

Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Jones and Town Libraries
Trustees' Room
December 13, 2008

Present: Molly Turner, Pat Holland, Chris Hoffmann, Louis Greenbaum, Ann Grose, Kathy Wang.

Also present: Bonnie Isman, Susan Hugus, Tina Swift

The meeting was called to order at 2:06 p.m.

Mr. Greenbaum complimented Ms. Turner on her published letter to the editor.

The Trustees discussed the previous minutes' draft. Louis Greenbaum added :

[Typed copy.] Ms. Platt described the work of volunteers in her department from the Mt. Holyoke/Simmons Graduate Library Studies program and Mr. Greenbaum asked if there might be similar apprenticeship opportunities in the various departments of the Jones and that such a collaboration might work well for both institutions. Ms. Platt accepted this as a useful idea and offered to pursue possibilities.

Motion: To accept the above addition to the previous minutes as presented by Mr. Greenbaum. Motion by Pat Holland, seconded by Chris Hoffmann. Vote: Unanimous.

Ms. Grose had comments regarding the minutes of the last meeting: She asked the meaning of Ms. Anaya's 'holds from other libraries are a burden.' Ms. Isman suggested changing 'are a burden' to 'computer systems create more work.' Ms. Grose asked can other librarians work with Tevis Kimball in Special Collections? She also asked what Maggie Spiegel meant when she said she had more time for more collection development when at the Jones Library. Ms. Isman explained that collection development is not only adding, but also withdrawing items from the collection, specifically in North Amherst and Maggie could speak with other librarians when she works at the Jones Library.

Why can't a volunteer do the children's story hour in North Amherst (rather than the Jones' Children's Room person.) Ms. Isman said that there is currently no volunteer to do that, so Sondra Radosh sends her staff person weekly in order to help out.

Ms. Grose asked if there is a limit to the number of holds one person can put on their record. The limit is 20 requests and this cannot be restricted at the Amherst level because it's directed by the CWMars collaboration. Ms. Grose asked about substitute librarians and where they come from. Ms. Isman explained that they often have full time jobs at other libraries, but have agreed to work for the Jones on a part time, infrequent basis. Ms. Grose also asked, 'Could volunteers help people with computers, rather than the reference librarians?' Ms. Turner said she thought the Jones should use volunteers for this purpose. Ms. Grose asked if the Space Needs Committee would consider more than the front hall. Ms. Isman responded that the committee has listed bottlenecks in the building and Ms. Ruth Levine met with the Committee and she had them think about the

message a patron receives when first entering the Library. Currently, the Committee feels the front entrance should be formal with a welcoming message and de-cluttered, with the side entrance a place for the teens to hang out while waiting for rides and reading the bulletin boards. Also, on Monday, some dvd's will be moved to where the magazines are displayed in the atrium area.

Mr. Greenbaum commented that the universities are currently out of the periodical business. He thinks the Jones does impart a magnificent reception and communicates a friendliness and openness. Ms. Turner praised the Emily Dickinson dvd which she had just seen. One of those participants commented to Ms. Turner that 'the Jones is just the best place.'

Ms. Turner will be writing a column for the next newspaper. She asked if any of the trustees would be willing to write a column of 650 words. Ms. Turner's stated goal is to inform the public of the Library's needs because the Library cannot continue to sustain cuts. Mr. Greenbaum suggested a letter from the Administration extolling the virtues of the Jones Library.

Sue Hugus spoke next. She spoke of the passing of Mr. Homer Cowles. His son, Andrew, had told Ms. Hugus that Mr. Cowles had 'thought the world' of the South Amherst Library. She noted that South Amherst had the first library in the Town of Amherst. At first, a patron had to subscribe and pay to use the library, but this library association preceded the Amherst College library as well. Ms. Hugus noted that her library operates with 1.4 people and, in her opinion, it's the smallest cost of any department to the Town. Ms. Hugus said her library has processed 77,000 transactions since last January and this includes her working 4 hours a week at the Jones Library. She spoke of how the community values her library and the branches serve special populations, such as the parent with an autistic child, or children who had never been to a library. She asked the Trustees to remember that the branches are part of the Jones Library. She noted that Thelma Issacs had bequeathed \$26,000 for the Munson Memorial Library (and another \$26,000 to the Jones) and she asked the Trustees to remember that this woman expected the Munson to remain open. Ms. Turner highlighted this philosophical issue of use of bequests. Ms. Hugus added to the discussion by saying, '...we love the Library and my staff work very hard.'

Ms. Wang noted that the history of both branches make them important to preserve. When Ms. Hugus gave some more history, including the moving of a memorial garden from the Bangs Community Center to the Munson Memorial Library garden, Ms. Wang suggested library tours.

