

**Ashland Town Library  
Minutes of Library Trustees Meeting  
March 19, 2015**

**Trustees Present:** Alice Staples, David Ruell, Mardean Badger

**Others Present:** Sara Weinberg, Library Director; Thomas Ladd; Norm DeWolfe; Sandra Coleman

[Before the meeting started, Sara gave a brief tour of the facilities to Thomas Ladd, Library Consultant.]

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm by Chair Alice Staples.

**THOMAS LADD, GUEST**

We met with Tom Ladd and discussed the services he might provide to assist us in planning for a future library.

- We reviewed steps we have undertaken up to this point (2009 survey, TCCAP building availability, 2014 failed bond issue, discussion with CDFA/CDBG, 2015 capital reserve approval, etc.).
- We explained the division of responsibility – Scribner Trustees for building and grounds; Library Trustees for library program.
- Sara gave Tom some documents for preliminary review – PowerPoint from 2014 deliberative session; mailer; handout from deliberative session; information on open houses; 2009 survey information.
- Tom Ladd – Positive elements:
  - Passage of capital reserve article (with library trustees as agents to expend indicates there is a certain amount of support in the community.
  - BOS, CIP and Budget Committee supported the capital reserve article.
  - CIP committee endorses the need for capital reserves and long-range planning for the town.
  - Ashland’s demographics are encouraging to qualify for some low income targeted grants.
- Tom Ladd - The library must show the public what our needs are and how to address them.
  - We need real data, information to present to the public so we can bring them along in the whole process.
  - Look at what we’re doing, what we want to be doing, what people in the community can benefit from and how these proposed changes will lead to that.
  - We need to find out what people want in the library, including what people have never thought of because they haven’t been able to get it here.
  - Build public support by putting information in people’s hands that make them think: “Libraries can do that? Our library doesn’t do that. I want our library to do that.”
  - With us as agents to expend the capital reserve fund, we need to be responsible and transparent about the use of the money. If there are any questions from the public, deal with it all up front.

- Tom Ladd – General information and suggestions
  - Update our survey which becomes part of the public relations plan.
  - No matter how much the town might be willing to bond, there has to be a significant fund raising and grant seeking component
  - Think about what you're willing and able to do with naming rights.
  - If donation will be a tax write-off, have a smooth process for that.
  - Tour other libraries – similar size, similar nature, older communities, similar budget levels.
  - All local lawyers and funeral homes should have information about the library for clients who are looking into estate planning.
  - Consider this question – If a “money tree” fell on us and we told the Scribner Trustees that we are moving, what would their reaction be? People are concerned about what will happen to this building.
  - Structural load capacity – Especially if re-purposing an existing building, have structural load tested, documented and certified by architect or engineer. Average house minimum 30 lb/sq ft live load. Library needs to be minimum 150 lb/sq ft live load.
  - Single floor building – Advantages: no elevator. Disadvantages: more walking distance, larger footprint, energy inefficient (multiple story, heat rises to upper floors).
  - If you look at a certain scenario, can you afford to operate it? – Staffing, open hours, plowing, shoveling, utilities, etc. It's a given that you will get increased usage with a new library, even going from a fairly decent place to a new place, even more so from something less adequate.
  - Research different grant sources and talk to other organizations that are used to looking for grants. Look carefully at grants, because some grants' “hoops” may not be worth the small amount of money.
  - Create a building development committee with community members, especially in the area of public relations and fundraising.
- Tom Ladd – What he can do for us
  - We need to decide if we are going specifically for the old school, going for another specific existing building or going for general space – this will shape Tom's report.
  - Application of general standards for the library, measure what the community needs here (and through some survey and PR) to help build support in the community for what we want to try to do.
  - Can apply general standards for public libraries to our specific situation
    - What kind of space would be normal for services?
    - What kind of services would be appropriate in a library serving this kind of community?
    - What is and isn't being done”
    - Input from us regarding demand and what we would like to do
  - His rates are \$50/hour, plus mileage (at federal rate) and expenses (specialized printing, etc.).
  - Some typical building program reports have been in the range of \$3,000 to \$5,000 over the process.

