

Meeting of the Jones Library Board of Trustees

June 30, 2009 in the Amherst Room of the Jones Library

Trustees Present: Patricia Holland, Sarah McKee, Louis Greenbaum, Carol Gray, Chris Hoffmann, Kathy Wang (arrived 7:36 p.m.).

Also Present: Bonnie Isman, Library Director; Tina Swift, Library Business Manager; Library Department Heads; Scott Merzbach, Press; and the Public.

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m. President Holland called for public comment. Kevin Eddings thanked the Trustees for 'stepping up to the plate' for the Library. He then left.

Approval of Minutes: June 2: Page 1, third line from bottom, eliminate boldface from "you." On the last page, it should read "The Amherst capital budget is taking a hit of 9%." The Library's capital budget is increasing. On the last page (before Parade discussion), add: It was agreed that documents being sent to the Finance Committee or other Town Committees, relevant to the Library, will be reviewed and approved by the Trustees in advance. June 17: Delete Carol Gray seconded adjournment motion. Should read "to reduce the capital budget by \$34,704."

June 22: Peter Jessop is the correct spelling. 5th paragraph, should read 'that Jim Wald told the Trustees to wait for Town Counsel. 4th paragraph down, "The Lib Trustees requested funds of the \$30,000 CPA funds that were not yet appropriated. 3rd paragraph from bottom, write out historical. Correct to: Amherst Historical Commission (no preservation in the title).

June 23: Fix Jill's name to Aronovitz. 3rd paragraph, last line, 'Town Counsel said the switch could be made tonight and did not have to be made at a Special Town Meeting.' Last paragraph PIMCO (all caps). Allianz is the correct spelling. Second page, middle, "...and many more countries." Third paragraph from the end where it says "Carol Gray asked..." add: Mr. Farnham thinks we could increase our fixed income.

Motion: To approve the minutes of June 2, June 17, June 22, and June 23, 2009 as corrected. **Motion by:** Carol Gray. **Second:** Chris Hoffman. **Vote:** Unanimous

Treasurer's Report: no report.

Discussion of Investment Policy: Ms. McKee has spoken with former Trustee Anita Page asking about the origin of the Trustees' Investment Policy which had come from Fleet Bank. Yesterday, Ms. McKee called Yale's investment office. They actively manage their fund. Tonight, Ms. Isman has brought the Hampshire College and Boston Public Library investment policies and these seem to be clearer than what the Jones Library currently uses. Ms. McKee likes the information from Weiss Capital Management Company which seems to provide an overview of the Jones investment policy in relation to our investments, and show that there is a mismatch between our goal of 5% spending rate plus 2.5%

inflation offset, and our investment array. In the past, diversification worked (large cap stocks, international stocks, etc.), but now, with the international economy so interconnected, stocks tend all to fall together. Two thirds of the Jones endowment's 61% in equities is in index funds. Thus the Jones is exposed on the equity side. She recommended a conference call with Weiss in order to garner more information. Ms. McKee will ask David Farnham of Wells Fargo Financial Advisors if he could provide a total overview of the investments (as opposed to the 40% in fixed income which he looked at). Ms. McKee asked for an OK to request a presentation from Stakeholders Capital of Amherst (socially responsible investors).

Director's Report: The English as a Second Language (ESL) program has received a donation from Amherst Regional High School students – one is an ESL tutor. They held a car wash and sent in a contribution of \$195.00. The Library Director will send an "e thank you card." Another donation from Portland, Oregon came from Ms. Gloria Kelman's estate in the amount of \$2,337.00. This is a memorial fund donation. Ms. Isman distributed "Policy Statement: Contracts, Donations, and Revenues to the Jones Library, Inc." to inform the Trustees regarding the usage of donations.

Motion: To accept the Gloria Kelman donation in the amount of \$2,337.00. **Motion:** Kathy Wang.
Second: Carol Gray. **Vote:** Unanimous.

Ms. Isman told the Trustees that a patron had been injured by falling ice when coming into the Library last winter. The woman has asked for \$30 in medical copayments. Ms. Gray and Ms. McKee will query Town Counsel regarding the wording of a release. Ms. Isman told the Trustees that on July 2 and July 16, Ms. Olevsky has arranged to present Mohawk Trail concert previews in the Large Meeting Room of the Library. The Summer Reading Clubs at the Munson and the Jones have teamed up with Crocker Farm and the entire school will read E.B. White's "The Trumpet of the Swan." So far, the Munson Memorial Library has 60 children signed up for the summer reading club. The libraries are working with the parents as well. The Friends of the Jones Library have bought a book for every family in the school (either in Spanish or English). The Annual Fund total is now a little over \$53,000. Last year at the time, the total was \$58,000 but that included \$5,000 from the Xeric Foundation and \$2,000 from the Friends. So this is the best we have ever done.

Motion: To move to new business. **Motion by:** Carol Gray. No second.

President Holland spoke of the petition drive to put \$34,704 back into the Library's budget. This will be an article which will be reconsidered at the next special Town Meeting in July. The Trustees agreed to consider the document titled "Prof. Staff Recommendations, in addition to cutting materials \$7,600 and book repair position 9 hrs/wk." Ms. Isman told the Trustees that the Town administrators (of which she is one) have agreed to take only a 2% COLA since the schools have agreed to do that. Ms. Isman told the Trustees that she wants the non union professional staff (her department heads) to receive the 3.5% COLA that the teachers will receive. The first cut is cutting the supply budget. Since the Library will be ordering fewer circulating materials, there can be cuts in the processing materials. The major cut in this category is in Special Collections' archival materials. Tevis Kimball feels that she can utilize Community Preservation Act monies allotted for the preservation of materials. Ms. Isman spoke of the other cuts in

turn. Ms. Gray noted that the staff cuts and reassignments are “restructuring.” The third cut means eliminating the current computer classes. Ms. McKee suggested raising the computer classes fees and Ms. Gray favored a sliding fee scale so everyone could participate. Ms. Gray wanted to wait on making cuts until the Library knows if the petition article will fail or not. Mr. Greenbaum said it’s too bad that this cut list could not have been shown to Town Meeting.

