Meeting of the Jones Library, Inc., and the Town Libraries’ Board of Trustees
September 20, 2023 5:00 p.m. meeting conducted via Zoom webinar

Members Present: Austin Sarat, Alex Lefebvre, Tamson Ely, Lee Edwards, Farah Ameen, and Bob Pam
Also Present: Sharon Sharry, Lewis Mainzer, and members of the public (1 attendee)

I. Meeting called to order at 5:01 p.m.

II. Changes/Additions to Agenda - None

III. Approval of Minutes
   A. **MOTION:** To approve the minutes of July 25, 2023. **Approved 6-0.**
   B. **MOTION:** To approve the minutes of August 1, 2023. **Approved 6-0.**

IV. Public Comment - None

V. President’s Report
   A. Noted that Trustee Lefebvre will not be running for re-election and thanked her for her service. Made note of her efforts specific to sustainability, community outreach, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and working on behalf of staff.
   B. Trustee Picture to be rescheduled. Library Director to forward a poll to determine a date.

VI. Committee Reports/Question for Committees
   A. **Library Building Committee (LBC)**
      i. Project is proceeding. Wonderful to see work of team to advance the project. Now in Construction Documents phase. Will have a meeting of LBC to decide on the external brick work and to think again about the question about how we are going to ensure the library is as sustainable as it can be. In light of the new energy code, will be discussing proceeding with solar panels. In the process of consulting with various boards and the permitting process. Have met with the Design Review Board and Historic Commission and will meet with them again. The team of architects, OPM, and landscape designers have been in attendance of the various board meetings. Historic Commission approved the demolition request. There will be additional meetings relative to historic preservation.
      ii. Question – estimate of site work has increased by 35%. Does this mean the landscaping has been priced out and that is that the increase? Is landscaping where we should be spending additional funds? It appears we have not increased furniture and fixtures number yet. Question about increased levels of rainfall and if drainage plans will be adequate. Also noted that some level of decorative work would be a good addition to the exterior. Chair requested these comments/questions be put in writing so they can be fully responded to by Sharon and team.
      iii. Comment that there was a good discussion in the Design Review Board about storm water management and the fact that plans needed to include revised standards of the state which have increased the once in an x floods etc. to a more common occurrence.
      iv. Another cost estimation will be conducted in October. Last cost estimation significantly reduced the costs from the one prior. Will be in a better position in the next few weeks to have a better sense of costs.

   B. **Buildings and Facilities Committee**
      i. Committee met twice since last Trustee meeting, once on August 22 and again yesterday. The minutes from August 22 are in the packet. Details regarding the burst pipe and any materials damaged by that incident were also included in the packet. There were no new updates since that meeting.
      ii. The HVAC module that died – details in the packet. We still do not have an estimate on cost or when it will be repaired. Waiting on the contractor.
iii. Delivery Van – it was supposed to be built this month however the auto worker strike/negotiations may play a part in our expected delivery.

iv. NAL – still waiting on 2 circulation desks but the majority of work appears to be completed, including paving the parking lot and removal of the garage. Have not been given an opening date or date for ceremony yet.

v. Backup Building Project Planning – an updated list of priorities for the building to remain safe and open were provided to Town along with a request to clarify/understand what complying with ECAC sustainability guidelines would mean for any Backup Building Project plans.

vi. Tent is coming down along with the structure. While it is a Town owned tent the Library will retain possession for now. The Town made clear they would not approve the permit again, but we can reapply should it become necessary.

C. Personnel, Planning, and Policy
   i. JEDI update – approved the survey on belonging so that will go out. At the Block party, have a QR code, and community can respond to it that way. Began talking about the Library’s Action Plan.
   
   ii. Question – discussion of the patron behavior policy. What is the status? Two meetings ago, the JEDI committee commented that they liked where the patron behavior policy was headed and gave recommendations and then sent it back to the staff to amend. The amended policy will be sent to PPP for review.

   iii. Comment that the work of the committee is appreciated and the creation of the belonging survey. Hope that this survey or other surveys can be used in the future to inform the design choices for the interior of the library. How the library is ‘put back together’, art etc. Comment that one of the discussion items that comes up continually in the JEDI meetings is the art in the Library. Question if it is possible to go back to CPA to change restrictions on art to allow the Library to create spaces where the community feels more represented and welcome. Library Director stated that the CPA language allows for rotation of art. It does not have to be on the wall all of the time. The new building will have more wall space and could allow for a single location that houses a rotating exhibit of the art restored with CPA money. If that does not work, we could also go back to CPA, if needed.

D. Development
   i. Annual Fund just began in July. Ahead of last year in terms of gifts. As of the end of August a little over $7k from 45 gifts versus the prior year with $6,400 from 37 gifts.
   
   ii. Capital Campaign has raised a little under $8M. Took in almost $18k last month. Noted that the Campaign only reports gifts and pledges that have been received in writing. There are many verbal commitments not yet reported. There is at least another $25k commitment, verbally, awaiting in writing pledge. Believe there are more commitments to come in writing.

   iii. John Lithgow event, September 30 at 7:30 at Johnson Chapel. He will give a chat on libraries, democracy. The response so far has been very good. As of today, 327 tickets reserved. Hoping to fill the chapel. The event is free and open to the public. Encourage donations and people have donated. Will be at the Amherst Block party tomorrow with posters and giving out information where the community can ‘reserve’ tickets. Noted that the expenses against event are minimal. Printing and rental of the space. All money will go directly to the capital campaign.

   iv. Comment that summer months tend to be low point in fund raising. Hopeful that fall months will be fruitful. Friends working on different ways of being in contact with potential and past donors. Also considering long term structures for fundraising for the annual fund.

   v. Will the Sammy’s be held again? The Sammy’s is held entirely by the staff, not the Friends. Because it is so staff intensive, the expectation is that in the spring staff needs to be focused on temporary locations etc. and will likely not have the additional time the Sammy’s takes.

E. Budget
i. Met last week. Director’s report includes materials summarizing FY 23 budget. Any additional costs needed were covered by the surplus in the State Aid account. Unless there are substantial additions to fundraising, will likely use State Aid surplus again this year to bridge any gaps.

ii. Library Director noted that we owe a big thank you to both Mindy Domb and Jo Comerford for voting to increase the amount in state aid line of the state budget. The additional amount makes a big difference to all libraries. Libraries can use the funds however they see fit.

iii. Also noted that this year JCPC recommended a line item for ‘building and maintenance’ needs. This line item was created a few years ago for town buildings and this year for the school buildings. We will need to think about the amount requested and what this might cover in our future JPCP requests.

F. Investment
   i. Current value as of the end of August of Endowment was $8,537,441 and Woodbury $690,390.

VII. Friends of the Jones Library System Report – no report

VIII. Directors Report
   A. **MOTION**: That $4,675 be withdrawn from the Woodbury Fund for Library programming. **Approved 6-0.**
   B. Shout out to staff and their work on summer reading program. Went across all 3 buildings, the attendance figures were very high.
   C. Want to make note of the Library Director’s commitment to staff, and express gratitude and appreciation for the extraordinary work the staff does in constantly going above and beyond.
   D. Noted that comments from some of the Department Heads in the Trustee packet was a great addition. It is a nice reminder of the work that staff is doing in terms of programming, outreach, and services. If it is not additional work, it would be a great addition to the Trustee packets. Library Director noted that she receives emails with details and will try to add to the packets as time permits.
   E. Question if it makes sense to have Department Heads come to meetings with Trustees to introduce themselves to Board Members and give an overview of what is going on at the Library in their departments. Chair suggested he and Library Director would explore the idea further.

IX. Meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Alex Lefebvre