

# JONES LIBRARY

NORTH AMHERST LIBRARY • MUNSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

## NOTICE OF MEETING

Inhabitants of the Town of Amherst:  
You are hereby notified that there will be a meeting of:

**Public Body:** The Jones Library, Inc. Personnel, Planning and Policy Committee

**Date:** Tuesday, October 18, 2022

**Time:** 9-10:00am

**Location:** Zoom Webinar

ADVISORY TO THE PUBLIC: This special Jones Library Personnel, Planning and Policy Committee meeting will occur virtually via ZOOM and will be streamed live here:

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.

When: Oct 18, 2022 09:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Topic: The Jones Library, Inc. Personnel, Planning, and Policy Committee

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://amherstma.zoom.us/j/85678847756>

Or One tap mobile :

US: +16469313860,,85678847756# or +13017158592,,85678847756#

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 646 931 3860 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 309 205 3325 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 646 876 9923 or +1 564 217 2000 or +1 669 444 9171 or +1 669 900 6833 or +1 719 359 4580 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 386 347 5053 or +1 408 638 0968

Webinar ID: 856 7884 7756

International numbers available: <https://amherstma.zoom.us/u/kckENZSaGf>

Or an H.323/SIP room system:

H.323: 162.255.37.11 (US West) or 162.255.36.11 (US East)

Meeting ID: 856 7884 7756

SIP: [85678847756@zoomcrc.com](mailto:85678847756@zoomcrc.com)

## Meeting Agenda

- I. Call to Order (Welcome, Tamson, Farah, and Sharon!)
- II. **Minutes \***
- III. Public Comment
- IV. Equity Committee Update
- V. **Library Director Annual Evaluation \***
- VI. Adjourn

Next meeting: Tuesday, November 8, 2022; 9am

*\*\* Please note that the list of topics in this notice was comprehensive at the time of posting, however the public body may consider and take action on unforeseen matters not specifically named in this notice.*

*\* Indicates Handout(s) will be made available.*

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## Meeting Minutes

**Public Body:** The Jones Library, Inc. Personnel, Planning and Policy Committee

**Date:** Wednesday, July 27, 2022

**Time:** 9-10:00am

**Location:** The Jones Library's Goodwin Room (Top Floor)

Attending: Tamson Ely, Farah Ameen, and Sharon Sharry

Also Attending: Jeff Lee

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Jeff Lee asked to record the meeting and shared (state) guidelines that specify such recording.

- I. Meeting called to order at 9:09 a.m.
- II. Minutes for June 14, 2022 approved.
- III. Public Comment: Jeff Lee, District 5, said he was curious as to why the Committee chose to meet in person. Director Sharry said she posts meetings, and has to post them 48 hours in advance. The Legislature hadn't approved meeting via Zoom far enough in advance. This is the last in-person meeting for any of the Committees.
- IV. Equity Subcommittee formation process and forms were discussed, including some of the changes in red in the draft document of "interview" questions for community members who wish to serve on this subcommittee. Sharon, Farah, and Tamson agreed that these interviews were going to be more of a conversation. Tamson remarked that other committees, like the Garden Committee, look for specific experience, but in this case, PPP is looking more at a candidate's interest and willingness to serve.
  - Members discussed who should be part of the interview committee. Sharon suggested PPP plus Mia Cabana, or just the PPP committee members (Sharon, Farah, and Tamson) during a posted meeting. Farah questioned whether the Town HR is involved? Sharon said no, just the Trustees on PPP. Farah mentioned that it's intimidating enough to be interviewed by a group of people; making this process public would just heighten that situation. PPP agreed that fewer people interviewing would make more sense. Tammy is happy to have Farah conduct the meetings, so the interviewees could be put at ease. Sharon mentioned that candidates would probably want to interview us, to see if we are worthy of their time. It has to be a good fit for everyone. Final decision: The interviews will be conducted by Sharon and Farah; final candidates would be discussed with Tamson, and then the decisions would be brought to the subsequent Trustees Meeting.
  - Committee discussed changing the application deadline to September 1 because of families' summer schedule—people with children have a lot going on, plus vacations, getting children ready for school, etc. Interviews will be scheduled for the week of September 12; Sharon and Farah will start looking at applications before then.

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- Committee approved application document, which will be sent to Library staff and to the Town (Jennifer Moyston), the school blogs, and various social media platforms to access different avenues.
  - Committee approved interview questionnaire.
- V. Library Director annual evaluation was discussed. All evaluations have been submitted; Tamson says because of her finger/shoulder injury the collation process will be delayed. She will try to present her report to the Board in September, at the earliest.

