



TOWN OF WESTMINSTER
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MEMORANDUM

To: Select Board
From: Old Town Hall RFP Review Committee
Date: October 23, 2023
Subject: Report of the Historic Meetinghouse Review Committee

The Town reissued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the sale and reuse of the Historic Meetinghouse in August 2023. This represented the Town's fourth attempt to find an entity to buy and redevelop this property, the first two attempts taking place in 2017, and third in 2022.

The Select Board, with the assistance of the Town Administrator and Town Planner reviewed and refined the contents of the RFP, scoring matrix and proposer qualifications. The Select Board, assisted by the Town Administrator, appointed an RFP Review Committee consisting of the following members:

- Fire Chief Kyle Butterfield
- Building Commissioner Eric Chartrand
- Historical Commission Chair, Roni Beal
- Library Trustees Chair, Kim Samson
- Agricultural Commission Chair, ML Altobelli
- Congregational Church Board of Trustees Chair, John Fairbanks
- Citizens-At-Large (3):
 - Brian Vincent,
 - Chelsey Patriss and,
 - Eric Callahan

The Town received three proposals, along with the following purchase pricing:

- Lee Properties, Haverhill MA (purchase price: \$25,000)
- Community Arts Foundation Westminister, MA (purchase price: \$1.00)
- Pillar & Post, Windham NH (purchase price: \$10,000)

The review committee met twice; once to distribute review materials and discuss the process, after which point the Committee members were instructed to review and rate each proposal on their own. At the second meeting held October 19, 2023 the members met to present their individual scores for each proposal.

The three proposals received the following scores out of a maximum allotment of 12 points:

- Pillar & Post LLC 10.3 points (cumulative 93 pts)
- Lee Properties 8.2 points (cumulative 74 pts)
- Community Arts Foundation Inc. 8.1 points (cumulative 73 pts)

At the October 19 meeting, each Committee member presented their scoring and justification for each proposal, including any comments. The Committee members discussed the merits as well as drawbacks of each proposal - based on the overall scoring and references, the Committee reached consensus on a recommendation. The Committee respectfully recommends that the Select Board enter into a contract with Pillar & Post LLC to redevelop this property and ensure the building's survival as an asset to Westminster.

The Committee elected Kim Samson, Roni Beal and Brian Vincent to be present at the Select Board meeting on October 30, 2023 on their behalf should the Select Board wish to discuss further or have any questions.

Encl.

Final Score Sheets

References Checks

Old Town Hall RFP - Final Score Sheet

LEE PROPERTIES						
Committee Members	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Total	Notes:
R. Beal	3	2	3	2	10	liked the energy conservation for heating and cooling and contaminants
B. Vincent	3	2	2	3	10	experience with a variety of projects
K. Butterfield	3	2	2	2	9	left out items that could increase cost, basement reference
ML Altobelli	3	2	2	2	9	we need housing in the town
E. Chartrand	3	3	1	1	8	special permit? Best purchase price, hard money lending
E. Callahan	2	1	2	3	8	hard money can go either way, "need to raise funds", no bank letter
K. Samson	1	3	1	2	7	did not list fully completed projects, replacement of brick/clapboards/windows
J. Fairbanks	0	2	2	3	7	na
C. Patriss	1	2	1	2	6	no complete projects, no historic preservation, no finance letter
Lee Properties Total Score					74	

Total Cumulative Scores		Total Average Score
Lee Properties	74	8.2
Community Arts	73	8.1
Pillar & Post	93	10.3

Old Town Hall RFP - Final Score Sheet

COMMUNITY ARTS FOUNDATION						
Committee Members	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Total	Notes:
C. Patriss	2	3	3	3	11	long term/fundraising, greater long term community benefit, paid most attention to preservation, assembling team, solid non profit plan
R. Beal	2	2	3	3	10	Joe has shown he is capable and his staff have historic preservation experience
ML Altobelli	2	2	3	2	9	cant beat interest in historical component, does not like removal of bottom floor
K. Butterfield	2	1	3	2	8	length of time for return, parking for large events
K. Samson	0	2	3	3	8	parking!, timeline, funding
B. Vincent	1	2	3	2	8	timeline, last phase 2029, longtime to have neighborhood interruption. Qualifications of previous projects not similar
E. Callahan	1	1	3	3	8	fundraising not guaranteed, timeline too long, not much experience
E. Chartrand	1	1	3	1	6	least desirable purchase price, references, preserves most history
J. Fairbanks	1	1	1	2	5	na
CAF Total Score	73					

