

Minutes of the Jones Library and the Town Libraries Board of Trustees

March 2, 2010 in the Trustees' Room of the Jones Library

Present: Patricia Holland, Chris Hoffmann, Sarah McKee, Louis Greenbaum, Kathy Wang. Also present: Bonnie Isman, Tina Swift, the public.

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m.

Consideration of the Minutes:

January 26, 2010: Page 1, change 'Ms. McKee thinks' to 'Ms. McKee understands...' Add "in favor" to every Unanimous vote. Change "bequest" to "gift" (every time). Page 2, paragraph 2, change 'principle' to 'principal.' On page 3 correct it to various (incorrect spelling).

Motion: To accept the minutes of January 26, 2010 as amended. Motion by Sarah McKee, second by Chris Hoffmann. **Vote:** Unanimous in favor.

February 2, 2010: On page two (center of the page) add to 'Ms. Gray possible language':

Motion: The Trustees communicate to the BCG that the Trustees would not support a position that the Libraries certification level budget is dependent on an override. In other words, the Trustees and the BCG representatives ... the rest will arrive by email.

Delete incomplete sentences and thoughts; on page 4, middle – delete Ms. McKee.

On page 5, correct it to: only one elevator sticks. Change it to the atrium elevator. Insert 'The elevators are NOT out of code.'

Motion: To accept the Minutes of February 2, 2010 as amended. Motion by Chris Hoffmann, second by Pat Holland. **Vote:** Unanimous in favor.

Table Feb. 9, Feb. 23, and Feb. 26 minutes until next time.

Public Comment. None.

Ms. Holland recapped that the Friends of the Jones Library and the Board of Trustees have agreed to form a committee to discuss disposition of the Woodbury gift. Committee members from the Friends: Michael Greenebaum, Edith Byron, Nancy Gregg. From the Trustees: Carol Gray, Chris Hoffmann, and Sarah McKee.

Mr. Greenbaum said he felt the Woodburys wanted to achieve the widest possible consensus. Ms. Isman will talk to a staff person to join the committee and she wants to ask someone else to participate in her stead. Mr. Hoffmann will inform the Friends of the Jones Library's members.

Treasurer's Report: Chris Hoffmann will contact Gage Wiley in order to disentangle the Woodbury gift from the endowment. The current figure (including the Woodbury gift) is \$8,099,621.09. Ms. Gray

asked if the endowment is accruing 4% and the answer is no and the Library is dipping into the principal. But in the past, the earnings will eventually rise.

Ms. Holland feels reports from Gage Wiley once a month is sufficient. Ms. Gray agreed to that but felt that the reporting had been less than that. She wants the Woodbury gift separated from the endowment **since the amount of the gift down the road would presumably be the original amount of the gift plus whatever interest has accrued on the principle.**

Director's Report: Ms. McKee has asked who had been hired to staff the desks. Since the beginning of the fiscal year, seven people had left the employ of the Library. Three people with CW Mars experience have been hired as part time circulation workers. These positions were posted on library listservs and the vacancy was posted on the Library's web site, and it was posted on the CW Mars listserv. These people began working in January. Ms. McKee asked what had been done in regard to diversity. Ms. Isman said they were looking for library experienced people which is why the above mentioned list servs had been used.

Ms. Gray said a hiring and firing policy should be crafted. She said that she and another trustee had spoken with Maureen Killoran of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and she had said that Trustees should be informed when there is a vacancy and kept abreast of searches for new staff members. Maureen said that hiring and firing was something the Trustees had bottom line in responsibility about. Maureen had quoted Chapter 78, section 11 of the Massachusetts General Laws which says that, *"The board shall have the custody and management of the library and reading room and of all property owned by the town relating thereto."* Maureen said that that means that the Trustees are the 'ultimate authority' regarding the library, which includes oversight and over hiring and firing. Ms. Gray expressed concern about seven people leaving the library and three people being hired without the Board being notified of any of these hirings and vacancies.

Motion: The Director inform[s] the Board of Trustees whenever anyone leaves employ or when there is a position vacant for which hiring is being considered. Motion by Carol Gray, Second by Sarah McKee.

Discussion: Mr. Greenbaum asked where that put the Trustees because the Library is a private corporation even though it is a public library. Ms. Isman reminded the group that the employees are Town employees. Ms. Wang said her understanding is that while the Board is responsible for hiring and firing, the Board **can** delegate this responsibility to the Director. The second part is, what about confidentiality – would the Board have to go into executive session? Ms. Gray said the Board may say that it does not wish to be involved, but that is different from being informed. Ms. Killoran said it is routine for the Board to be informed of people leaving **and of the search process for hiring.** Mr. Greenbaum supports the Board's being informed of when people leave or are hired.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Ms. Isman distributed the pay **chart** for the Library. Ms. Gray suggested asking the Town for upgrading library positions.

The Audit: Ms. Isman described the procedure. Every year the auditors have new suggestions and Ms. Swift is working with Amy Fleury, their senior accountant. Ms. Gray wants to see the draft of the management letter. Ms. Isman asked when they would like to meet with the auditors.

