

Meeting of the Jones Library, Inc. and the Town Libraries' Board of Trustees
March 16, 2022 9:00 a.m. meeting conducted via Zoom webinar

Members Present: Austin Sarat, Farah Ameen, Lee Edwards, Alex Lefebvre, Tamson Ely, and Bob Pam
Also Present: Sharon Sharry, Lewis Mainzer, and members of the public and press (5 attendees)

1. Meeting called to order at 9:01 a.m.
2. Changes/Additions to the Agenda
3. **MOTION:** To approve the minutes of February 23, 2022. Approved as amended 6-0.
4. Public Comment: None
5. President's Report
 - a. Incredibly grateful to the staff working through transition with the mask mandate being dropped. Library Director commented that most people are still masked, and things are transitioning smoothly. Still not up to the same amount of traffic as pre COVID. Until in person programming returns, which was a key driver of bringing people to the building, don't expect numbers to go back to "normal".
 - b. President participated on a call with MA state congressional staff around necessity of and supporting libraries. Appreciate our current legislators who are very supportive of library and library services.
6. Committee Reports/Questions for Committees
 - a. Library Building Committee
 - Met yesterday, still waiting to finalize the arrangement with architects. The hope is to have finalized by next week. Have a new lead with the OPM, Craig DeCarlo. Ken Guyette continues as supervisor. Beginning discussions about possible swing spaces owned by the Town for temporary locations. Design & Outreach Subcommittees have been formed and have met.
 - Are there any comments from community members yet that can be viewed by Design Subcommittee with FAA? Not yet, because need to hire FAA, get the committees up to speed, and then go out to community.
 - Do we have a plan for publicizing about outreach committee – what can we do to avoid people feeling they did not participate until it was 'too late'? Suggestion about using flyers, District Superintendent newsletter, PGO blogs, etc.
 - Discussed past community outreach for the feasibility and preliminary design phase, continuing community discussions through process and will be building on past efforts to assure that renovated and expanded library serve the community.
 - b. Buildings and Facilities Committee
 - **MOTION:** That the Board approve the *Preservation Restriction Agreement between the Trustees of the Jones Library, Inc. and the Town of Amherst* included in the meeting packet. Approved 6-0.
 - The Library used CPA funds in the past to make capital improvements, one of the requirements was a permanent restriction on the building and property. Because the Town uses a permanent restriction it must be approved by the State. The first HPR was a local version that the Town, Library and Amherst Historic approved, but the state did not approve that agreement and requested their 'standard' version. The Library and Town have some relationships that are atypical to most HPRs and the state HPR agreement was amended to better reflect this as well as incorporating some comments/questions brought by members of the public.

- Once recorded this HPR is recorded we won't need to have another one recorded. The restriction is on the entire property but makes clear that only the 1928 building is significant. It allows for removal of the 1990 addition. Any addition and renovation would be subject to review under the HPR. The HPR currently restricts only the exterior, not the interior. The Library is approved for CPA funds for the Special Collections as part of the renovation and expansion. We will not need to record another HPR for that work, but it is likely there might be an amendment to the existing document that would cover future funding.
- The HPR also impacts major landscaping, such as the Kestrel Land Trust proposal.
- Kestrel Land Trust Proposal – Library Director will work over the next week with the Kestrel Land Trust to prepare a written document to send to the Amherst Historical Society for review according to the HPR at their next meeting in April.
- NAL Building Project – Library Director will meet with Town Manager to review suggested changes to proposed plans and request funding for furniture necessary to minimize impact to loss of collection and programming spaces of the project.
- Question if we could some notifiers for NAL patrons regarding where they can go etc. and what that will look like during the move? Yes, once we have dates from the Town and know when things will proceed.
- Historic Structures Report – report to be sent to JLBC. This will be an ongoing process that requires input from the historic tax consultant and architects. George, as a member of both B&F and the Design Subcommittee will act as a liaison with respect to decisions that may impact future operating costs or obligations for the Library.
- Civil war tablets display at the library. May be eligible for CPA funds or historic tax credits. There is a working group in Town regarding the Civil War Tablets – they are looking at CPA funds and they are still in discussions around where is the best place to house the tablets.

c. Development

- Annual Fund Report
 - As of March 8, 2022 - \$117k from 670 gifts.
 - Another appeal letter will be sent out soon. There will be more appeals this year than in the past and working on education around capital campaign versus the annual fund and different missions of each.
- Capital Campaign Report
 - Cash in hand from individual donors \$1,007,620 plus additional individual pledges to total \$1,578,578. Portion of the development committee had a good site visit with the Beveridge Foundation, grant request pending of \$50k – should hear by the end of April.
 - In touch with state and national representatives and received encouragement and working on a proposal to send to Representative Domb.
 - Does the Board need to vote on transfer funds from certain accounts (VanSteenberg)? No - read prior vote on Steenberg request.
 - Does the Board need to send over 100% of amount raised or net? Net amount - read section of MOU.
 - The Sammy's will be kept separate from capital campaign event which brings it back into staffs' laps. Want to have in the Library this year.

