

Minutes of the Board of Trustees

The Town of Amherst and the Jones Library, Inc.

May 13, 2008, 2008

Jones Library's Trustees' Room

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

Absent: Trustee Greenbaum, Trustee Hoffmann.

The meeting was called to order at: 7:06 p.m.

Motion: To accept the minutes of April 8 and April 25, 2008 as written. Motion by Ann Grose, second by Kathy Wang. **Vote:** 4 ayes.

President's Report: Ms. Wang showed a Gazette article titled "Last Night's Key Decisions" regarding Town Meeting votes. Both Town Meeting amendments for \$25,000 and \$11,000 increases of the Library's budget were voted down. Ms. Wang was impressed by the support for the Library and she suggested writing a letter from the Trustees thanking the two people who brought forth the amendments to increase the budget: Isaac Ben Ezra, and Vince O'Connor. Later, Larry Kelly supported the Library saying he'd rather have Library open on Monday afternoons as opposed to a new lawn mower for Cherry Hill.

Motion: Ask Ms. Wang to write a letter thanking the Library budget supporters (as mentioned above). Motion by Molly Turner, second by Ann Grose. **Vote:** 4 ayes

Treasurer's Report. The current invested funds now total \$8,944,191.26.

Director's Report. Bank of America's investment consultant, Thea Katsounakis, would like to speak to the new Trustees' Treasurer regarding the Robert Frost Chair investments and BOA services. Every year in May, the high school calls Ms. Wang, as the President of Jones Library Trustees to attend the nomination meeting for the recipient of Robert Frost Teaching Chair. The selection committee consists of parents who vote on names proposed by teachers.

The ESL center has received \$200 from the Amherst Women's Club (this came in April). The Community Foundation of Western Mass. will award \$4,000 from the Credit Data Services, Inc. Fund to the ESL center. The Library had applied for \$8,000, so we are not certain of what project will be funded. Amherst College is providing an almost 8 week intern for the ESL Center. She will work on the web site, and look for grants for ESL. Currently, the ESL Center uses eight or ten Amherst College students as tutors.

Community Foundation Challenge Grant. There has been publicity about this in the Republican, and the Director has developed a "Keep Us Open" flyer. The Friends of the Library will fund an ad in the newspaper to "Keep Us Open."

Kanakesaki Sister Library Exchange. There is a new library director in Kanakesaki who has sent us 24 children's books in Japanese. The Kanakesaki Sister City Committee has sent a box of books to the new library director in Japan. This postage was \$100 and the Trustees agreed that the Director should pay the shipping from the Library's postage budget.

Unfinished Business. Community Voices Budget Choices. Project started by BCG. See: Attached chart.

Community Choices Scenarios for 2010 through 2014 years.

1. Level Funding -- includes 2.5% increase in taxes, but no other increases in state aid or other types of funding.
2. Level Services -- money needed to keep services at 2009 level.
3. One step up from 2009 level, restoring one or two of recent cuts = minimal service improvements.
4. Adequate enhancements -- the kind of services the community wants
5. Optimal enhancements -- the very best level of service.

The BCG wants the Citizen Facilitation Committee to study the options and recommend one scenario for all Town, school, and Library budgets.

The Library director must submit scenarios in mid-June. For long term funding, Ms. Holland suggested longer open hours for all libraries. She also likes the idea of another branch in southwest Amherst (East Hadley Road). Ms. Wang suggested bringing back the bookmobile.

New Business.

Motion: To postpone election of officers to June 10, 2008. Motion by Molly Turner, second by Kathy Wang. **Vote:** 4 ayes.

Café Committee. See attached handout from Ms. Grose, titled "Discussion of a possible Café at the Jones Library." More investigation of the café will ensue. Ruth Levine, a space planner, has volunteered to help the circulation area plan library spaces. The Trustees will not appoint an official coffee committee.

Ann Grose and Chris Hoffman went to the Forbes Library for the WRMLS Trustees' Program. They saw four videos with board meeting scenarios. Ms. Grose was asked by the Amherst History Museum Board if the Jones Library Trustees would plan and coordinate with them. A relationship with the History Museum will be put on the agenda for next time.

Committee Reports. The Fundraising Committee has not met. Ms. Turner thought the summer would be a good time to solicit local businesses for money.

Town non Union Employees' Meeting. Ms. Turner and Ms. Isman attended. Flo Stern, the head of the Personnel Board, will be a champion of the professional employees. Ms. Stern will look at the Library's salaries.

250th Committee. Ms. Grose distributed a draft proposal to dedicate the Jones Library as a Robert Frost Literary Landmark. This will cost \$650. The Trustees agreed to support this project.

Amherst Planning Together. Ms. Turner has been attending but she missed the last meeting. She wants to make sure the Library is still in the goals of the Master Plan. Ms. Turner will report on the Master Plan at the next Trustees' meeting. Ms. Isman is concerned that the Library was not mentioned in the April draft.

Friends of the Jones Library. They will vote June 2, 2008 on whether they will support the challenge grant from the Community Foundation to restore Monday afternoon hours. Ms. Holland wondered if branch hours could be restored with the challenge grant.

Consult a private attorney regarding retention of fines – put on agenda for next time.

No progress has been made on the Library Director's review.

Orientation tour for Louis Greenbaum and Chris Hoffman will be set.

The next fundraising committee meeting will be on: June 10, 2008 at 6 p.m., followed by the Trustees' meeting at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Grose
Clerk

Tina Swift,
Transcriptionist