Cancel the meeting of: March 16 and schedule a meeting on March 22 at 7 p.m. in the Large Meeting Room. **POST** the CPAC meeting on March 18 at 7 pm in the Town Room.

Carpet Replacement: Ms. Isman **asked for Trustee volunteers to work on the carpeting issue.** Pat will call Ms. Erica Gees, an architect, who is a flooring specialist.

Capital Projects: The elevator technician could not find anything wrong – or anything to repair – in the elevator. Ms. Isman spoke to John Musante who cannot do anything to provide fund and he suggested Ms. Isman talk to Ron Bohonowitz who is in charge of Town buildings. Ron could not do anything. Ms. Isman has one quote for repair and will get another. George Hicks has been in contact with the other two elevator companies. Ms. Gray wants to expedite getting this quote because the JCPC will meet soon **so the request for elevator funding will be well-prepared when the JCPC discusses the issue.** Ms. Gray told Ms. Isman to send a formal memo to the JCPC requesting a place holder before their next meeting on Friday at 8:00 a.m. Ms. McKee will post the ADA compliant language regarding elevator alternatives.

Painting: Ms. Isman has talked with Bill Gillen and he will charge \$4,500 to write the painting (outside) specifications and he will oversee the bidding of the painting contract. Kathy Ford was overburdened and suggested Mr. Gillen who will photograph every window to be sure it's painted properly. This will be paid through two appropriations, one of which was \$6,000 to study a historic window refurbishing. Mr. Gillen will have the bid package ready by April 7th. The job will be done by May 21. Mr. Gillen suggested a \$50 deposit for the contract specifications which is returned when the contractors return the specs. Ms. McKee suggested using the best quality paint and the longest lasting paint.

Emergency Roof Repair: The third piece over the ramp on the side entrance should be done by the end of March. Roy Brown is coming to look at the nun's cap on the roof tomorrow. The large slate job still has to be bid.

Frequently Asked Questions on the Amherst Override: This sheet will help staff answer questions; it could be put on the web site. This would be put on the counter so people can pick it up if they wish. Ms. Wang had several changes. Add: The Trustees have not taken a position on the override. Ms. Gray wondered if having this informational sheet implied taking a position.

The following all apply to the FAQ:

For the sake of neutrality, the Trustees have chosen not to take a position on this or the previous two overrides.

Mr. Greenbaum noted that from 1919 to 1955, the Jones Library, Inc. paid ALL of its expenses from the endowment. The Trustees tweaked the wording on the FAQ of the override.

And this at a time when people depend more than ever on public libraries! Under staff cuts: It should be two staff cuts (not the number). Change to 6% of staff hours have been lost. Strike: 2 full time equivalent. Strike children's programs. Public funding no longer exists for teen activities or computer classes.

Paragraph 6: Have the Library staff made concessions?

Paragraph 7: How many volunteers does the Library use?

Paragraph 8: What impact will the outcome s of the override vote have on the libraries. If the override passes, Town libraries ... add: If the override does not pass, the Library will ask Town Meeting to appropriate funds to continue current services. Delete paragraph 9 and substitute below.

What is Town Meeting's role? Town Meeting approves the final budget. You can support your libraries by contacting Town Meeting members, the Select Board, and the Finance Committee. See: www.amherstma.gov.

Paragraph 9: If Town Meeting doesn't approve the libraries' budget, the following cuts are likely: more staff cuts in all library departments will mean fewer staff to help children, clean the library, get new books to the shelves, find answers to research questions, register new people for library cards, and check out books, movies, and CDs. The Jones Library will be closed on Friday afternoons.

Paragraph 10: How many people use the libraries? Bonnie Isman will supply appropriate large statistics from George. Amherst residents depend on their libraries for computer access, books, CDs, DVDs, to do research, conduct their businesses, and study.

Paragraph 11: How much does the library endowment contribute? The library endowment started in 1919; built the Jones Library; and now, with other private donations, contributes 25% of the annual budget. In FY2010, the Trustees voted to spend \$111,541 **more** than investment advisors recommend: the more we use now, the greater our children's tax burden.

Paragraph 12. How will the gift from Nathalie and Richard Woodbury be used? The Jones Library Trustees and the Friends of the Library are meeting jointly to discuss how best to use this to benefit the libraries.

Paragraph 13: Do the libraries raise private funds? Yes. Fundraising is an all-volunteer effort by the Friends of the Jones Library System and the Trustees. There is still time to donate to the Annual Fund: www.joneslibrary.org.

Paragraph 14: How are the branch libraries used? North Amherst and Munson Memorial Libraries are highly valued as community centers. Last year North Amherst Library patrons checked out 36,255 books, etc. Munson users took home 40,854 items. These totaled 15% of all Amherst library loans. North Amherst Library supports the Head Start program. Munson does special programs with Crocker Farm Elementary School students. All three libraries have summer reading programs for school children.

The meeting adjourned 11:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah McKee, Clerk

Note taker: Tina Swift

Edits are in bold face and these minutes were accepted by the full Board on April 6, 2010.