

WHITING LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes – December 14, 2021

Trustees Present: Robert Nied, Ed Grossman, David Lord, Rosamund Conroy and Cathy Hasbrouck via Zoom Teleconference.

Citizens Present Deirdre Doran at the Whiting Library.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Robert Nied, Chair, at 8:30 AM on the Zoom platform.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Ed Grossman reported that the Town Clerk of Andover would like the library to provide a write up for the Andover Town Report. Robert said the issue could be taken up as part of the budget discussion or the Treasurer's report.

Robert Nied asked to add a brief discussion about a possible mask mandate for the Town of Chester to the agenda.

APPROVE NOVEMBER 9, 2021 MINUTES

There were no changes to the minutes proposed. A motion (David, Ed) to approve the minutes was made, seconded and approved.

DIRECTOR/YOUTH SERVICES REPORT

Deirdre Doran gave the highlights from the report she had sent to the Trustees the previous week:

- The Strategic Planning Committee had met twice. A draft Strategic Plan has been started and is available on Google Docs via a share from Deirdre.
- She has finished the reporting for the ALA grant for community outreach.
- She has been buying things with the funds from the ARPA funding the town received.
- Whiting Library received the funding from the ARLS grant to cover a fine-free trial in 2022 and pay off existing fines.
- The library expanded its collection of books by native American authors as part of celebrating Native American Heritage month.
- The Association of Vermont Organic Farmers had two on-line presentations by native Vermonters that Deirdre publicized via the library's social media outlets.
- Youth Services librarian Carrie King featured the themes of gratitude and Native American Heritage in the crafts she presented for November.
- Carrie has been doing story time in the community room since it has been a relatively small crowd. She is planning on using a reservation system if attendance rises past the capacity of the room.
- Deirdre has given Carrie her performance review. Deirdre said Carrie has been doing a great job and encouraged her to continue. They agreed to set some goals for Carrie to learn more of Deirdre's and Will's job so that she could fill in if needed. Carrie also had suggestions for projects in the Children's room. Carrie said she enjoyed her job.

Deirdre added that the Strategic Planning Committee had agreed on a mission, vision and values statement at the last meeting, which will be shown to the full board. Deirdre said she had a lot of notes on the draft to integrate and the committee will go through the changes at their next meeting on January 12th.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Ed discussed several accounts which were over or under budget and gave reasons for the variances. He said that the anticipated \$3,120 draw to cover health benefits had not yet been taken. Expenses in 2021 have been about \$3,000 less than budgeted. There has been an additional \$1,200 expense for the Kindful program which was not part of the original budget. Ed and Cil Mathews have decided how to record the \$4,300 grant to pay off fines in 2021 and 2022. He recommended that the trustees consider drawing \$3,120 from the Preservation Fund to address a potential \$8,100 deficit in the 2021 fiscal year. Robert suggested that the draw be addressed after the executive session to discuss the budget. Ed agreed.

Ed noted the Preservation Fund value had dropped \$6,000 since the last Board of Trustees meeting, but the fund was up \$11,000 for the year.

The November 2021 fund drive has brought in \$3,634 so far.

Deirdre confirmed that she is writing reports for both Chester and Andover to be included in those town's Town Reports. She will send copies to the Board for confirmation before sending them to Chester and Andover.

A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report (Cathy, Rosamund) was made, seconded and approved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION TO FINALIZE STAFF COMPENSATION FOR 2022

A motion to enter executive session (David, Cathy) was made, seconded and approved at 8:52 AM.

The Board returned from executive session at 10:05 AM.

Ed Grossman summarized the budget agreed to, \$134,686 in both income and expenses. This is an increase of \$19,000 over the 2021 budget. The increase was primarily the cost of health benefits for the employees. The telephone budget increased by \$400 and the fee for Kindful, \$1200 had not been included, but will be added to the budget.

A motion (Cathy, Rosamund) to present the proposed budget to the Chester Selectboard was made, seconded and approved. Robert thanked Ed for all his work on the budget.

A motion (Cathy, Rosamund) to authorized the Treasurer to withdraw up to \$3,120 from the Preservation Fund in the event the fundraising campaign falls short of covering expenses was made, seconded, modified to include getting the Chair's signature for the withdrawal, and approved.

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE REPORT

The report was deferred until Lyza Gardner could attend the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

The Trustees agreed to form a committee to assist and support the library director in developing new programs. Robert Nied, Ed Grossman and Rosamund Conroy agree to serve as members of the committee. The Trustees decided a motion was not necessary for this action.

Robert Nied recapped the current situation in Vermont about mask mandates. He asked the other Trustees how they felt about a mask mandate for the libraries. Rosamund said the library has had a mask mandate for the past 2 months and felt it was appropriate. Cathy said this wave of COVID cases has impacted people around her much more than the previous wave and was in favor of masking at the library to protect the staff and patrons. David Lord was also in favor of masking. Ed Grossman noted that there was a poll in the Chester Telegraph that shows a nearly even split among readers between those who wanted a mandate and those who did not. Robert said he would support a mask mandate for the town. He did not feel the library trustees should weigh in with a formal statement on the issue.

OLD BUSINESS

Robert said there was a vacancy for a trustee which needs to be filled. Kathy Poston has expressed interest in the position. She is going to run for the position and not ask to be appointed.

David Lord asked about the year-end gift from Trustees to the library staff. Rosamund suggested that an e-mail be sent informally for that purpose.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There being no members of the public present, there was no public comment.

David Lord moved to adjourn the meeting. Rosamund Conroy seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Hasbrouck, Secretary