

**Joint Meeting – Scribner Trustees and Library Trustees  
May 25, 2020**

**Ashland Town Library  
LIBRARY TRUSTEES' MINUTES**

**Scribner Trustees: Amanda Loud, Susan MacLeod, Lisa Rollins  
Library Trustees: Alice Staples, David Ruell, Mardean Badger  
Library Director: Sara Weinberg  
Members of the Public: Alan Cilley**

The meeting was called to order by Amanda Loud (Scribner Trustee) at 5:27pm. The Ashland Library Trustees and the Ashland Library Director participated in this joint meeting with the Scribner Trustees to discuss the physical state of the building which houses the Ashland Town Library. The meeting was conducted via virtual Zoom video and telephone connection.

Amanda Loud reviewed the transition of the Scribner Trustees' membership, recent changes to Trustee expenses, current status of the Scribner trust, and the need for a long-range plan (maybe 3 years) for sustaining the building and/or the trust.

A variety of issues with the building were discussed, including issues observed by the Scribner Trustees and issues observed by the Library Trustees.

**The Scribner Trustees mentioned the following building issues:**

- Oil tank – repair of the filler tube, age and condition of the tank is needed. State requirements for underground fuel tanks must be investigated.
- Roof – east (front) side replacement; formation of ice dams. Roof is an immediate need.
- Irrigation system
  - Scribner Trustees will not use the irrigation system at this point. They will see if they can find a plan of the system.
  - There is a separate meter for the irrigation system, which is currently shut off.
  - Library Trustees noted that there is no indication that tents on the lawn have resulted in any damage to the system.
- Artifacts in the cabinet upstairs were given to the library.
- Shed – the door is now padlocked; long-range decision needed for use.

**Some general statements/comments that were made by Scribner Trustees throughout the meeting included:**

- Scribner Trustees do not want to spend money on something that might be torn down in a few years, but they may consider some minor repairs.
- Scribner Trustees may consider spending down the money in the trust.
- Scribner Trustees are waiting for the results of the recent inspection of the building by the Building Inspectors.

- Scribner Trustees will not spend funds on making the interior of the building ADA compliant.
- Scribner Trustees are watching the balance of trust, want to cut expenses to make the trust last as long as it will last.
- Scribner Trustees are not sure about market, but want to safeguard the money.
- Scribner Trustees want to put together a long-range plan – maybe 3 years.

**The Library Trustees** compiled and submitted a list of critical building issues (*see attached document*) based on their observations and concerns. The list was discussed by the two groups of Trustees. Comments on the issues included:

Primary Issues

- Rear walkway and handicapped access – The grade of the rear walkway is not ADA compliant.
  - Investigation is needed to determine existing and required grade, expense of correcting the issue, and who could do excavating. Grant sources can be considered.
- Railing on ramp – can be sanded, painted.
- Exterior signage – The ‘Scribner Library’ sign should be removed because it is the ‘Ashland Town Library’. There may be a bronze plaque ‘Scribner Memorial Building’ upstairs that can be used.
- E-911 numbering (41 Main Street) should be fixed right away; add numbers at the front entrance.
- Children’s room windows (vinyl replacement windows) – the windows don’t lock and a few have fallen out of the frames. Is this considered to be a structural issue?
- Kitchen water freezing – Scribner Trustees suggested having a plumber check the dripping faucet and add insulation under the sink.
- Toilet often runs and overflows and is an inefficient household model. Bathroom floor is warped and cracked due to leakage. Scribner Trustees are hesitant on replacing the toilet, but should have plumber to evaluate inexpensive options.
- Water bill – Library Trustees recently received ten-fold increase in bill; still need to investigate the cause. Are there any outside faucets?
- Stairway sprinkler – Fire Department previously mandated a sprinkler system on stairway in order to allow usage of second floor, to provide a safe egress from second floor. Several years ago, the cost estimate was \$1800 for household-type sprinkler. Library Trustees previously offered to pay for it, might still be interested if we could gain use of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor meeting room.
  - Need to reconfirm with the Fire Chief if a stairway sprinkler would still satisfy requirements.
  - Amanda Loud asked if anyone else uses the library. Green Grove Cemetery, Women’s Club, and Garden Club have some records stored in the Library and only access them a few times per year during library hours. These three groups are all independent, non-profit groups (not municipal government groups).

