

**Meeting of the Jones Library, Inc. and the Town Libraries' Board of Trustees**  
**May 14, 2021 10:30 a.m. meeting conducted via Zoom webinar**

Members Present: Austin Sarat, Lee Edwards, Alex Lefebvre, Tamson Ely, Chris Hoffmann, and Bob Pam  
Also Present: Cyndi Harbeson, George Hicks, Lewis Mainzer, and members of the public

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- I. Meeting called to order at 10:31 a.m.
- II. **MOTION:**
  - A. To approve the minutes of April 9, 2021. Approved 5-0-0 (Pam absent).
  - B. To approve the minutes of April 13, 2021. Approved 5-0-0 (Pam absent).
- III. **Public Comment:** None.
- IV. **President's Report:**
  - A. Date of Next Board Meeting - June 16, 2021 at 4:30pm
  - B. Gratitude to Director and staff for work put into reopening plan. Appreciate notes sent from Lefebvre from MBLC Deep Dive for Trustees on Library reopening.
  - C. Acknowledge Chris Hoffmann as longest serving Trustee currently on the Board. Appreciate his knowledge, hard work, and work he has done over the years.
- V. Committee Reports:
  - A. PPP
    1. Heard a presentation from Special Collections on a deaccession proposal. Would like to have a few more people review the list; form a committee to review and then come back to PPP with recommendation.
    2. **MOTION:** To approve "Jones Library Plan for Phased Resumption of Services to the Public" as dated May 8, 2021. Approved 5-1-0 (Pam - no).
    3. Plan is an evolving plan, but actual reopening is to be set by the Trustees.
    4. Cindy Harbeson presented plan:
      - a. require everyone to wear masks unless age 5 and under;
      - b. contact tracing; not in favor of contact tracing but Amherst Health Department, is requiring so feel need to do it with use of greeters (one to monitor capacity and one to conduct contact tracing)
      - c. occupancy levels posted throughout the Library
      - d. 6ft social distancing, hand sanitizing stations, panels
      - e. no seating other than computers and ESL
      - f. restrooms open to public
      - g. first two weeks limited hours to get things rolling with department heads acting as greeters
      - h. encouraging to limit time to 30 minutes; 1 hour if using computers (Town is offering a number of options as cooling stations; want to advertise availability)
      - i. resume ESL tutoring and beginner class
      - j. materials checked out at circulation desk
      - k. virtual programming may be scaled back; in-person programming outside
      - l. Impact of CDC decision yesterday regarding vaccinated individuals not needing masks or social distancing? Staff are concerned about how this will impact mask non-compliance; but will still require masks to be worn.
      - m. If mask non-compliance, staff will work with patron to either put on a mask or wait outside for services to be brought out to them. Would ideally like someone to call other than police if can't get someone to wear a mask or leave the building. At the moment the only option is the police, but would love to explore other options.