Meeting adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

Farah Ameen

Next meeting: Tuesday, August 9, 2022; 9am; Zoom

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**Public Body:** The Jones Library, Inc. Personnel, Planning and Policy Committee

**Date:** Tuesday, September 13, 2022

**Time:** 9-10:00am

**Location:** Zoom Webinar

## Meeting Minutes

Attending: Tamson Ely, Farah Ameen, Sharon Sharry, and 1 member of the public

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1. Meeting called to order at 9:05 a.m.
2. No public comment.
3. Equity Subcommittee update: Three applicants so far: Farah and Sharon agreed that conversations with two community members went really well. One person has vast experience with DEI work and could possibly chair the committee. The other candidate, a high school senior, has been working on accessibility issues most of his life, and has collaborated with the high school English teacher on books for a disability literature course. Still looking for a couple more candidates. Subcommittee appointments will be discussed at the October 3 Trustee meeting. Farah hopes we can start committee work by the end of October.
4. Director evaluation update: Tammy is collating responses. She has printouts from online evaluations as well as from the box. She's heard from HR and the Town Manager, as well as some staff. There are comments she would like to discuss with Sharon, and hopes to approve the draft before October. She asked if she should meet with Sharon before writing her summary. Sharon said she needs to read all the original evaluations. Chris Hoffmann used to share a draft summary in advance of sending the final version to Trustees. Tammy appreciated Sharon's self-evaluation.
5. New curator update: Sharon hopes to have members of the Equity subcommittee on the interview committee for this position. Town's HR director and Assistant HR directors have left their positions so we are behind schedule. Elizabeth Proulx is the new assistant in the office.
6. Meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

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## Sharon Sharry Evaluation October 2022

In this Jones Library Trustees' official evaluation of the Library Director, non-public feedback was provided by the Trustees, Library staff, town staff, Friends of the Jones Library and the general public. The actual contents of the non-public feedback will be discussed with the Director by the Chair of the Jones Library Personnel, Policy and Planning Committee. This is also available to any Trustee who wishes to view them.

This has been yet another stressful year for the Director and the staff. The beginning of the year came with the lifting of many COVID restrictions. The Building Committee began its hard work and the North Amherst Library was relocated to the Mill District in order to construct the new meeting room and rest rooms. The projected rise in building costs due to COVID and supply shortage has increased the projected cost of the Library renovations and expansion. This led to more work with the Town Manager and the Town Council to secure a vote to continue work on design development and construction documents to the bid phase, when the project will be reconsidered. Many libraries statewide with MBLC grants are facing the same projected increases and together they will be working to secure additional state funds. In addition, retirements and some resignations in Library staffing have been challenging, and the Library and town are both working on increasing equity and inclusion hiring to diversify the staff.

In general, there was significant praise for the Director's ability to work on many complicated projects and activities at the same time.

The Director started the year with five goals:

1. Continue to support the work of the Friends Development Committee including meeting with and informing donors about the Library and reaching their goal of raising \$175,000.
2. Continue to work on the Library's renovation/expansion project, including but not limited to the development of portable programming, securing interim location(s), working on the designs (interior and exterior), and holding community outreach sessions.
3. To develop and implement staffing plans, including but not limited to the development of portable programming, for both the North Amherst and Jones Library Building Projects.
4. Continue to support the work of the Friends Capital Campaign Committee, including meeting with and informing donors about the project, and to begin to reach their goal of raising \$5.6 Million.
5. Continue to work with the Library's staff Equity Collaborative Team and the Town's Equity Core Team in order to build staff and organizational capacity through training for new skills and competencies to advance racial equity with the goal of beginning to update Library policies, procedures, and guidelines, as well as to diversify the Library's workforce.

In the Board's evaluations of progress on these goals, most rated it as commendable, with some satisfactory ratings as well. Specific comments related to goals included: significant progress on all goals, exemplary success managing the complexities - logical, financial, tactical and political - of the building project, working with the Friends on the Annual Fund Drive and the Capital Campaign, including

meeting with donors, and seeking additional funding through grants including state and federal funds as well. The Director worked diligently at diversifying the staff, reaching out to historically marginalized groups, and offering a safe space to diverse groups in our community.

There were five staff comments, the majority very positive. There was one identified Friends evaluation which described the Director's enthusiasm and commitment to the Friends. There were additional comments, 5 placed in Library boxes in the atrium and 6 comments online, again most positive. However, in all public and staff comments there were some comments and suggestions which will be discussed with the Director.

Finally, the Town Manager and the HR Director both commented on how well the Director works collaboratively with the town, manages staff and Library budgets competently, meets all town deadlines, and is well organized. Also noted was how well she communicates effectively, and has articulated a vision for the planned renovation and expansion of the Library.

It is clear from the many evaluations received during a tumultuous year that the Library has managed well under the exceptional guidance of the Director. The Board is pleased with her progress and the strength of her leadership.