

**TOWN OF ENNIS COMMISSION MEETING
JULY 8, 2021
7:00 P.M.
ENNIS TOWN HALL**

Open Meeting: Commissioner Roberts opened the meeting at 7:00 pm

Pledge to the Flag

Commission Present: Lisa Roberts, John Bancroft, Kristy Ranson, Jason Schroeder (quorum)

Minutes: Minutes of previous meeting were reviewed by the Commission. Bancroft moved to approve; Schroeder seconded the motion. All voted yes.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items A question was asked from the audience if the budget was available. Commission explained where to find the budget on the town website.

School Project Introduction Casey Klasna introduces himself as school Superintendent. Klasna states that the school has been working on strategic plan which is where this project is stemming from. Focus on keeping classrooms small which results in filling up on classroom space. Klasna states that growth, site safety and security and growth down the road are the focus. Building age is becoming an issue, many aspects are not in code. Klasna focused on site safety issues, specifically the library and the Elementary kids traveling through entire school to get to library. Lack of sq ft. 700 sq ft is a tight environment. Lack of natural light in science room and music room. Turning kids away due to classroom size (art). Kids back and forth between buildings, safety concern. School took survey of community – consensus was to keep the school together. Maria Marzulo asked about public meetings to discuss options with school. Klasna states there are meetings open to public – dates and times are on school website.

Klasna introduces Ali Vasarella, Project Manager from 45 architecture. Discussion about options. Discussion about water and sewer being sized to uphold addition.

Kirk Cardoso asks about time distance for final drawing.

Ali states 1.5 years away and discusses timeline for process.

Roberts asks if final design is needed for bond.

Ali states process for project.

Roberts asks what ballot the school would like it to be on.

Klasna states the goal is for the November 2021 ballot but the board will be meeting Monday to decide.

Roberts asks if there are pictures to share with public.

Ali states the bond info is on the school website with all documentation and images, processes, etc.

Roberts asks if a traffic study has been done yet.

Ali states that it has not been done yet but that would be done in the future.

Roberts states that she believes it would be a good idea for there to be a Town Representative at the future building meetings.

Kirk Cardoso asks how to secure a number for a bond with material prices changing so often.

Ali explains process for pulling pieces out to create an alternate bid if prices fluctuate out of budget.

Jason Schroeder states that the abandoning of a portion of Charles Street is concerning and interesting. Concerning because the Town does not have very many streets as it is. Interesting because he would 'actually like to do that at his house'. States he is just kidding. Wonders how the school came to the decision that abandoning Charles is the only option. Why not a sky bridge or tunnel.

Ali states that the planning board did not want to build on the football field. They did not want to separate the campuses and the need for the sq ft they felt the only option was to spread across the proposed area. Ali states that she has worked on three other projects where the local municipality has voted to agree on abandoning a street for safety reasons. States that sky bridges and tunnels are a decent idea but the liability and cost factors are prohibitive.

Bancroft states that he understands getting help is a struggle and a bigger school will require more staff which will need housing. He asks, where does the school plan to house the needed staff?

Ali states the planning committee was concerned with housing and that the school's 50 acres has been considered an option as well as the existing housing owned by the school.

Karen Ketchu states that she is a proponent of working towards this because as the town grows there is a responsibility to provide excellent learning environment for kids.

Bancroft requests the school to explain why they are against using the 50 acres for a new high school.

Klasna states the consensus from surveys was to keep them together and two different buildings means two food services, which means more staff which would propose issues.

Roberts requests clarification on the material and which is the final draft.

Roberts states she would like to know with a traffic study how this proposal would impact town traffic and the current bottleneck situation. She states that past studies in 2011 made suggestions for 'safe routes' which were never followed and she wonders if there will be facilities for kids to walk and ride their bikes to school.

Roberts asks if the new Vo Tech building would be torn down in this process and how to parking would be monitored, painted, etc.

Ali confirms that yes, the building would be torn down and that the school would plan to put a left turn lane and paint the parking lot.

Attorney Greenbaum reads law on street closure. He confirms the process for closure of a street would require a petition by the immediate homeowners on the street which would then be brought to the council to be voted on after a public hearing process.

