at the AUD.

7. Congressional grant funds

- Communications have been unclear and lacking.
- This is considered the Committee’s highest priority.
- The Committee discussed the need to have a seasoned Project Manager to run the AUD project.
- The NU Senior Project provides insights into certain AUD updates.

8. Marketing Report – Jim

- Jim suggested that a least 4 meetings each year include a “walking tour” component so that repairs and issues associated with managing the Civic Center Complex could be seen and discussed.
- He discussed a series of basketball events, including open practice; college hoops with Norwich; the Winter Solstice Event (in January) involving HS players; the State Wrestling Championship tournaments at the AUD for the first year; and various sponsorship-oriented activities, including NSB chairs for the Basketball season and banner issues.

9. Staff Report

The Committee learned by email shortly before this scheduled Sept. 11 meeting that the interim director of the Civic Center Complex, Rikk Taft, had left his position and a new person had been hired. The Committee was informed by the City Manager that the new hire is Tom Baker, scheduled to start on Sept. 16, 2024.

Praise for Rikk Taft:

The Committee wanted the minutes of this meeting to reflect the group’s highest regard for the fine work completed by Rikk Taft over the one-half year he worked as the interim director for the Civic Center Complex. The Committee was exceptionally impressed with his interest in the Civic Center Complex and his readiness to identify and respond to problems quickly and effectively. He will be missed, and the Committee wishes him well in his next pursuit. Thank you.

The Committee meeting was adjourned at 9:30AM.