

### **A Change of Plans on the Community Center**

A month ago we reported in this forum that the Community Center Use Committee had produced a drawing that, if implemented would result in the building being used for town offices, community center, and commercial activities. A large part of that scope included moving the town offices from their current location into a portion of the 1974 wing of the building. We reported that the committee and the Board of Selectmen were working to produce a project cost that could be presented to the town for consideration. The chosen way forward was to produce a set of contract drawing and specifications that are then advertised for bids. Project award would be contingent on approval at a town meeting. The advantage of this method was that the cost presented to the voters would represent what a contractor is actually willing to be paid for the work versus what an estimator thinks it might cost. We wanted to reassure you that when you saw the bid requests in the Shopper's Guide, we would not be awarding the project before approval by the voters.

After discussions with someone experienced with municipal construction business and knowledgeable about the current contracting environment, we concluded that the above approach would not likely be successful. We were advised there would be a problem getting competitive bidding for a municipal project that hadn't yet been approved for funding. There were also additional costs involved with the process that would need prior approval. Therefore the Board of Selectmen decided to go forward with only that work which had been approved at the special town meeting in Sep 2015. This scope includes the ADA restrooms, handicap access modifications, fire detection and alarms, lighted exit signs, and added insulation above 1974 wing of the building. This work (minus the insulation) reflects the minimum requirements of the state fire marshal to use the facility in any capacity.

The approved scope of work has been advertised for bids. If the bids fall within the funding already approved, the project WILL be awarded. This would put the town in compliance with the requirements of the state fire marshal when using the facility for town meetings, etc. Any other modifications or uses of the facility will be presented to a town meeting for approval.

Sincerely  
Baldwin Board of Selectmen