

Town of Stockton Springs

Select Board

June 25, 2020

8:00 a.m.

Minutes

Present: Peter Curley, Betsy Bradley, Melissa Moody.

Also Present: Jennifer King – Town Manager.

There was discussion of the interest expressed in the Stockton Springs Elementary School building by two churches and the loss of tax base if the property is purchased by a church. Mr. Curley asked if the Town would be required to accept any offer or if the Town had the right to refuse offers at the auction. Ms. Bradley mentioned the reserve amount, which might act as the minimum bid. Ms. King said the town had a purchase and sale agreement from one of the churches, with an amount of \$108,000, with \$8,000 of that going to closing costs and other expenses. Ms. King said that church invited community discussion as far as a playground and is interested in keeping the playground equipment. Ms. Bradley asked if, with an offer made, the Town could go to the other interested parties and see what their counteroffer might be. Ms. King said Town Attorney Ed Bearor had advised that the Town not play real estate agent, and that if they were going to try and play real estate agent, it would be just as well to go with the auction process. Ms. Bradley said the offer of \$108,000 had met her personal goal for a minimum amount. Mr. Curley said people have known for months that the school was for sale. He asked why one party was asking for an extension of the deadline for making offers. Ms. King said that when she was last at the building the floors were soaked. Mr. Curley said it was important to disclose all the problems with the building to any potential buyers. Ms. King said the second church that was interested had offered \$70,000, and that church would like to keep the playground equipment but allow the community to use it. Ms. King said the Town could approach the church and see if they would increase their offer. The Select Board agreed that \$100,000 was a good minimum price on the parcel. Ms. King said that church members stated that property abutter Ryan King had expressed relief that a church might purchase the property. Ms. Bradley suggested that a monetary value could be put on use of the playground and taken off the bid minimum. Mr. Curley said he has traveled that road many times and has never seen a single child using the playground equipment. Mr. Curley said \$70,000 just was not enough of an offer. He again said there had been plenty of time for interested parties to approach the Town.

37 Ms. Bradley said some people may have been put off by the assessed value of the building and
38 property at \$400,000+. There was discussion of the one party's request for more time so that
39 they could do their due diligence regarding the property. There was discussion of an oil tank that
40 might need to be removed. Mr. Curley asked if the Town was prepared to accept less than
41 \$100,000 if the buyer would generate taxes from the property. Mr. Curley said he favors none of
42 the parties in particular but wants to do what is best for the Town. It was agreed that Ms. King
43 would reach out to all three interested parties and let them know that the deadline for offers was
44 July 8 at 12 noon. She asked the Select Board what they wished to do if the church could not
45 have their information together in time for the deadline. It was agreed that if all parties offer
46 \$100,000, they would go first with the one that adds to the tax base. It was agreed that if there
47 are only offers from churches, the bid would go to whomever came up with the cash first. It was
48 agreed that the Select Board would meet on July 9 and July 23 instead of the first and third
49 Thursday of the month, for the month of July only. The conversation ended at 8:50 a.m.

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51 Approved – Select Board

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