- Second Floor Meeting Room – there are still Town Trustee records (back to 1970s, with some books from 1930s-40s) stored there, so the room is still locked. Once the records are moved to the Town Hall the room can be opened and used, depending on the stairway sprinkler issue.
- Cracked floor tiles by back door – Scribner Trustees are not interested in doing floor work. Maybe could put a carpet (entry mat) over the cracked tiles.
- Maintenance and emergency contacts – will have professionals do any work. The Scribner Trustees are the primary contact.
- Storage space for library use – Winter tools can be stored in basement. Scribner Trustees noted steep, narrow stairs in basement/attic can present liability issues. Should old furniture be stored or kept?
- Old fire alarm siren in attic window, attic window is open year-round. – The old alarm system is disconnected. The window should be closed.
- Tree – rotting tree is potential problem. Susan will investigate estimates for tree removal.
- Shed – door is now locked. Not really suitable for storage.

#### Building Exterior

- Brick foundation deficiencies – waiting on Building Inspectors’ report.
- Storm door in front – Gap at bottom lets in cold air, snow, blowing debris. Properly-fitting door will be discussed by Scribner Trustees.
- Threshold/sill and steps of unused exterior door in children’s room. That door was blocked at Fire Chief’s request as it was not appropriate for a fire exit.
- Bathroom addition separating from main building – will wait for Building Inspectors’ report.
- Front wall of building bowing in – Scribner Trustees will wait for Building Inspectors’ report.

#### Building Interior

- No security alarm – There is only a fire alarm system.
- Sinking floor in stack area – Scribner Trustees will wait for Building Inspectors’ report.
- Restroom handicapped access – Scribner Trustees do not feel it can be readily addressed at this point.
- Peeling paint on ceiling in front of bathroom – seems to be from a previous leak.
  - Library Trustees cautioned against any scraping/sanding of interior paint. A lead paint inspection report in June 2015 determined that much of the interior paint (especially the painted woodwork) is lead-based. Sara will provide a copy of the report for everyone.
- Hole in wall behind folding chairs – wind would blow insulation inside; a board is covering the hole (rough size of 8x11). Near the outside hole in the foundation.
- Wall separated under window in stack area – horsehair plaster and wallpaper; area is soft and hand could be put through it.

Memorandum of Understanding – needs further discussion

## Other General Comments

Scribner Trustees want to work with the BOS & Library Trustees to decide what are we going to do with the building. Scribner Trustees can't support the building. What will happen to building when the trust is gone? All have to work together.

Scribner Trustees will come up with a plan – what we can afford to fix now, what the town can do. We don't want a park – we want to maintain the integrity of having a building.

Scribner Trustee (Susan) – The Library Trustees also have to make a decision, explore other buildings, find out what the cost of a new building is, how to use their capital reserves. If the Library remains here, will their capital reserves become part of taking care of this building? What are we saving this building for if the library moves out?

Library Trustee (Alice) – The BOS needs to be part of this conversation. It is a town building and the town has to provide a library. Could we build on this property and what is the cost?

Scribner Trustee (Amanda) -- By about Sept/Oct, there will be time to come together and put together a proposal. We would all meet to look at our proposal – what needs to be done, prices, state of trust, how long we think we can make it last and we know the library has a capital reserve fund.

Scribner Trustee (Susan) – For the BOS, you have to put together a proposal and have to at least tried to think of all the options and have all the information.

Library Trustee (Mardean) -- At some point, I would like to see the Library Trustees and Scribner Trustees do some brainstorming -- what are all the possibilities that can be attained with this building and property to satisfy all the needs that need to be satisfied? – brainstorm all possible ideas. There are a lot of issues with the building that will impact programs. Put aside all those little nitty-gritty issues for a moment, and do some real creative brainstorming.

Scribner Trustee (Amanda) – The library trustees should do that first, what you can and can't do with your program in that building. The Scribner Trustees will look at it from a financial standpoint.

