

**Ashland Town Library  
Minutes of Library Trustees Meeting  
April 22, 2021**

**Trustees Present: Alice Staples, David Ruell, Mardean Badger; Kathleen DeWolfe (alternate)**

**Others Present: Sara Weinberg, Library Director; Lisa Rollins**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM via a Zoom virtual meeting.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A motion was made (Staples) and seconded (Ruell) to approve the minutes of March 18, 2021 and March 30, 2021. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote, 3-0.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- The Friends of the Library met recently. They accepted a \$1,000 donation for outside furniture. They approved the purchase of 4 Adirondack chairs, are considering a picnic table, and have added some outside decorations. They have also purchased the annual Science Center Pass.
- Sara submitted the application for a line of credit with Amazon. Due to Amazon's and Equifax's difficulty in verifying the library's address, the approval is still on hold.
- Sara reported that our hosted catalog system is being moved from a server to a cloud and will be unavailable from April 30 to May 2. The Trustees agreed to close the library on May 1 while the system is down.
- The back doorbell, which has not worked for years, was repaired by Lisa.
- The State Library is offering a group discount (\$200 instead of \$600) for a virtual 6-week summer reading program, which will include story time and crafts. The library will be putting together the craft kits for the programs.
- Building Maintenance -- The Ashland DPW, on rainy days, has started some of our inside repair projects – repairing the children's room window locks, and starting repair of the falling horsehair plaster and ceiling water damage.
- Sara discussed some goals for technology and computer upgrades, including Chrome Books (about \$250 each) and/or laptops for patron and staff use, replacing old computers (at least 2 staff desktops and 1 public computer), replacing printer/copier, upstairs hot spot, etc. None of the library computers have camera capability. She will be developing a plan for technology upgrades, including some items which would be considered immediate needs and some long term needs, using funds from our budget technology line, the technology fund and grants.
- Because we currently do not have an IT consultant, the library staff has been doing most of our basic computer and software setup, which is very time consuming. We have received a recommendation for a technology consultant, Bill Powers, who is also a library trustee in Hebron.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

- The town appropriation has been received.

- The monthly treasurer's report will be available next week, as an addendum to these minutes.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- **Trustee Training**
  - Kathleen DeWolfe reported that she is attending the trustees training sessions being offered by the NHLTA – 3 preliminary mini-webinars and the virtual conference. Topics include laws and responsibilities, policies, budgeting, rules of procedure, etc.
    - Sara will work out a method to share policies with Kathleen.
    - The *NHLTA Guide for Library Trustees* is available to download from the NHLTA website --  
<https://www.nhlta.org/ckfinder/userfiles/files/2016%20Manual%20Combi ned.pdf>
- **Internet Upgrade**
  - The library has received the internet upgrade proposal from Spectrum. The upgrade to 200MB service will be \$59.99 per month (\$719.88). Sara will contact the Spectrum representative to discuss installation process, etc. We previously approved the upgrade to 200MB.
- **Design Planning, Ward D'Elia**
  - Sara met with Ward today and toured inside and outside of the library with him. He hopes to have a plan by October. He would like to see the new survey when conducted; he also needs the building inspector's report from last year and our minutes from March 30.
- **150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Continuing Ideas**
  - One library, instead of burying a time capsule, placed a special box on an upper shelf.
  - The Library moved to the Scribner building on September 9. A September weekend might be a time to celebrate, and we might also be able to update on building plans from Ward D'Elia. We could also re-dedicate the library.
  - An outdoor covered space/gazebo would be useful for outdoor programs.
- **Survey of Property**
  - We will check with Tony Randall to see if he needs anything else from us.
- **Lawn Sprinkler System**
  - The condition of the lawn is very poor this year. The in-ground sprinkler system covers just the back lawn, with about 3 sprinkler heads. Every year there are repairs to the system; the last sprinkler head in line is the one which regularly fills with sand. This year we prefer using hoses to water the lawn; we will check on faucets and hoses.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Library Space Planning**
  - Sara will order/download the book: *Library Space Planning; a PLA Guide* by David Vinjamuri.