Bancroft states that the school currently closing the street during school hours is technically not law and that the Town is allowing that to happen is simply favoritism to the school because the street should not be closed for the school.

Zoning Board of Adjustment Volunteer Members

Roberts asks for list of names of volunteer members.

Ginger Guinn reads list of names as follows: Maria Marzulo, Tony Treglia, John Heckler, Patricia Haederle, Christian Pederson

Roberts states that there will be a process and resolution for deciding term limits for each member and that the Town will be providing a training for all board members. Zoning Board of Adjustments in Town Code 11-1-9 is read. Members will be appointed by resolution and terms will be decided.

Trevor Lockhart asks how the board members were picked or if all five volunteered.

Ginger confirms that the members were all volunteer.

Maria asks timing and details of training.

Roberts states that details are not clear yet but that they would like to have it complete within 30 days of appointment.

Attorney Greenbaum states that the Town will use Gallatin County as an example to draft their own best practice for the board.

On Call Planning Services for Town

Roberts proposed this item on the agenda to discuss adding a contracted planning service in the budget for the next 2021-2022 fiscal budget. She believes this will be necessary as town growth continues because there is no licensed planner on staff which leads the town to rely heavily on the county interlocal agreement with Alex Hogle. Would like to see text amendments, zoning and processes in place for more clear-cut plans and codes that are current.

Kristi Ranson states that she believes this would be a good idea for the big projects coming up. Maria asks if there's an idea of cost.

Robert states there's an estimate of \$30-50k and that the Town would like to use them ideally for a year or two and wean off the service as best practices and procedures get update and put in place.

Dino Fanelli asks if the Town has ever considered hiring a City Manager.

Discussion about the role of a city manager occurred. Conclusion is that the need is growing and becoming apparent but that a professional planning service is a different service and becoming urgent.

Maria asks for process of hiring city planner.

Roberts states that a scope of work needs determined and that will be on August agenda. Roberts confirms that RFPs are only needed if the cost is greater than \$50k.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding Plans

Kelly updates that he attended the County Commission meeting and requested \$200k. He listed the needs for Ennis and was granted \$225k of ARPA funds. Kelly stated the top needs are updating valving, repairs in multiple locations and a new well.

Ranson asks where new well would be.

Elser states that it has not been determined but the town would need to purchase land to be drilled on first. He continued that DEQ highly recommends a 3rd well to prepare for any issues that may arise with existing wells.

Roberts asked how the Town would best pick a site for a new well.

Elser stated that there will be a hydrogeologic study in the coming months that will cost about \$30k and help determine that.

Trevor Lockhart asked if the ARPA money could be used for infrastructure instead of water and sewer.

Elser stated that it isn't off limits but that the monies were specifically meant for water and sewer first.

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment Discussion

This item was set for a work session to be held July 19, 2021 from 6:00 pm to 8:00pm

Set for Work Session: Business Licenses, Street Bonds & Discussion of Private Wells in Town Limits

Work session set for July 19, 2021 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Business licenses - Roberts requests that a rough inventory of short-term rentals in Ennis be gathered and that they be required to get a business license.

Elser states that the Town needs an updated Street Bond process and would use Bozeman as an example. The list of locations where the road has been dug up and not repaired adequately is substantial so there needs to be consequences and a plan of action to be sure the road damage does not become an issue for the town to fix.

Department Reports:

Library: Karen Ketchu states that the library is busier than ever. They are seeing about 300 visitors per day and are seeing about 50-60 people attending their Friday programs. She requested permission to look into funding and options for expanding community broadband access. Commission agrees.

Police: Written report provided – Brandi from Ennis Auto Parts requests that Officer Moore patrol the area in front of their store more as people are driving on the sidewalk.

Public Works: Annual Water Report now available, budget is in the works, road repairs and street bonds are a priority.

Zoning: No zoning report provided. Commission requests for future meetings to have a zoning report provided. Also request enlarged map of zoning to be accessible in meeting room.

Clerk: Written report provided

Mayor Report/Comments: Mayor not present

Commission Comments: None

Claims: Kristi Ranson moved to approve. John Bancroft 2nds. Call to vote – all voted yes.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8:54 pm.

Blake Leavitt, Mayor

Brittney Hirsch, Deputy Clerk