

**Meeting of the Jones Library, Inc., and the Town Libraries' Board of Trustees**  
**May 25, 2022 9:00 a.m. meeting conducted via Zoom webinar**

Members Present: Austin Sarat, Farah Ameen, Alex Lefebvre, Tamson Ely, and Bob Pam (Lee Edwards absent)

Also Present: Sharon Sharry, Lewis Mainzer, and members of the public and press (4 attendees)

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1. Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m.
2. Changes/Additions to the Agenda
3. **MOTION:** To approve the minutes of April 27, 2022. Approved 5-0.
4. Public Comment: None
5. President's Report - Exciting moment for the library. Great things being done every day to serve the residents and users of the library. Also, exciting things at the North Amherst Library as well as at the Jones. FAA has launched schematic design phase. There are many people who do extraordinary work for the library and acknowledging one person is problematic since so many people do so much but want to acknowledge work done by Trustee Lefebvre on the Building Committee and Outreach.
6. Committee Reports/Questions for Committees
  - a. *Library Building Committee*
    - Met yesterday, in process of gathering input from public in design phase. Working with architects and incorporating public comments. Forwarding comments to architects for their consideration. Large number of insightful and enlightened comments. Public comments are helping the JLBC think about things in new ways or are deepening the thought process. Expect first report from FAA on May 27 at 9 am and then the designs will go from Design to JLBC at their next meeting. Outreach effort launched including Newsletter to help people keep up to date on the project.
    - On-line comments platforms include Amherst Talks (UMass partnership), Padlet (images of other libraries and by FAA for comments and feedback on design feel), Engage Amherst site, QR code on SOOFA signs downtown, library project site updated. Keeping community informed through Newsletter (weekly at the moment but will slow down once project hits different phases) provides information and many links about upcoming meetings, link to view public comments collected and results of those discussions, timelines, etc.
    - Two upcoming virtual meetings (not to include Designer or OPM) June 1 at 6 pm – review of updated schematics that will be presented on 5/27. Give opportunity to public to view and provide questions and feedback to carryforward to next JLBC meeting.
    - 6/8 virtual meeting at 7m (no OPM or Designer) – opportunity to review where we are in the project, ways community can be engaged, show how to use tools. Q&A about process and feedback.
    - Outreach weekly at Farmers Market on Saturdays, Amherst Survival Center on Thursdays, event at Olympia Oaks with Town, Amherst Recreation and CRESS was a great event with 3 trustees in attendance to help gather feedback and talk to the community.
    - 290 unique comments gathered to date with 964 comments in total (boosting other people's comments). 84 unique comments (292 total comments) were reviewed by JLBC at last night's meeting. The majority of the comments are either already contemplated in the design or were approved to forwarded to the Designer for consideration in the schematics. The inclusion of the comments will ultimately depend on feasibility, ability to work with the design and cost.

- Comment that JLBC is a town committee and includes members of the public and town officials. Want to express appreciation of Angela Mills and her extraordinary work on the committee and in helping with Outreach and all of the elements of the project.

b. *Buildings and Facilities Committee*

- North Amherst Library – contract has been signed and project is moving forward. The project will be about 10-11 months. George Hicks-Richards will be on vacation but upon return we will work with the town on the logistics of the move into a temporary location. The Mill District has generously agreed to donate a space for the temporary location of the library (next to The Closet).
- Question - hearing cost is \$1.7M. or roughly the cost of two-bedroom houses built from scratch. Hoping to learn from NAL project that we can reduce delays or any other kinds of things. Where a project has a timeframe and where it exceeds a timeframe, costs can be reduced. Is there any way to have a contract with penalties? Discussed Town project funded by a private donor, and they are engaged in contract negotiations.
- Kinsey Garden move to Kestrel Land Trust was heard by Amherst Historic Commission and was very well received and approved. Root pruning in the spring and plants to be moved next year and then holes to be filled in for safety purposes. Landscaping design will be part of the building project.

c. *Development* – no report

d. *Budget*

- Library Director made an excellent budget presentation to the Town departments. Relationship between Town and Library are very good thanks to Library Director and her understanding of the budget and library needs.

e. *Investment*

- Vanguard management fees have been announced that they will rise as of October 1. Minimum fee of \$30k per year, increase from our current rate based upon current asset values. Typically use AUM as the basis for fees but often there is a minimum. Based on AUM as of December 31, 2021, fee would have been \$25k-\$26k. Since 12/31 the market has been negative and the AUM as of April 30 is \$8.7M plus \$700k for Woodbury. Would have produced fees of \$24k per year. We will pay more than in the best but still a relatively small fee for the industry.
- Market has been going down, as of April 30 \$8,725,831 and Woodbury \$717,927.
- Overall average return with Vanguard since moved funds under their management has been 7%.

f. *Personnel, Planning, and Policy*

- **MOTION:** To approve the revised and updated mileage reimbursement rates as recommended by the PPP. Approved 5-0.
- Library not currently in line with State and Federal rates. Increasing rate to be in line with state and federal standards.
- What is the likely change in budget from these changed rates – The budget already includes an increase as we expected to have increased travel for staff around professional development, community outreach, etc.
- **MOTION:** To approve the evaluation packet and forms for the annual evaluation of the Director as recommended by the PPP. Approved 5-0.
- Based on prior forms with update including the Library Director Goals that were approved in the past and the inclusion of a specific form for the Friends.
- Question - would like to look at the timing for setting goals for the year beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>. Typically set the goals halfway through the year and would like to set them closer to July 1. The goals do not actually follow the fiscal budget but the hiring date of the Library Director. October 3 was her date of hire. Evaluation is actually set to anniversary date of October 3 when a new contract is signed.

7. Friends of The Jones Library System Report

- Par 3 Golf Tournament sponsored by Friends on August 20 at Amherst Golf Club. Trustees sponsored a hole but hope they will join as well. Gratitude expressed to Lewis and the Friends for all of the work they do on behalf of the Library

8. Director's Report

- **MOTION:** To approve two Woodbury Fund withdrawals totaling \$23,732; 1) \$4,525 for staff development (i.e., Annual MLA Conference) and 2) \$19,207 for various public programs and monthly wi-fi hotspots expenses. Approved 5-0.
- Wi-fi hot spots were originally funded by a grant. Grant has expired and there is a monthly cost to maintain them.
- Updated Schematic Designs - had a chance to meet with the architects – they were able to incorporate a lot of the staff concerns. Believe people will really like what Designers will be showing on Friday and encourage everyone to attend
- Cyndi Harbeson – there will be a gathering on Friday at 1 pm at Munson Library. All are invited to stop by and say thank you. Cyndi has only been at the Jones for 6-7 years but can't think of anyone who has accomplished more in that time frame. In Special Collections, she 'found' things not properly put away, treated things the way they are supposed to be treated archivally. Reached out to the Community and brought Special Collections into the Town of Amherst. The Jones archive has always been spectacular, but she has been able to spotlight it, share it, and bring excitement to the community. Very sad to see her go but she will be the new director of the Belchertown Library. During COVID, she took on things that were not her responsibility and took on so many additional challenges. She crafted all of our COVID and reopening procedures, took over staffing of the branches and their outreach. Her biggest contribution has been bringing the Jones out into the community. The Trustees want to convey deep gratitude and deep wishes to Cyndi.

Meeting adjourned at 9:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Alex Lefebvre