

Minutes of the Town of Amherst Libraries and the Jones Library, Inc.
January 12, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. in the Trustees' Room of the Jones Library

Present: Sarah McKee, Patricia Holland, Louis Greenbaum, Carol Gray at 9:00 p.m.

Also Present: Bonnie Isman, Library Director; Tina Swift, Library Business Manager; Carolyn Platt, Technical Services Dept. Head; Rosemary Loomis, Reference Head; Lynne Weintraub, ESL Coordinator and some ESL tutors; Beth Girshman, Adult Services Librarian; Tevis Kimball, Curator; Maggie Spiegel, North Amherst Librarian; Sondra Radosh, Children's Librarian; the Public and the Press.

Absent: Chris Hoffmann, Kathy Wang.

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. Consideration of the Minutes was postponed.
Public Comment: Adele Levine, an ESL tutor is very disturbed that the ESL Coordinator might be eliminated or the program cut back. She also leads Conversation Circles (funded by an LSTA grant which is ending) which serve many different students. Another ESL tutor (who has tutored for four years) said this is the only service the Library gives to the tutored students and it only costs about \$400 per student. She thinks the program is most valuable in the summer, when Lynne is not working due to budget cutbacks. She thinks it's a valuable service that the Library provides. Lynne got an email from the Czech Republic from someone trying to make European libraries more welcoming of immigrants. This woman ran across the Jones ESL program and she is using it as a 'best practices' model. Linda Wentworth (Leverett Library Director) is concerned about her colleagues working in an inadequately staffed building.

Woodbury Bequest: Sarah McKee told the group that Mrs. Woodbury was a resident of Shutesbury and often used the books on tape in later years when her eyesight was failing. This is a very generous gift (\$283,521), the use of which will be directed by the Friends of the Jones Library. Due to this restriction, a new account must be opened.

Motion: Be it hereby resolved that any of the following officers, to wit, Patricia G. Holland, Chris Hoffmann of this Corporation, be, and they hereby are, fully authorized and empowered to transfer as follows:

Withdraw \$283,521 and transfer to a new account to be established with New England Capital through TD Ameritrade, titled The Jones Library, Inc. Woodbury Gift Account. Motion by: Sarah McKee, second by Patricia Holland.

Mr. Greenbaum says the Friends do not have anything to do with the Jones Library's fiduciary responsibility and he requests the family's attorney be contacted. He knew the Woodburys and they may have not known of the Board of Trustees (who are publicly elected). Mr. Greenbaum proposes that we find out if Mrs. Woodbury knew of the existence of the Board of Trustees and he respectfully requested a query of Attorney Hart in order that this be a truly unrestricted gift to the Jones Library, and not under the direction of the Friends. Ms. Gray asked if the Trustees could discern the rate of earning of this money in the endowment as compared to the fund that Ms. McKee was proposing shifting the money to. Ms. Gray expressed concern about moving a large sum of money to a money market account or other lower interest rate account, rather than keeping it in a higher interest account such as the endowment. Ms. McKee suggested continuing to segregate the money and she volunteered to query Atty. Hart. Atty. Hart is not the Trustee of the Trust, but he can put us in contact with the maker of the

trust. Mr. Greenbaum noted that the purposes of the Trustees are different from that of the Friends of the Jones Library and he feels that putting this money into the endowment would safeguard the life of this gift. Ms. Gray asked if the Trustees could discern the rate of earning of this money. Mr. Greenbaum noted that the Friends of the Library are a very important group to the Library and he thought the Trustees might ask the Friends if they really want to take on the administration of these kinds of funds. Ms. Gray noted that the Friends don't typically fund things like staffing, such as hiring a Director of Development, or funding something like a geothermal system. Ms. Isman will provide the Friends' bylaws to Ms. McKee.

Vote: Motion withdrawn by Ms. McKee.

Ms. McKee agreed to contact Atty. Hart, and Ms. Gray said she would like to join the discussion, suggesting the conversation with Attorney Hart could be with him on a speaker phone.