Motion: Accept the top tier of cuts minus \$4200 (cut 9 hrs. for Tech Svc staff), minus \$11,844 (Close on Friday afternoons). **Motion:** Carol Gray.

Mr. Greenbaum objected to saving Friday afternoons. He feels the Trustees need to “show clear and unequivocal signs” that we are in an emergency and “we are practicing retrenchment.” Ms. Holland pointed out that Ms. Gray did not advocate restoring Fridays. Ms. Wang suggested using caution in the use of the Library’s money. She noted that emergency funds must be rebuilt.

Second: Chris Hoffman.

Friendly Amendment : Utilize items 1 (Cut \$2,100 in processing and Special Collections supplies), 2 (cut 11.5 hours of the Children’s Room staff), 4 (Cut out 5 hours per week of Reference substitutes, cut computer classes), 5 (cut 10 hours from adult and children’s shelving staff), and 6 (cut 4.5 hours from the Adult desk staff). **Motion:** Carol Gray, **Second:** Pat Holland. **Vote:** Unanimous.

Discussion of number 3 (cut 9 hours which is \$4,200 for Tech Services Staff (hourly position)).

Motion: To roll over \$8,000 from FY09 and add to FY10 operating budget. **Motion:** Carol Gray. **Second:** Holland.

Discussion: Ms. Gray thinks Town Meeting may restore \$34,000 and these cuts won’t be needed. Mr. Greenbaum said, “I feel it’s absolutely essential that we heed the \$34,704 in cuts.” He continued, “What impresses me is that these proposals [for cuts] are coming from the Library staff.” He approved of number 3 and number 7 for cuts. Ms. Gray suggested adding both tiers of the furlough. Ms. McKee said any proposal must be concise and clear because it’s difficult for people to understand numbers and cuts. She said the Trustees must make it really clear that not getting the Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR) is critical for the Library and she suggested making \$34,000 worth of cuts. Mr. Hoffman said it’s important to say, ‘We acknowledge we are \$34,000 short and we’re putting \$8,000 away for a rainy day.’ Ms. Gray said some people are asking, ‘Why would you shut down before exploring a skeleton crew?’ Ms. Gray does not believe in a one week shutdown due to non union furlough. She feels it locks out the poor and hurts the poor the most. Mr. Greenbaum noted that all Town departments were asked to show what they had to sacrifice and the Library said it had cut its materials budget. He said Town Meeting’s reaction was, “ho hum.” He said these cuts show that the Library is sacrificing personnel and hours, as well as materials. Ms. Gray would be in favor of a staggered furlough, not a one week’s shutdown.

Motion: To utilize cut number 3 and number 7. **Motion:** Kathy Wang. Ms. Wang has spent five years fighting to keep the Library open, so she does not advocate shutting down, but feels it's necessary. She does not think it would be safe to have an unstaffed children's room.

Second: Chris Hoffman.

Vote: (On the previous motion to roll over \$8,000 from Fy09 to FY10's operating budget). 1 Aye.

5 Nays. Motion fails.

Vote: (On using number 3 and number 7.) 4 Ayes. 2 Nays (Holland, Gray)

New Business: Ms. Holland said there are 220 signatures on the petition for the Town Meeting article to restore \$34,407 to the Library's FY10 budget. Mr. Greenbaum does not think the Trustees should sponsor a petition which has been generated by the community. Mr. Hoffmann said some people are unhappy with the Trustees' 'weasling out of cuts' and he does not support the Trustees sponsoring this petition article. Ms. Holland said she feels it is the Trustees' responsibility to find money to support the Library in any way they can and she thinks the Trustees should sponsor this petition article. Ms. Gray says this year's vote on the Library's budget was much closer than last year's vote and she feels that if Town Meeting (TM) had gone one more day, the Library might have fared better. Ms. Gregg, from the audience, said TM had been swayed by what Library users had said – not what the Trustees had said during the budget presentation at Town Meeting. Mr. Greenbaum told the group that not many in Town Meeting could understand why the Trustees wanted to rescind the \$55,000 capital plan. He said, 'We made the right decision tonight. It was a bitter decision. But it will be understood. That should be enough to restore our links with the citizens of Amherst.'

Motion: To sponsor the petition article which will restore \$34,704 to the Library's FY10 operating budget. **Motion :** Carol Gray

President Holland urged a unified stand at Town Meeting in sponsoring the petition article. Ms. Gray stated she feels it's very important that the Trustees sponsor this petition article. Ms. Wang said she'd prefer that the endorsement come from the Friends of the Library. The Friends, however, will not be meeting soon enough. Ms. McKee said she is "deeply conflicted" on this issue and she thought that the Library will have to demonstrate their quest to get the MAR in order to retain certification.

Second: McKee **Vote:** 3 Ayes, 2 Nays, 1 Abstain (Wang)

Ms. Holland asked the Branch Librarians to get permission from parents for their children to be in the 250th parade representing the Town Libraries. The next meetings will be on: July 14, August 11 (both at 7 p.m.). The meeting adjourned at 9:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Sarah McKee, Clerk

Stenographer, Tina Swift