Library Trustee (Mardean) -- The Library Trustees first, continue with the Scribner Trustees, and then come together before the third level, the BOS.

Scribner Trustee (Lisa) -- Keep in mind the capital reserve funds and the Scribner funds, plus grants or other funding. Remember we have a low budget.

Process – (1) Library Trustees; (2) then Library Trustees plus Scribner Trustees; (3) then all 3 groups, Library Trustees plus Scribner Trustees plus BOS – also involve the community along the way.

Scribner Trustee (Amanda) – By our next meeting (June 8) Scribner Trustees hope to have estimate for tree, Building Inspectors report, put #41 on the building, estimates for toilet, sink, sprinkler, information from Steve Heath about Immediate life safety issues & liability issues. The Scribner Trustees position is the building.

Scribner Trustee (Amanda) -- The 2 groups work Independently first and then come together again in a couple months to look at both groups' drafts & then come together with something reasonable.

Scribner Trustee (Lisa) thanked the former Scribner Trustees for all their work and the helpful letter from Tom with details.

Alan Cilley – I was present during the building inspectors' inspection of the library. They didn't miss a thing. That report is available to you and I'm surprised you don't have it.

Scribner Trustee (Lisa) – Doesn't the BOS have to release it first?

Alan Cilley – The report has 60+ issues deficiencies, with pictures. It was a quirk of fate that I was there. Don't expect any further comings and goings by the building inspectors, as they are no longer with the town.

Discussion re: arranging a viewing of building for Susan, to get the lay of the building.

Library Director & Library Trustee (Sara & Alice) - We need to communicate, so we don't have all people in building at the same time, need to know when employees will be in there.

*Meeting adjourned 7:20.*

*Notes provided by Mardean Badger (with reference to meeting recording)*

**[Attachment]**

## **Issues for discussion with Scribner Trustees regarding the Scribner Building (May 2020)**

The Ashland Town Library Trustees are looking forward to working with the Scribner Trustees in the best interests of the town of Ashland. As we understand, the Scribner Trustees have responsibility for the trust funds, the grounds, and the building on the Scribner property. The Ashland Town Library Trustees have responsibility for library-owned material and the management of the Ashland Town Library.

### **Critical issues that need immediate attention**

- \* Handicapped access and signage – We are not in ADA code compliance. Library trustees have purchased temporary signs to direct people to back walkway and ramp. The walkway is too steep, and needs a hand rail.
- \* Splintered railing on the back ramp
- \* Confusing exterior signage – Sign on front of building says “Scribner Library”, sign on Pleasant St. side of building says “Scribner Center”.
- \* No E-911 number on the building
- \* Children's room - Windows do not lock securely. Some windows have fallen in from window frame.
- \* Kitchen - Freezing of water pipes in kitchen during winter. No insulation in outside wall.
- \* Stairway sprinkler – would enable public use of upper floor as advised by Fire Department.
- \* Cracked floor tiles by the back door – safety hazard
- \* Issues with the toilet running and overflowing. May have caused large water bill for the last month.
- \* Who will do maintenance?
- \* Who is emergency contact?
- \* 2nd floor meeting room for events, collection, leave open?
- \* Storage in basement, attic, 2 meeting room closets (library access to closets)

## **Other Critical Issues**

### **Grounds**

Trees- old ones rotting, new planting?

### **Shed**

Paint

Use?

### **Building exterior**

Shingles on Main Street side of roof

Brick foundation, repointing, damaged sections at the street corner and on east side of restroom addition

Storm door on front porch that does not reach to the floor

The exterior steps to the children's room need paint and show signs of decay.

And, the threshold for that unused door and the billboard under the door are rotting.

Bathroom/back door addition pulling away from the main building

Front wall of building bowing in

### **Building interior**

No security alarm

Stack area sinking floor (termite damage?)

Restroom handicapped access

Peeling paint on the ceiling in front of bathroom

Hole in the wall behind the folding chairs

Wall separated under window in stacks where air conditioner is placed

### **Other issues to discuss**

Memorandum of understanding between trustee boards?

Liaison from one board to the other?