FY11 Budget: Consideration of the document: Sourcesendowment 1/12/10. At the bottom there are calculations for the distribution of the endowment. Currently, the spending rate of distribution is 5.4% which is \$420,000 as of November. Due to good performance of the invested funds, it's possible to add \$10,000 (three year average) or \$18,000 (a five year average). Bob Saul, Finance Committee, said the Finance Committee think it's great that the Trustees are 'taking the bull by the horns' and making 'concrete, Draconian cuts.' Bob Saul says the Trustees are falling into a trap that past performance is an indicator of future performance. He alluded to the market's falling again and advised the Trustees to move to cash. Mr. Greenbaum asked Bob Saul how the Trustees could share the expenses with the Town and Mr. Saul would not speak to that. Mr. Saul noted that T Bills are yielding almost four percent, 'which is not a bad number.' He suggested advising Gage-Wiley of this.

Motion: To use the three year average at the 5.4% level which is \$430,230 of income from the endowment . Motion by Carol Gray, second by Patricia Holland.

Discussion: Ms. Gray stated the Trustees are being fiscally responsible, raising money with the Annual Fund, etc. "This is not the year to drop to 4%. "Ms. Holland said Ms. Gray makes a good case." Ms. Gray suggested a gradual decline beginning next year. Mr. Greenbaum noted that 'all of our financial advisors have warned us of the dangers of using more than 5%.' He feels it is ill advised to attack the corpus of the endowment, because the tendency is too easy to take it from the endowment. Mr. Greenbaum asked if that is what the Trustees want – to endanger the endowment, or to adopt a figure which is unpalatable to everyone. Ms. Holland said the newest bequest will add to the endowment, and for that reason feels more comfortable in using the 5.4% figure. Mr. Greenbaum said using 5.4% eats into the solvency of the Library. Ms. McKee noted that there are approximately 18,000 Library card holders who use the Library. Ms. McKee would like to build a Library email list asking for a monthly donation. Ms. McKee would be in favor of using less than 5.4% while pursuing donations very aggressively. Ms. Isman noted that the general public would not be welcoming to the idea of the Library spending less from the endowment this year.

Vote: 4 ayes. Motion passed Unanimously with two absent.

This vote brings the figure to \$430,230. It seems likely that we will receive certification. State funding is uncertain but the cuts seem to be directed to the regional library systems. The deliveries will continue but many of the WRMLS staff will be losing their jobs so there would be no supervisors for the delivery people or any way to repair trucks. The budget plan calls for \$36,451 in state aid. Ms. Isman asked if the Trustees wished to use all of this money or save some as a buffer.

Motion: To use \$30,000 of state aid. Motion by Carol Gray. When Ms. Holland suggested instead using \$36,451, Ms. Gray withdrew her motion agreeing with Ms. Holland.

Motion: To use \$36,451 in state aid. Motion by P. Holland, second by Ms. Gray. Vote: Unanimously passed.

There is \$22,185 intended for the North Amherst Library remaining in the Holland Fund. Ms. Gray said it was her understanding that that money was donated with the intent that it be used for an addition and refurbishing of the North Amherst Library. [Update: Most of the gift has been spent on renovations at the donor's request.]

The current Annual Fund total: \$50,530.09 (expenses have been taken out). Ms. Gray expressed thanks to Copy Cat for donating approximately \$1,000 in an in-kind donation. Mrs. Shafie's mother had participated in the ESL program. Ms. Isman told the group that another \$5,000 can be added to the fundraising estimate by utilizing lost item fees.

Looking at the tiered cuts, Ms. Gray suggested restoring for Plan A restoring the Special Collections Asst., the ESL Coordinator, and she wants to keep the branches open. Ms. Isman pointed out that Item b, eliminating COLA for admin/prof staff, is about \$20,000, the exact amount to be determined. Lynne Weintraub introduced Kitse, a high school student, who had held a car wash and is organizing a football tournament to raise funds. Some of those funds will go to the ESL program. Ms. Platt objected to cutting her staff but Ms. Isman talked about having less processing work due to buying fewer items.

Motion: Cut items a through d in Tier 1 to reach a level services budget using 5.4% of the income which brings the cuts to \$35,382. Motion by Carol Gray. Second: None. Ms. Holland suggested the Trustees hold off on motions and instead just discuss suggestions so the meeting proceeded in that manner.

In order to achieve Tier 2 cuts, another \$19,552 needs to be eliminated. Ms. Gray suggested cutting 2/3 of the Office Assistant's position, which would leave \$8,748 of that position in Tier 2. Ms. Swift pointed out that this would change it from a benefited position to hourly.