- He will probably put in a couple hours reviewing the initial information Sara has provided for him.
- He would like one person designated as a point of contact.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A motion was made (Ruell) and seconded (Staples) to approve the minutes of February 26, 2015. The vote was unanimously in favor 3-0.**

The minutes of Library Trustees meetings are now being posted on the library page of the town website. The minutes of 2013 and 2014 minutes are available, and 2015 minutes will be available going forward.

The unavailability of minutes from Scribner Trustees meetings was mentioned. Mardean at one point in the past had obtained some of their minutes through a Right to Know request. Sara records when she sees the Scribner Trustees come into the building for their meetings; it is typically the first Monday of the month.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- Sara distributed the March library newsletter.
- The final CLiF event is April 15. The storyteller Henry Homeyer will be at the Barnes daycare center (2 daycare groups combined) in the morning and at Ashland Elementary School in the afternoon. There will also be a book giveaway (1 per child) for the daycare children (10-12 children) and for grades K-6 (about 150 children) at the school.
- Sara has asked MVSB if they would consider sponsoring the Science Center pass again. They have done so for about 15 years so far.
- The Friends have submitted a grant to sponsor a Humanities Council program on June 3, 6:30 pm, for the Old Country Fiddler.
- The Friends paid for half of the new edition of "Hooked on Phonics." The remainder was paid through donations (Noreen Crawford).
- Summer programs:
  - July 16, Science Center live animal presentation, "Animals of New Hampshire"
  - August 6, "Robin Hood" play by the Hampstead Players. Rain location will be at the Booster Club.
- The library has been very busy as spring arrives, with 7 new cards since the beginning of the month.
- Computer #4 is still not working properly. Sara will contact Jeff Levesque again.
- Brian Chalmers has indicated that he is too busy to consider heading our building campaign.
- Sara conveyed to a patron the Trustees' decision to not relax the replacement policy for lost DVD's. The patron was displeased and would not consider other alternatives to resolve the situation.
- Sara noted that Steve Heath will be contacting the Scribner Trustees to schedule an inspection of the library building and get access to the locked parts of the building.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

- Income – small refund from Amazon; transferred donation money (Noreen Crawford) to pay for half of “Hooked on Phonics.”
- Expenses – books, audios, videos, 1 magazine subscription, program supplies, stamps, dues for Scrooge & Marley and NHLA, utilities, and cleaning

## OLD BUSINESS

- **Plumbing bill** – have not heard anything since turning the bill over to the Scribner Trustees
- **CDFR** – The Trustees decided to postpone applying for a CDFR planning grant, possibly for the next round. The grant would be due at the end of April, which gives us very little time to pull together. Also, we are still very scattered with our direction, so not sure how successful the grant would be.
- **Policy Review** – We will complete the following policies at the next meeting.
  - **Salary Schedule** – We discussed it at the 11/2013 meeting but no vote was recorded. We have already used it during the budget process. **A motion was made (Ruell) and seconded (Badger) to adopt the salary schedule. The motion passed unanimously 3-0.**
  - **Library Director Evaluation Rubric and Summary forms** – We reviewed and revised the forms on 4/28/14 and 5/20/14; we used the forms this year. We will vote on approval of the policy at the next meeting. ***[provide copy for next meeting]***
  - **Social Media Policy** – The minutes of 5/20/14 make reference to one suggested revision. Sara will update the policy and we will vote on approval of it at the next meeting. ***[provide edited copy for next meeting]***
  - **Overdue Policy** – We discussed the policy at length at the 8/7/14 meeting but never proposed any specific changes. We will continue discussion of it at our next meeting. ***[provide original copy for next meeting]***
  - **Staff Evaluation Form** – The form was mentioned at the 8/7/14 meeting. ***[Sara will bring a copy of it to our next meeting]***
  - **No Bags Upstairs** – At this point it is just a new procedure. Sara will include it in the procedures notebook.
- **Employee Handbook** – Several items were mentioned and Sara will revise the handbook where needed:
  - Related items should be grouped together (such as termination and resignation).
  - Check agreement of notice requirements (# of weeks) in termination and resignation statements.
  - Medical insurance section also references withholding taxes. Distinguish between withholding taxes from paychecks and deduction of health insurance premiums from paychecks.
  - Paydays – Clarify that paychecks can be picked up at the library on Thursday. When Thursday is a holiday, the paychecks will be available at the town office on Wednesday.
  - Timekeeping – add ‘director’ after ‘assistant.’

