

Minutes of the Board of Trustees
The Town of Amherst and the Jones Library, Inc.
April 8, 2008, Children's Biography Room

Present: Trustee Wang, Trustee Holland, Trustee Grose, Trustee Greenbaum, Trustee Hoffmann, Trustee Molly Turner. Also Present: Library Director Bonnie Isman; Naomi Ossar (Public), Kay Moran (Finance Committee), Tina Swift.

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

Motion: To accept the minutes of March 10, 2008. Motion by: President Wang.
Second by: Patricia Holland. **Vote:** 3 yes, 1 abstain, 1 not present.

President Wang welcomed Chris Hoffmann as the newest elected trustee. The Annual Meeting will be on May 13, 2008, which is the next meeting. The trustees will elect officers then.

Treasurer's report: Today's balance of total invested funds is: \$8,729,724.36. The total assets with Vanguard are \$8,799,750.60. This is approximately \$7,000 higher than March 11th, but \$250,000 less than the beginning of the year.

Corrections were made to the Trustees' contact information sheet.

Discussion of Patrons' Rights and Responsibilities Policy. This year, the Library staff has had to deal with homeless alcoholics who spend extended periods of time in the Library. Library staff has looked up what are legal reasons for asking people to leave if they are offensive to others. Also, teenagers hanging out at the Library have become disruptive. The staff has researched "loitering." The issue of people wearing excessive perfume was mentioned. Cigarette smoking must be done ten feet away from the building. The new behavioral policy language is in Italics and in boldface type. Mr. Greenbaum felt this policy is necessary as long as it is legal. Ms. Wang asked if people could use the Library for their office, thinking that the policy might need to be less specific in speaking of types of Library usage. Ms. Turner had concerns about inflexible people enforcing such a policy.

Motion: To accept the suggested policy changes with this change: 'Whose bodily hygiene is so offensive as to constitute a nuisance.' Motion by: Ann Gross
Second by: Louis Greenbaum **Vote:** 4 ayes, 1 abstention

Gates Foundation: We and 60 other libraries are on the list to receive computers. The Munson Memorial Library and the North Amherst Library (NAL) have qualified through means of an inventory of the public computers. (The computers at the Jones are too up to date to qualify for Gates computers.) This is the Gates Opportunity, Online Hardware Grant Program. They are offering two years of computers with a two year match of \$11,700 from the Library. This would be an ongoing budget line for new computers and computer support. Since the Jones has been approved for new computers next year, this could be the match (through capital funding) for two years. The NAL is eligible to

purchase six computers, but there is no room for that many unless it's a laptop. Technical support, which is always necessary, is included in this grant. Ms. Isman suggests accepting the grant, but pointed out that the matching funds must be a commitment. These are for the public only, not staff.

Motion: To accept the grant, commit to the matching funds of the Gates grant. Motion by: Ann Grose, second by: Chris Hoffmann. **Vote:** Unanimous.

Ms. Isman offered a tour of the Library to Mr. Hoffmann. Mr. Greenbaum stated that he has become intrigued by the Burnett collection and would like to go on the tour with Mr. Hoffman. Ms. Turner reported on Rep. Ellen Story's visit to Special Collections. Rep. Story is on the Tourism and Travel Committee at the State House. Ms. Story commented on showcasing Special Collections as a Town destination. Mr. Greenbaum remarked on the Robert Frost collection in Special Collections. Mr. Frost had said that the Jones was his 'first collector.'

Ms. Isman had talked with Atty. Joel Bard, Town Counsel. His reading of the 1972 Town Manager's act, creating the Town Libraries, was that the Library should be treated as any other Town department. Ms. Isman reminded him that the Corporation signed the checks, but Mr. Bard said the intention was that the Library would be treated as any other Town department (meaning that the Library cannot keep the fines). He said even though the Library Corporation buys the books, it was not the original intent that the Library can keep fines levied on late materials. The question was posed: Could the Library keep revenues from a coffee shop? Or would the Library need to rent out the space to a concessionaire and keep only the rent? Mr. Greenbaum expressed concerns about a coffee shop on the first floor. Ms. Turner said coffee shops in libraries are a trend and she has seen them in many places. Ms. Holland said Watertown, Mass. has their coffee shop where the books for sale are located. Ms. Isman noted that urban city libraries often have a coffee shop because people visit for the whole day, and spend longer at the library. The discussion returned to whether the Library could get another legal opinion regarding the retention of the fines. Atty. Bard referred to '...the Library Trustees may spend all funds as a single source...' as his reason for saying the fines cannot be retained. The Trustees will consider changing the fine policy back to where it was, which was an honor system. By consensus, the Trustees asked Ms. Isman to see another legal opinion in this matter.

Ms. Isman told the trustees that if they wish to keep the Town Meeting article regarding a revolving fund, it must be fine tuned with different wording. The discussion turned to retaining fines, establishing a revolving fund, and changing the philosophy of the Library from a free public library to a library with fees.

Motion: Table the Board's consideration of a revolving fund article for Town Meeting. Motion by: Molly Turner, second by: Ann Grose. **Vote:** 4 ayes, 1 opposed

Finance Committee meeting: A possible revolving fund was discussed briefly.

FY09 Budget: Ms. Isman distributed the budget chart as it will appear in the Finance Committee book with the adjusted total, including the new health insurance figure. There is now an \$11,000 gap which necessitated the Monday closing. This gap is down from \$28,000. The Western Mass. Community Foundation has a potential donor who will offer a challenge grant to keep the Library open on Monday. The Friends do not wish to pay for staff, but rather materials. The hope is that the Friends will work with the Community Foundation and come to some agreement. As of this moment, the North Amherst Library will only be open five days per week in FY09, not six days. By closing on Mondays, the Library will eliminate its gap.

Motion: To accept the figure of \$2,128,147.00 as the total budget for FY09 and to present this to Town Meeting as the Library's budget. Motion by: Chris Hoffmann, second by: Ann Grose. **Vote:** Unanimous

Press Coverage: Molly Turner spoke on TV about the Library's idea of adding a coffee shop. This was also reported in the local newspapers.

Committee meetings:

JCPC: Has concluded its deliberations. Computers, roof work approved (Library capital projects). No security cameras, no carpeting.

BCG: Community Choices Committee has a task: 5 scenarios of what we want the Library to look like, ranging from worst case to best case scenario. Figures/costs must be included. This would be from level to less than level funding with others in between. The scenarios should be ready by May for presentation to the CCC. Ms. Turner has to resign from this committee due to other commitments.

Fundraising: no meeting

Personnel Board: There was a meeting with non-union employees. The Personnel Board will look at mileage reimbursement and possibly raise it for the professionals.

250th Committee: On Apr. 25, 2009 Leslie Garris will speak at First Church with a reception at Goodell. Phil Shaffer will speak on architecture. Adele Gladstone Gilbert wants to do a walking tour. Arthur Kinney will be in charge of one lecture a month at the History Museum. Amherst College is giving the Committee money. Tevis Kimball has been very helpful with Amherst info and a possible calendar. The Comm. would like the Lib to do a dedication of the Frost Room. The Arts and Literature Committee want to have a legacy piece.

Amherst Planning Together: Ms. Turner wishes time on the agenda to report on the Master Plan.

Friends: voted \$300 to fund another drama workshop. The first newsletter has been published.

Matching Grant: an anonymous donor will provide \$3000 if there is a 2 to 1 match. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Grose, Clerk

Tina Swift, Stenographer