

**Ashland Town Library
Minutes of Library Trustees Meeting
August 6, 2020**

**Trustees Present: Alice Staples, David Ruell, Mardean Badger
Others Present: Sara Weinberg, Library Director**

The meeting was called to order at 2:16 PM via a virtual Zoom meeting.

The Library Trustees and the Library Director discussed issues being brought up by the Scribner Trustees in relation to the Scribner trust and the property.

The Scribner Trustees are considering the dissolution of the Scribner Trustees and turning over the remainder of the trust fund to the Library Trustees. There are many questions regarding the process to do that, the parties that would be involved (court, voters, etc.), the monetary status of the trust and so on.

So far, the Library Trustees have not had any input into the future of the property and the trust.

- If we do not have control of the property and/or the trust, we still need to consider what we need for the future of the Library program and continue to look for a suitable site for a new library. (Note: the Ladd report provides guidance on space needs.)
- If we do get control of the property and/or the trust, we need to evaluate the condition (and costs) of the current building, and any other options we might have for the property. We would also need to know the legal extent of our authority to make decisions about the building. For example, would we have the ability to make decisions about the best use of the property for the library or would the park restriction of the will still be in force? If we gain full control of the property, we would then have major decisions to discuss, including: (1) Do we continue to search for another building and site? (2) Do we repair and renovate the current building without any addition, which would still not meet the needs of the library? (3) Do we build an addition and renovate the existing building? (4) Do we build a new library on the lot and then tear down the old building?

On August 30, 2019, the Library Trustees sent a letter to the Board of Selectmen regarding the status of the Scribner trust and the potential impact on the Ashland Town Library. A response was never received from the Board of Selectmen.

“ . . . The Library Trustees propose a roundtable meeting to have a discussion and formulate a course of action for a solution. We would like this to be a substantive discussion of information and exchange of ideas among the Library Trustees, the Board of Selectmen, the Town Manager, and the Scribner Trustees. We would also like this to be a separate posted evening meeting to accommodate the public and have the meeting videotaped for public broadcast. We would like the support and assistance of the Board of Selectmen in arranging this discussion for this fall. . . ”

The Library Trustees expressed their intent to attend the next Scribner Trustees meeting on August 10 to observe the Scribner Trustees discussion of their next steps.

At some point after the August 10 Scribner Trustees meeting, the Library Trustees discussed re-sending the August 30, 2019, letter with a new cover letter to express our concern about the legal issues around the seemingly-rushed process for dissolving the Scribner trust, the condition of the existing building and to note that a discussion among all the involved parties (with the addition of legal advice) is even more important now.

Because the Scribner Trustees seem to be making decisions rapidly, we discussed needing information about the stability and longevity of the current building and needing that information relatively soon. Alice is communicating with a contractor to evaluate the building.

NEXT MEETING

- August 18, 2020 at 6:30 PM – Library Trustees meeting via Zoom

The meeting was adjourned at 2:57 PM.

Minutes submitted by Mardean Badger