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MUNICIPAL NEWS

Live theatre group seeks town deal

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
STAFF WRITER

A 400-seat, multi-purpose facility, featuring live theatre will be built downtown, if all goes as planned.

The former municipal office, located on Civic Avenue, will be leased to the Clock Tower Theatre Group for \$1 a year, if council agrees with a recommendation tonight, by town administrator Merlin Dewing.

Council is being asked to let the theatre group take over the town-owned property Jan. 2.

As part of the deal, the theatre group is being asked to outline its fundraising, construction and five-year business plan that will demonstrate its ability to undertake, complete and operate the facility.

If the proposal fails, the town would "not be asked or be obliged to bail out the proponents," Dewing said.

To do nothing with the property would result in another vacant building and an operational burden on the town, Dewing said.

Demolition is another option. "To demolish it would result in more potential parking area and may even spark a larger scale development project in the downtown, encompassing several properties. The loss of a historical building must be weighed against the overall benefit," Dewing said.

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