

Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Jones Library and the Town Libraries  
Trustees' Room, Jones Library  
February 3, 2009

Present: Molly Turner, Chris Hoffmann, Louis Greenbaum, Kathy Wang.

Absent: Pat Holland, Ann Grose

Also present: Bonnie Isman (Library Director), Tina Swift (Library Staff), Sara McKee, Scott Merzbach (Press), Carolyn Platt (Library Staff), Sue Hugus (Munson Memorial Librarian).

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m.

Additions to the Minutes of 1/13/09: Paragraph 5, Mr. Greenbaum wishes to add: "... and to solicit bids for the repair of the entire roof."

Add: Kathy Wang absent.

Motion: To accept the minutes of January 13, 2009 as amended above. Motion by: Chris Hoffmann, Second by: Louis Greenbaum. Vote: 3 ayes, 1 abstain

For the Minutes of 1/20/09, Second paragraph, it should be "this needed" (add ed to 'need' to be ... '

Add: Kathy Wang absent.

Motion: To accept the minutes of January 20, 2009 as amended above. Motion by: Louis Greenbaum, Second by: Chris Hoffmann. Vote: 3 ayes, 1 abstain

President's Report: Ms. Turner reported that Ms. Holland and Mr. Hoffmann will have a newspaper article ready for the next meeting. Ms. Isman will write an article for National Library Week in April.

Sara McKee brought her proposal for donating books to the Library. She has volunteered to work with the Library's "book wish list" and matching that with residents' deaccessioning wishes. She would also write thank you notes to the donors and publicize the program. Mr. Hoffmann suggested donating money (with a book plate) for a specific book. Ms. Platt suggested a donation of an actual book would be better. Ms. Isman suggested using the Amazon.com wish list. Ms. Hugus suggested that 'new' books be very, very current (not hot two years ago). Ms. Isman will meet with Ms. McKee and some book buyers to implement this plan.

Treasurer's Report: None due to absence.

Director's Report. The group considered the chart labeled Capital 2009 2014.xls which details the Capital Projects proposed through FY14. These will be discussed by the Joint Capital Planning Committee and then must be voted on by Town Meeting. Mr. Greenbaum reiterated that the Historical Commission and CPAC voted to support immediate emergency roof repair, future complete roof repair, and HVAC restoration for

Special Collections. The JCPC will meet on Thursday. Ms. Wang suggested a different font rather than different colors for this chart to increase understanding.

The MLA Legislative Committee has created the Mass. State Funding for Libraries chart (green sheet). This chart shows that the Board of Library Commissioners, State Aid to Regional Libraries, the Talking Book Library, and many other Library revenue sources have been consistently reduced. Fortunately, the State Aid to Public Libraries has been almost level funded with a small reduction. The Public Library Incentive Grant (matching fundraising) has disappeared. It will be June, if not July, before we know the actual state budget. Ms. Isman hopes that we can convince the legislature to fund us better. There will be a legislative breakfast on Friday, February 13, 2009 at the Leverett Library where library supporters can meet with legislators. We hope that Senator Rosenberg will join the Library Caucus. There will be a rally for libraries on April 2 in Boston.

The auditors' report is here. It will be considered in depth at a later time.

Ms. Isman reported that the CWMars network has now made it possible for patrons and others to donate to their favorite library online through Ecommerce. Patrons may also pay fines online using a credit card as well.

The BCG went over the latest info from Finance Director Musante regarding the Governor's latest cuts. This chart is labeled Town of Amherst Estimate of FY09 Mid-year and Fy10 State Aid Cuts. This does not require Town Meeting approval. Column B shows a very serious cut in FY10 lottery money. This translates into a 17.2% cut in lottery funds.

Ms. Isman has held one department heads' meeting on Jan. 28. Some of their suggestions were:

Combine adult and kids' circulation desks

Branches with only one professional librarian for both

Branch librarians as reading rooms

Close the ESL center

Streamline library hours in summer

There will be another department heads' meeting to further consider possibilities.

Ms. Isman, Amy Anaya, Molly Turner, and Kathy Wang will be on a "Fines Policy Committee" to discuss the effectiveness of fines in getting materials returned. The charge of this committee is to review current fines policy and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees for FY10.

The Finance Committee has a presentation list. Feb. 12 (7:00 p.m.) is the Library presentation date (along with some of the schools). It's important to tell the Finance Committee that we must meet the Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR). This is a three year average plus a 2.5% increase. If we cannot meet this, we cannot even apply for state aid. Our magic number is \$1,502,733 in order to qualify for Library aid. The

only way to get a waiver is if all Town departments are reduced by the same amount. If we are level funded for FY10, we cannot meet the MAR. If a library cannot qualify for state aid, the library becomes decertified and the patrons cannot use other libraries. Another issue, which is a bone of contention with the Finance Committee, is the retention of raised revenues. The Library would like to forgo rent on the Munson Memorial Library.

Possible new revenues: Rental collections: Renting dvd's for high demand best sellers  
Room rental – our current tenant will leave as of 2/28/09. Room rental money can be applied to next year through a carry forward process.

Fees for the ESL students. There is an agency in Palmer with a fee for ESL students.

Fees for Special Collections research

JCPC no report. They will meet on Thursday at Noon in a public meeting.

BCG: Pat and Chris attended. Additional revenues of \$500,000 are estimated for the proposed meals tax. \$42,000 is estimated for telecom loophole closing. Hotel/motel rooms tax might bring in about \$23,000 (this depends on Lord Jeff). \$13 Million in stimulus projects (federal) might be approved. The next BCG meeting will be in March.

Fundraising Committee: No meeting. Over \$37,000 has been raised. The goal is \$60,000.

The Burnett Gallery is meeting tonight.

Friends of the Jones Library: Bid on your Valentine baskets now. There are 109 baskets to choose from in the atrium.

Ms. Turner is really pleased to have four or five candidates for Library Trustees. There are two vacancies. She expressed appreciation for those wishing to be elected to the Library's Board of Trustees. Sara McKee, Carol Gray, Mike Giles, and Lucy McMorrow have all turned in papers for the position of Library Trustee.

Mr. Greenbaum encouraged the Board to go to the meeting on February 12 to demonstrate various perspectives.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009 (7:00 p.m.) and will be a special budget meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Minutes by Tina Swift for Ann Grose, Clerk