



Agenda

ADVISORY TO THE PUBLIC: This special Library Trustee meeting will occur virtually via ZOOM and will be streamed live here:

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.

When: Sep 12, 2022 05:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Topic: The Jones Library, Inc. Board of Trustees

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://amherstma.zoom.us/j/81653952889>

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1. Call to Order/Attendance.
2. Public Comment.
3. Jones Library Building Project Budget Update/Discussion.
4. Adjourn.

DRAFT MOTION: *In light of increased cost estimates, in order to keep the Jones Library building project moving forward, the Trustees of the Jones Library, Inc. agree to reimburse the Town of Amherst up to \$1.5 million for project costs incurred between now and the conclusion of the bidding process if the project is ended at that point.*

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September 12, 2022

To: Amherst Town Council

From: Members of the Jones Library Board of Trustees

RE: Jones Library Building Project

We are writing to reaffirm our continuing support for the building project. We believe that the plan developed after years of study, consultation, and support from the residents of Amherst offers the most prudent way forward.

Despite careful stewardship, the Jones building is in dire need of attention. Systems are well past their end of life and as a result are failing and are beyond a simple repair. Our wonderful staff is forced to cope without adequate space or the necessary infrastructure to do their jobs. And, most important, all of the library's patrons deserve a facility that is safe and can serve them well.

Before the start of the building project, the Jones Library Trustees considered a renovation and reorganization within the existing footprint. They concluded that such an approach would not meet the needs of the library if it is to serve everyone in our community equally. With the Town Council the Trustees reviewed the minimum cost for a repair of the building that would allow the library to continue to operate safely. We determined that it would cost the town as much or more to complete the minimum necessary repairs as to finance an addition and renovation of the kind we are now planning. None of this has changed, except that costs for both the necessary repair work and the renovation and expansion have escalated.

Costs have escalated in library construction projects across the state, and we hope that state government agencies will recognize this situation and offer additional financial support. Meantime, we have an energetic and effective fundraising effort in place as well as the support of our state and federal representatives as we seek additional funding opportunities. We have already seen the fruits of the Capital Campaign Committee's work as they have raised almost 50% of their original goal a full 9 months ahead of schedule. The library's legions of friends and supporters have been incredibly generous. And, as you know, we have pledged to backstop the fundraising so as to minimize any risk to the Town. We have said repeatedly that supporting the building project is necessary to equally support all members of our community. Children as well as teens, native speakers of English and those learning English, people who are economically advantaged and people who have been economically disadvantaged, people without physical disabilities as well as people with physical disabilities,

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neurotypical individuals and neurodiverse individuals all will be better served by the newly renovated and expanded building. Our library, like all libraries, is a critical piece of our community's social infrastructure and we must invest in that infrastructure to support its role as a crossroads for the community and a cornerstone of democracy.

We were pleased that the JLBC's voted to support continuing the work on the project through design development and preparation of construction documents. We think that is the right decision and we hope you will agree.

Stopping or pausing now will only lead to greater costs when needed work gets done. Amherst needs and deserves a first class facility for its first class library.

DRAFT

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