Old Town Hall RFP - Final Score Sheet

PILLAR AND POST						
Committee Members	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Total	Notes:
R. Beal	3	3	3	3	12	timeline for completion is a concern
K. Samson	3	3	2	3	11	no stage preservation but stairwell, vault, other features to be incorporated
B. Vincent	3	3	2	3	11	na
E. Callahan	3	2	3	3	11	hard money (w letter), realistic timeline
K. Butterfield	2	3	2	3	10	
J. Fairbanks	3	2	2	3	10	na
C. Patriss	3	3	2	2	10	preservation is good but is not for public use, lost opportunity for affordable housing, small apartments
E. Chartrand	3	2	1	3	9	best overall site plan
ML Altobelli	3	2	2	2	9	na
Pillar & Post Total Score	93					

Reference Check: Lee Properties

Questions:

	1. Does this proposer have experience with historic building renovation and construction?	2. In your opinion, is this proposer qualified to complete a historic preservation project?	3. Based on your experiercer with the propoer, would you recommend them to complete a full renovation and histpric preservation of an important structure in Westminster?	4. Is there anything else you wish to add?
Attleboro Historical Commission Marian Wrightington, Chair did not answer calls, no email provided				
Haverhill Historical Commission Andrew Herlihy, Historic Preservation Officer 9	Yes. they reovated 2 Washington St, Historic District, Haverhill....they did a great job	Yes	Yes	They are doing another one in Merimack Valley. Nothing else to add
Town of Stonington Danielle Chesebrough	Yes - They are in the process (early stages) of and Old Historic Mill in their town. They have been great to work with!	Yes, - to the best of her knowledge. They have not finished this project yet in their town	Yes	

**Reference Check:
Community Arts Foundation**

Questions

	1. Does this proposer have experience with historic building renovation and construction?	2. In your opinion, is this proposer qualified to complete a historic preservation project?	3. Based on your experience with the proposer, would you recommend them to complete a full renovation and historic preservation of an important structure in Westminster?	4. Is there anything else you wish to add?
John Bowen did not answer calls or email				
Greg Moran	Has confidence that they could pull together entities that have experience	confident they will pull together the appropriate group to complete	He has always had good dealings with Joe Serio, but he himself does not have enough experience with Joe to answer that	Historic buildings...once they're gone...they're gone
Jeffrey Crowley jeff@wachusett.com	I don't know	Think they could?	Sure	No
Jon Wyman did not answer calls or email				
Norman Boudreau	He did a lot of work planning this project, but I don't think he has the experience of what it takes for something like this	Depends on the money? Doesn't think he will be able to get the money to afford something this big. He heard his quote was low??	Don't think so? Based on what he wants there, doesn't think it's going to make any money to run on its own?	No

**Reference Check:
Pillar & Post**

Questions

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Kirk Cordell did not answer calls or email				
Andrew Farrell	Yes	Absolutely	Absolutely. Has seen many of his renovated buildings	got to know Tom well. He has brought several historic buildings back to their glory and does a great job!
Jennifer Goodman did not answer calls or email				

Ann Vandal avandal@dracutma.gov	Yes, they renovated the exterior and interior of a historic building on a farm that we purchased. Their property included a house, the house was the only structure they renovated.	Yes, as a matter-of-fact, they have begun to work on the Grange Hall which is located in the center of Town and is one of the oldest buildings in town.	Yes, they were very knowledgeable and had the passion that is needed to get it done right.	They are community minded; you will be pleased with their work and passion. Let me know if you have any other questions. Good luck!
Wayne Morris 603-204-0943 mod52wm@aol.com	Absolutely	Yes	Absolutely	I purchased a historic farm in Windham, NH. He was looking for a curratorship and I met Tom and ended up restoring the farm. Tom lived in the farm while renovating it. He met the detail of the time period of the farm and did such a beautiful job. Tom is easy to work with and just a great guy! I have seen several of his restorations and they are beautiful!