- Breaks and meal periods – The policy should specify the length of breaks and meals. Check language against labor laws. Norm mentioned that employee should sign a waiver if library procedure differs from labor laws.
- Personal Appearance – Reference is made to ‘dress code policy.’ Locate the policy or we can draft a new one.
- Patron Privacy and Confidentiality – Move this section ahead of the ALA policies and statements.
- Introduction – Change ‘circa 1870’ to ‘19<sup>th</sup> century home.’
- Chain of Command – Revise the last sentence ‘Library Trustees hire and fire all employees....’
- Performance Review – Use ‘evaluated’ instead of ‘rated.’ Use ‘outcome’ instead of ‘ratings.’
- Compare our policies with the town’s policies. (The town’s personnel policy manual is available at the town office.)

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- **2015 Budget Discussion** - We discussed the difference between our original proposed budget and the approved default budget. While the bottom-line difference between the 2 budgets is minimal, we will track our expenditures closely and will compare the default amount with our original request for each category.
  - **A motion was made (Ruell) and seconded (Staples) to approve the \$.25/hour raises for the library employees. The motion passed unanimously 3-0.**
  - **A motion was made (Badger) and seconded (Staples) to approve the letter to the Board of Selectmen outlining payment of the library appropriation for the remaining three quarters of the year: \$5590 (April); \$4790 (July); and \$4640 (October). The motion passed unanimously 3-0.**

### **PUBLIC INPUT**

- Norm DeWolfe reminded us that if we need to draw on the capital reserve account before the end of the year, we must first request that the funds be deposited into the capital reserve account. The funds are usually transferred to the capital reserve account at the end of the year. The letter to request an earlier deposit would go to the Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator and Finance Officer.
- Norm DeWolfe and Sandra Coleman expressed concern about the peeling paint on the window frame directly behind the circulation desk. We have determined that it is lead paint and encouraged the employees to get tested for lead exposure, although no one has done so yet. We recommended that Sara be the first one to be tested. Other building conditions mentioned were water leaking near an air conditioner and past issues with termites.
- The relationship between the Library Trustees and the Scribner Trustees was discussed. Sara noted that the Scribner Trustees seem to meet the first Monday of the month, although meetings are not posted and minutes are not on file in the Town Office.
- The Town Trustees also hold several small Library trust funds. We need to verify whether we have ever received the interest accrued.
- Ownership and insurance arrangements were clarified – The town owns the land and the building. The library owns the contents. The Scribner Trustees insure the building and

land, and they are the beneficiary of that policy. The town insures the contents and employee liability through Primex.

### **HIRING OF PLANNING CONSULTANT**

- We reviewed the proposed services that Tom Ladd could provide for us: prepare a report with data and statistics to show what the library needs are for the town, what a library should be like so we can translate it into a building. Tom would provide us with a formal report to use as part of the public information process for the future of the library. The report will probably cost in the range of \$3,000 to \$5,000. We reviewed the status of three of our funds – Donations, Building Fund, and Patron Fees.
  - **A motion was made (Ruell) and seconded (Badger) to hire Thomas Ladd to produce a planning document for the library and to pay for his services from our Donations account. The motion passed unanimously, 3-0.**

### **UPCOMING DATES**

- **March 24** – Visit to Abbott Library, Sunapee – 10:00 am – David and Mardean will go.
- **April 23** – **Library Trustees Meeting – 6:00 pm, Ashland Town Library**
- **May 18** – NHLTA Conference

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 pm.

*Minutes submitted by Mardean Badger*