Another \$85,000 needs to be eliminated to get to tier 3. Ms. Gray suggested getting to the Tier 3 cuts (\$85,834) by using:

- 1) the rest of the Tier One cuts that weren't used previously (letters e-i, with letter g being what was left of g after the Tier 2 cut, namely \$8,748);
- 2) all of the tier two cuts (none of which had to be cut under the revised Tier 2 suggested above).
- 3) letters o and r of the proposed Tier 3 cuts;
- 4) \$8,000 that had previously been put in the Endowment last summer after being left over from that closing fiscal year;
- 5) \$4,000 that was offered by Tevis Kimball from a donation that would be specifically for the Assistant Curator position (letter t);
- 6) \$203 cut from position p, which remains otherwise intact.

There seemed to be general agreement on achieving Tier 1, 2 and 3 in this manner, but no agreement was reached regarding how to achieve Tier 4 cuts. Ms. Isman suggested she and Ms. Gray could confer to revise the cuts chart according to the proposals Ms. Gray made. On Ms. Holland's suggestion, it was decided that no votes would be taken that night and the final votes would be postponed until after Ms. Isman met with the staff and until the next meeting when more trustees were likely to be present.

Mr. Greenbaum advocates closings of the Library along with the staff cuts. Ms. Isman noted this scenario does not have any closing of hours because the Board of Trustees objected to closing any hours. Ms. Gray said for Tier 3: Cut all of Tier 1, all of Tier 2, and cut items o and r from Tier 3. Need to find another \$12,000 more. Cut t and p. Mr. Greenbaum does not want to vote on cuts unless there is a clear picture that the Library staff can operate without closings. Ms. Holland agreed that the cut vote should be postponed. Ms. Girshman said she believes most of the professional staff believes that the Library must close for some hours. Mr. Greenbaum feels that there must be a balance of cutting hours along with cutting staff people. Ms. Swift commented that delaying approval of the budget means that Ms. Isman will not have to issue layoff notices immediately but can, if necessary, wait till the Trustees approve a final budget that might include such personnel cuts.

CPAC Proposals: Bids for exterior painting and insulation for the North Amherst Library were discussed. It was noted that there was a large difference in estimates. There needs to be more restoration, but that is not in the proposal for \$12,000 that we hope CPAC will fund. Mr. Greenbaum suggested bringing (on Jan. 21) a detailed budget for any requests for money from CPAC. The Trustees asked Ms. Isman to bring the proposal to the CPAC. Ms. Gray initially suggested Ms. Isman mention the possibility of the Library converting to geothermal power in the future, which might make the HVAC system obsolete, but it was decided this was premature to raise with CPAC now.

HVAC Proposal: Mr. Greenbaum said CPAC is prepared to receive another proposal for fixing the current HVAC system. In 2008, Ms. Isman got an estimate of \$27,000, but from an unsatisfactory company. She is hoping to get a new estimate from Grodsky (our current HVAC maintenance company). CPAC authorized \$15,000 for a study of roof repairs and emergency roof repairs. \$5,000 has been spent for the first part of emergency repairs and we have spent \$3,000 for the study for the roof. The remainder of that \$15,000 has not yet been spent but would be put toward the overall cost of the roof repair, estimated to be approximately \$50,000.

Ms. Gray set up an energy audit of the Jones Library which happened earlier today. She reported that the last audit done of the building was more than 10 years ago in 1999, at which time the auditor recommended that \$5,000-\$6,000 worth of insulation be put into the building. Ms. Gray circulated a list of insulation needed and estimated costs that was written by the auditor in 1999. None of this was done. Ms. Gray said the auditor who came through the building today was getting updated estimates on the costs on these items. Ms. Gray discussed how insulation is something that could be covered by CPAC, noting that some towns have funded insulation projects with CPAC funding. It was also discussed that the insulation project could be forwarded to JCPC for funding. The Berkshire Gas program may pay for half of this, though they have a contract that requires continued service for five years as part of the cost sharing. Presumably if there were a conversion to geothermal during that five year period, the Library would have to repay Berkshire Gas for part of the cost they had shared.

Tevis has been invited to speak to the Historical Commission on Thursday night regarding the archival proposal for Special Collections. Ms. Isman will be there to speak of the other CPAC proposals. The meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m. The next meeting will be on Jan. 20th not Jan. 19th.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah McKee, Clerk

Amended as Voted by Tina Swift