Ms. Hugus spoke of her outreach to the community. There was discussion of Library tables in the schools' open house. Ms. Hugus is buying elementary school science books to augment her students' school work.

Mr. Greenbaum asked "for the unconverted," why the Munson should remain open. Ms. Hugus said the Munson is the only public service in So Amherst and many of those

taxpayers feel left out of public services. Ms. Wang said the Town's budget cannot be balanced by closing a branch, or even by closing all three libraries.

Chris Hoffmann suggested that Ms. Hugus write a column for the newspaper about the Munson Memorial Library. Ms. Holland volunteered to help.

Ms. Turner said she was very pleased with the reports from the Jones Library's department heads. She stated, "We are grateful."

Mr. Greenbaum said, 'The Munson is not a library in South Amherst, it is a library *for* South Amherst.' Ms. Turner said, 'We are passionate about keeping our branches.' Mr. Hoffman will assist Ms. Holland in writing a column about the Munson.

Treasurer's report. As of today: \$6,262,813.18. This is up from Dec. 4 by about \$80,000. The investments are slowly coming up.

Since the Library has implemented cash registers, at the behest of the Town Accounting Department, the collection of fines is lower. This delays the whole checkout process and often people delay paying their fines. Ms. Turner said, "We are public service and our mission is to bring access to information and efficiencies don't do that." Mr. Greenbaum said, "We must think outside the box when talking about money."

Director's Report. Ms. Isman updated the corporate resolution for Vanguard. The Town Manager has decided to close all Town offices on Friday, Jan. 2. Therefore, the Library will be closed then as well.

Ms. Turner requested that Maintenance Supervisor, George Hicks, come to the January trustees' meeting. Ms. Turner wants to reapproach the Capital Planning Committee with a list of building needs. Mr. Greenbaum said he has not seen any requests for CPAC money. Ms. Isman said the roof needs \$50,000 of repair and energy efficient windows will require \$200,000. Mr. Greenbaum requested a preliminary request for CPAC funds. Tevis Kimball wants an HVAC study regarding better equipment for the care and storage of documents.

The group discussed the organizational chart. The group heard from Ms. Swift who spoke of her department which is the main office. Since the Trustees' first budget cut for FY09 was \$7,000 for "extra help" in the Office, Ms. Swift must now function as the receptionist for a minimum of 17 hours per week (and 22 hours the current week due to other's illness). She noted that she now spends 40 minutes per day reconciling the four cash drawers for the Town registers.

Ms. Turner requested a copy of the former fine policy for reconsideration in January. The Trustees' budget guidelines must wait for the next meeting. Ms. Isman asked, do the Trustees want a 2% level funded budget for 2010? Ms. Turner wants a level services, not level funded budget. Ms. Isman reminded the group that level services means no service (and the Library would be closed) on Monday which is currently funded by private donations.

Motion: The Jones Library Trustees request a level services budget proposal for FY2010. Motion made by Ann Grose, seconded by Kathy Wang. Vote: Unanimous.

Mr. Greenbaum said, "Others will say, 'You should be happy with a two percent increase.'" Ms. Wang and Turner requested a list of privately funded services. Ms. Isman will provide this list. Mr. Greenbaum said, "It is expected that the Library goes out with a tin cup" soliciting donations.

Committee Reports: There is a binder copy of the Facilitation CC report in Ms. Isman's office. Mr. Hoffmann pointed to the chart showing the public's preference.

Ms. Isman provided follow up information on self check out library equipment.

The *fundraising* total is \$16,166.87. Ms. Isman stated that this is less than last year, but this year's mailing went out very late due to the direct mail service.

Personnel Board: The health insurance amount should remain the same with some increase in co-payments (Pat Holland)

250th: Calendars are for sale, A to Z book is in the works. A meeting to discuss the dedication of the Robert Frost Room with Tevis will take place next week. A float for the Library would be nice for the 250th parade.

Friends of the Jones Library(Hoffmann): Amherst Books is picking up some of the Jeffery Amherst Bookstore's assistance to the Friends

Ms. Wang suggested sending a fundraising letter to Home Depot.

Ms. Isman requested that the trustees review the revisions to the Borrowers' Policy.

Ms. Holland will not be able to attend the Jan. 6th trustees meeting at the North Amherst Library.

By consensus: **Postpone the January 6th meeting until January 13, 2009** at the North Amherst Library.

The trustees will create a warrant article for a specific purpose (restore Monday afternoons at the Jones, etc.)

Ms. Wang suggested making an earlier presentation to the Finance Committee.

Mr. Greenbaum wants to keep the fines at the Library, rather than turn them over to the Town as is the current practice.

The meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Grose, Clerk
Tina Swift, Transcriptionist

N.B.: The meeting following the January 13 meeting will be held on January 20, 2009.