Meeting of the Town's Library Board of Trustees, and the Jones Library Inc  
25 March 2024 - 9 a.m. – meeting conducted online via Zoom Webinar

Members Present: Austin Sarat, Tamson Ely, Lee Edwards, Bob Pam, Eugene Goffredo, Farah Ameen

Member Not Present: None

Also Present: Sharon Sharry, Bob Peirent, Richard Morse, Members of the Public (6 attendees at start of meeting)

1. Call to Order/Attendance – Austin call to order @9:00am.
2. Changes/Additions to Agenda.
   a. Bob Pam asked for a motion on the budget
   b. Bob Pam asked if the Jones had policies for whistle-blower, retention and destruction, conflict of interest. Austin stated PPP would look into this.
3. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting(s) (2-12-24). Approved
4. Public Comment. No public comments
5. President’s Report.
   a. Amherst Historical Society Property Easements Negotiations
      i. Easement talks continue
      ii. MOTION: To approve the temporary and permanent easements between the property of the Board of the Amherst Historical Society and the Board of the Jones Library, Inc. – motion approved subject to confirmation of insurance details
      iii. Bob Peirent: clarified why there were two documents due to two parties (town and Historical Society), some minor revisions around specific measurements, start/end dates (will be filled in after bids received)
      iv. Questions:
         1. Bob Pam asked about cost of required insurance, is that included in current budget; per Bob Peirent stated it’s in MoA, insurance to be covered by contractor, Bob Peirent will confirm party responsible for paying
         2. Bob Pam questioned the second $1 amount, Bob Peirent explained total amount was from two line items, each one needed a non-zero balance
         3. Bob Pam had some typo/grammar comments/questions
6. Committee Reports/Questions for Committees.
   a. Library Building Committee (Sarat).
      [Project Update [Schedule; Budget; Designs; Interim Spaces; Movers RFP]]
      i. Sharon re: interim spaces, work continues, close to finalizing, should have more to say in several weeks
         1. Bob Pam asked about how long it would take to pack, move, unpack. Per Sharon packing would take about 4 weeks to pack, 4 weeks to unpack in interim spaces, cautioned this is an estimate. Bob Perient stated by statute, towns have 30 days to accept bids, then several weeks for insurance, bonding, approvals, reviews, then another two months for the official go-forward to be issued (this two months would be when the move would start), then ground-breaking
         2. Bob Pam asked about removing of ceilings and insulation, per Sharon/Austin they will get back to Bob on this question
   b. Buildings and Facilities Committee (Ameen).
      i. Nothing to report, committee has not met yet, dependent on move details
c. Development (Edwards).
   (Annual Fund Report; Capital Campaign Report)
   i. Fundraising slightly ahead of last year
   ii. Explained difference between capital fund and ongoing fund (for programming)
   iii. Ongoing series of library tours are drawing larger numbers (16 people per tour)
   iv. Austin asked about numbers in Community Campaigns, some minor discrepancy, Lee to clarify, thought it is donors changing the amount they pledged
   v. Bob Pam asked if possible to have a column indicating intention of gifts versus actual amount of donation, asked if report can reflect that. Sharon replied some gifts are not connected to pledges, also said there are difficulties in reporting that way due to the way people donate, lag of payments to reporting, but mapping won’t be clean due to this. Lee stated that expected conversion of pledges to cash donations is fine

d. Personnel, Planning, and Policy (Ely). (10 minutes)
   (Trustee Bylaws; Deaccession Request)
   i. MOTION: To approve the revised “Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of The Jones Library, Inc. and of the Amherst Town Library. Approved
   ii. MOTION: To deaccession out-of-scope items from the Amherst Historical Society transfer listed in a memo dated February 2, 2024 from Katherine Whitcomb. Approved
      1. Katherine Whitcomb explained about above transfer, 228 items don’t fall into policy of Library Special Collections, so approved of the return of those 228 items to Amherst Historical Society
      2. Austin asked about how the policy worked, Katherine explained that accepting collection items required a direct connection to Amherst after examining each item (example was examining/reading a Springfield newspaper for specific references to Amherst and that a Springfield newspaper belonged in Springfields collections.)

e. Budget (Pam). (20 minutes)
   (FY24 Budget; FY25 Budget Request)
   i. MOTION: That the budget be amended to add $25,000 to the programming line, to be balanced by an increase of $25,000 in the gifts and grants line, and therefore an increase in the total budget of $25,000. Approved
      1. Sharon proposed a 0.1% decrease in budget for next fiscal year due to estimates of changes of utilities costs, other expenditures due to move, programming changes due to move. Expect utilities to be this fiscal year lower due to lower costs in interim spaces, programming costs lower due to interim space move and staff bandwidth due to move.
      2. Bob Pam gave an overview of budget in context of changing expenses due to move, personnel costs, state aid. Suggesting programming part of budget too low and should increase in programming and town visibility will increase engagement and therefore help all fundraising.

Sharon stated due to move there is a staff bandwidth due to move plus interim spaces doesn’t have programming space. Sharon stated it’s important to be conservative in promising programming increases due to these issues.

Farah felt it might be unrealistic to expect increase programming due to all the challenges of the library construction even though increasing programming would be a positive thing, that we should trust the Director and staff to determine programming amounts
Lee stated that it would be good to come back in the second half of the year to see if budget should be adjusted if programming can be increased, that we should trust director in projections of amount of programming, that it is a fluid situation.

Eugene asked if Board could commit to formally commit to revisiting after the move is accomplished and things have settled down.

Austin suggested we build in the additional budget upfront to provide the additional funds (approximately $25,000) to be used as needed based on what the post-move programming opportunities looks like, but understanding it is not a mandate to spend all that. Sharon agreed to this.

ii. Motion to approve the budget as amended: passed

f. Investment (Pam). (10 minutes)
(Quarterly Report)

i. Bob Pam gave status on ongoing move from Vanguard to Mercer, amount of endowment draw

ii. Bob Pam stated he was most likely moving from Amherst on June 14, 2024, and suggested a current Board meeting should join the investment committee and that the board should start to consider a new member to replace him

iii. Austin stated when Bob Pam submitted formal resignation notice, a defined Town process would start to fill Bob’s seat and thanked Bob for his service to the Board


a. Friends have had internal discussions around the future of the Friends

b. Expressed ongoing contact between Friends Executive Board and Trustees, possibly an annual social event, or each meeting Lee brings a different Trustee to a Friends meeting

c. Austin and Sharon confirmed there were Friends/Trustees meetings pre-COVID, Sharon to work with Friends for a closer collaboration similar to situation prior to COVID

8. Director’s Report (Sharry).

a. MOTION: To approve moving $500 from Woodbury fund for adult programming. Passed

9. Adjourned by Austin at 10:51am.

Respectfully submitted by Eugene Goffredo