d. Budget

- Budget on a monthly basis has a 2-page summary. Library Director working on a creating a new periodic summary.
- **MOTION:** The Board approve the FY23 Budget Request dated March 8, 2022. Approved 6-0.
- Discussion at Budget Committee around programming. The programming dollar amount is the same as last year. The amount committed to staff training and travel is increased. The total budget for programming is the same, but the amount allocated in the budget for children's has been doubled and adult has been halved.

- Total budget request \$2,741,684 – and represents a balanced budget.
- Library Director clarified that programming has been level funded to \$30k. The actual spending of the budget on programming is determined by what staff can put together and what staff feels they need to provide. It is a fungible amount by category that staff ultimately decide how they want to spend the money and how they make the request to the Friends. Also noted that we increased the state funding to keep programming level funded.
- President, Library Director and Town Manager had a constructive conversation to revisit the MOU entered into in 1984 regarding town funding of the Library. All agreed to have conversation.
- NAL Electricity drop- does this assume cost sharing with Town once project is completed? Town is open to taking over expenses but not a done deal.
- State Aid – are we setting aside state aid again as a ‘reserve’ –yes, building up reserve again
- Noted that the budget is a statement of our priorities and appreciate the importance in this year’s budget around outreach and staff development.

e. Investment

- As of the end of February, the Endowment is \$9,307,924 and the Woodbury Fund is \$706,9351
- Noted that withdrawal for the monies that were earmarked to move to capital campaign – that will appear as a reduction in the endowment. Will need to schedule a meeting with Vanguard.

f. Personnel, Planning, and Policy

- Library Director Goals and mid-year ‘check in’ are in the Trustee packet.
- Question about utility of singling out the goals. How do we develop goals that are different from what the Library Director would otherwise be doing or are what she would be doing? How do we measure or assess the goals?
- Comment that these were originally developed to direct the Director’s time. Not sure they have done that. Seem to be a statement of things the Library Director would do otherwise.
- Should we consider using the goals as a statement of priorities of Board?
- Comment that previous Boards dealt with some issues around micromanaging and the implementation of goals was a way to point out areas of concern and allow to report back. Use as a tool for discussion about how matters are handled.
- The President articulated some of the ways in which the Library Director is supervised including the his monthly meetings with the Library Director, the annual evaluation, and meeting with chair of PPP annually.
- Staff are interested in establishing an Equity Subcommittee that would include staff, community members and a Trustee. Would connect with Town Equity subcommittee – looking at policies, best way to educate staff and community, making the library an inclusive place to work, establishment of internships to help bring in new staff who are more reflective of the community.

7. Friends of The Jones Library System Report – Lewis exited the meeting prior to his report.

8. Director’s Report

- **MOTION:** To approve the expenditure of \$4,050 from the Woodbury Fund for virtual RPG for teens and tweens. Approved 6-0-
- Programs are always booked and waitlisted. We don’t have enough of these programs. Typically between 20-25 teens attend.
- Cyndi Harbeson working again with the Town on the Juneteenth celebration – responsible for images for walking tour and doing historical accuracy checks.
- On the Same Page event happening now – all of the programs are being held online, including author talk
- Tent coming in the middle of April.
- Hampshire Hope – provided opioid rescue kit, plexiglass enclosure with 3 doses of Narcan for easy access. Hung up near our bathrooms as that is where overdoses have occurred in the past. We get free refills.

- Is there a concern about children having access? It is hung high and it causes no harm if used by someone not having an overdose. All the librarians have been trained on the use.
- Northampton road project – will likely impact people coming to the Library and parking on Amity Street. People should consider parking in CVS lot.
- 2 DVD players donated to the library – a lot of people got rid of DVD players but still want to watch DVDs. Now can check out DVD and a DVD player

9. Etc.

- a. Clarification to statement in prior meeting regarding fees to Vanguard. Last year fees were \$23,441, prior year \$23,653. The current year may be close to \$25k (as stated in prior meeting) as the fee is linked to value of the accounts.
- b. Town was a destination for people needing a place to be cool or warm. Town working with Craig's doors providing nighttime and daytime shelter.
- c. Tent continues to exist for programming especially for children under the age of 5.
- d. Discussion about in person meetings versus online? Not entirely sure when Town will ask the Boards to make a decision. Each Board will make their own decisions. Cannot do hybrid meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Alex Lefebvre