- **Return to Meeting in Person**
  - We had a lengthy discussion about meeting in person. The primary questions are: when will we start meeting in person? and where will we meet?
  - The normal rule is that a quorum of a board must meet in person, while the remaining members of the board can meet virtually. The governor still has not rescinded his order that allows for boards to meet totally virtually. We don't know when this change will happen. If the governor rescinds his order, we will have to determine where we will physically meet.
  - Our only large, handicapped accessible space is the children's room, if we move the furniture out. If the library is still not fully open, would our meeting in person in the children's room jeopardize the health and safety of the staff and patrons?
  - If the library is still limiting patron usage of the library, we should also limit our usage of the space.
  - Zoom is still a viable method of meeting, providing flexibility for the public.
  - The Water and Sewer conference room is available, provides additional space and the connectivity issues are being resolved. Cleaning and air purification in that room is not necessarily satisfactory. Meeting in that room does not provide easy access to library files that might be needed during a meeting.
- **Vandalism and Security**
  - Recent vandalism (discovered on April 19) at the library included trash, craft kits and free pantry food dumped all over in the entry porch, some ruined books, and cooking oil poured on the front granite steps. The DPW spent considerable time degreasing and steam cleaning the steps; the slipperiness was eliminated, but stains remain on the granite.
  - The incident was reported to the police and will be reported to Primex.
  - Sara will contact the company which installed our interior cameras, and get recommendations for location of exterior cameras, type of storage, and costs. There are no additional slots on our storage DVR, but cloud storage is now a possibility and will be investigated for both indoor and outdoor cameras. We'll also get an estimate for cameras on the second floor.
  - We will investigate ways to secure our new outdoor furniture or we may wait until outdoor security cameras are in place.
- **Library Financial Controls**
  - We discussed Item #4 from the town auditors' questions and comments from the 2019 audit and an appropriate response. David will draft a response and forward to Katherine Davis, Ashland Financial Officer.
- **ARPA Grant**
  - As part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), libraries in New Hampshire are eligible for grant funds being distributed through the NH State Library. Priorities are to assist libraries in reaching residents through digital means, emergency relief to respond to the pandemic, and to support library services which meet the needs of the community.
  - The first round of grants consists of a pre-determined amount allotted for each library. Ashland Town Library's allotment is \$2,907 and an application must be submitted to explain how the money will be spent. Further information from the State Library will be forthcoming when the funds are released.

- Some technology that we might consider include internet upgrades, hot spots, more digital content and streaming services.
- A second round of funding (larger amounts available) will be a competitive grant round.
- **USDA Rural Development Grants & Loans**
  - These grants and loans will be valuable sources to investigate for funding our future building development. The small size of our rural community and our median family income provide favorable financial benefits.

### **NEXT MEETING**

- May 20, 2021 – Library Trustees – 6:00 PM

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM.

*Minutes submitted by Mardean Badger*

### **Addendum, April 26, 2021, Treasurer's Report:**

*“Since March 18, we have bought books and videos and 2 subscriptions. Two water & sewer bills, two telephone bills (the regular bill and the fire alarm bill) and one cleaning bill were paid, as was a fuel oil bill for \$923. Supplies and program supplies were purchased. Two closet lights were bought for about \$40. The annual inspection of the fire extinguishers cost \$47. Four commemorative plates were purchased from the Ashland Historical Society for \$40. We also paid \$309 to the Park Street Foundation for the movie license fee, which will be for an extended period of time from July 1, 2021 through the end of 2022. On the income side, the General Fund received the Town Appropriation of \$9605 and a 1 cent refund from Amazon. Other funds saw increases - \$40 in donations to the Building fund, \$113 in general donations, \$80 in copy fees and \$20 for a patron fee.”*