- n. The proposed plan is very conservative. Deliberately tried to be more conservative than the state guidelines. Gating criteria started with state guidelines but staff felt did not go far enough in terms of safety and felt needed to go further. Looked at MBLC, town and state guidelines. State basis everything on two-week turnover, felt needed to be more conservative by going to three weeks.
  - o. Bob Pam joined the meeting 10:54am
  - p. MBLC and other libraries around the state have clearly stated that reopening must be done in conjunction with staff. Important not to go too fast for staff comfort levels or too slow. Requested that we have criteria that can be easily monitored by staff and patrons. State tracks on two-week basis. If going to use 3 weeks basis ,could we provide information perhaps on our site so easily understandable where we are relative to our metrics?
  - q. ESL is a priority and has been since day one. Computers will be inside (8 computers) which allows for longer use period while Library is open. Transitioning tent to more programming options which will be up to staff. Families will be another priority. Will continue to monitor Library usage as re-open and adjust plan accordingly. Staff want to do nightly de-briefs and will report to Trustees periodically on services.
  - r. Will be using the Town's self certification form for staff.
  - s. Concern expressed about Library taking so long to reopen. Can we do more outside while we are transitioning?
  - t. Moving services indoors is an 'all hands on deck' effort and it is difficult to maintain high level of programming and get the building and services ready for reopening. Trying to find the balance.
  - u. Gating Criteria in the re-opening plan is meant as a guide.
  - v. We currently meet the threshold for Phase 3, but would like to start in Phase 2.
  - w. Contact Tracing - MBLC call seemed to state that contract tracing is no longer required by the state. It is Cyndi's understanding that current MA guidelines under which the Library falls 'other sectors not listed' should maintain contract tracing if needed. Amherst Health Department interprets as needed to mean we must do it.
  - x. Contact tracing - how can the Trustees support the staff in pushing back on the Health Department as suggested by the MBLC around contact tracing? It was the understanding that libraries are required to conduct contact tracing based on state guidelines but that the MBLC does not want it done and was pushing back against the state. If MBLC is interpreting as does not apply anymore, think can go back to Health Department who is requiring based on state guidelines. Does it make sense to get a statement from MBLC directly about state requirements and contract tracing. Would like to clarify with MBLC if libraries are still required by state to conduct contact tracing and then follow up accordingly.
  - y. Town Hall requires contact tracing.
  - z. Question if we are we willing to use volunteers if they are not vaccinated?
5. Library Director Mid Year Evaluation
- a. would like some metrics on equity group to track progress
  - b. building renovation and expansion may be on hold for a bit which may impact what can be accomplished
  - c. Shout out to staff of equity collaborative; goal is to come up with metrics.
  - d. Comment regarding desire to see more detail in the mid-term self-evaluation on status of each section. Discussed this document has not typically been an outline of all things done like in annual review. If want to have this be more structured to report on what has been done to date, need to let Library Director know this is expectation.
  - e. Intent of PPP was not to be a detailed review but to reassess, tweak or adjust goals and touch base.
  - f. Question regarding status of temporary move - working with MBLC on planning the move to the temporary location. Will go through the Building Committee that is not formed yet (and is on hold for now). Department Heads are looking at square footage and technology needs. Will be working with Building Committee and community once we move forward.

- g. What is the work that needs to be done for the moving out phase, work with B&F to review and have them report to Trustees

B. Budget

Committee has not met since last meeting. Current spending and donations are on target as anticipated. Received some additional funding from COVID Cares Funds. Finance Committee met yesterday, Library Director presented approved budget. No real questions from Finance Committee so anticipate approval by the Town.

C. Investment

1. December 31, 2020 report that Endowment was slightly under \$9.1M. As of March 31, 2021 it was around \$9.4M but went up on April 30, 2021 to \$9.6 M and now down to \$9.5M. Endowment at higher levels than in last 10 years or more.
2. Discussion was had with Vanguard around possible risk to and strategy for Endowment if commitment to fund raising for the project is not raised - Vanguard conducted a detailed analysis and provided the following recommendations:
3. don't change current investment policy which would reduce rate of return over the next three years but only reduce risk by much smaller amount
4. as we get closer to conclusion of project will have a better understanding of if a withdrawal might be needed and size, if likely required, sequester portions on a slow basis over a 12 month period or so into a low risk fund
5. rebalancing rules currently following for allocation only reviewed once per quarter. For the future, will review on a daily basis, at any point if out of balance more than 5% will do rebalancing.

D. Development

1. Annual Fund from the Friends to date is 996 gifts resulting in about \$139k. Recent mailing went out and anticipate one more mailing in June. Feel confident will get to goal of \$150k.
2. Still between 90 and 100 individual donors with about \$900k. Will report on exact numbers next time.

E. Building & Facilities Have not met since the prior Board meeting.

VI. **Friends of the Jones Library System:** Nothing new to report.

VII. **Director's Report:**

- A. Summer Reading Program planning is under way, will be asking for funds from the Friends
- B. Huge thank you to staff for all of the work they have been doing and acknowledge 'scariness' around reopening.
- C. HEPA filters were approved to be paid under CARES Act funds. Will be ordered and in place, bathroom exhaust fans are fixed.

VIII. Could the Board meet in person in June? Town Manager is not seeing in person public meetings until after Labor Day.

Meeting adjourned at 12:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Alex Lefebvre