

1 **WHITING LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

2 **DRAFT Minutes – January 11, 2022**

3
4 Trustees Present: Robert Nied, Ed Grossman, David Lord, Rosamund Conroy Lyza Gardner and
5 Cathy Hasbrouck via Zoom Teleconference.

6 Citizens Present Deirdre Doran at the Whiting Library.

7 **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

8 The meeting was called to order by Robert Nied, Chair, at 8:32 AM.

9 **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

10 Robert Nied asked to add an executive session for the discussion of staff compensation to the
11 agenda.

12 **APPROVE DECEMBER 14 AND 28, 2021 MINUTES**

13 The December 14, 2021 minutes were discussed. There were no changes proposed. A motion
14 (David, Lyza) to approve the minutes was made, seconded and approved.

15 The December 28, 2021 minutes were discussed. There were no changes proposed. A motion
16 (Rosamund, Ed) to approve the minutes was made, seconded and approved.

17
18 **DIRECTOR/YOUTH SERVICES REPORT**

19 Deirdre Doran gave the highlights from the report she had sent to the Trustees the previous
20 week.

21 She had attended to many end-of-the-year tasks:

- 22
 - She wrote Annual Reports on library activity for the Chester and Andover Town
 - 23 Reports and sent them to the respective Town Clerks.
 - 24 • She wrote and turned in an extensive report of library activities and statistics for the
 - 25 Vermont Department of Libraries.
 - 26 • She developed several 2022 calendars of library tasks and activities.

27 In light of receiving the grant for library fines, she implemented procedures for informing
28 patrons their fines had been forgiven and charging zero-dollar fines in the future.

29 She worked on raising the credit limit on the library's credit card so she could purchase furniture
30 and computers using the ARPA funds.

31 She got the beeping noise in the foyer corrected. It was a dead battery in the alarm system panel.
32 The fire alarms were also checked when the alarm company visited.

33 An air leak in the sprinkler system was patched. A replacement for the piece of pipe that had
34 failed is planned. A second, smaller leak was also patched. The sprinkler system is about 25
35 years old, which is near the its expected lifetime. The library could start thinking about replacing
36 the system.

1 Deirdre worked on the Strategic Plan, updating it with the results of the last meetings. The
2 Committee has chosen a mission, vision and values statement and will be meeting the day
3 following the Trustee meeting.

4 Carrie King held a lot of events to celebrate the holidays including 3-dimensional snowflakes.
5 In-person story time was not attended. Going forward, story time will be conducted via Zoom.
6 A book club for middle school children will also be held via Zoom. During this period of cold
7 weather and high pandemic activity a wait and see attitude about meeting in person has been
8 taken. The community room is being re-organized and cleaned during the hiatus.

9 Robert Nied asked whether Julie Hance, the town manager was aware of the sprinkler system
10 issue. Deirdre said the information was contained in her building inspection report to the town.

11

12 **TREASURER'S REPORT**

13 Ed said the profit/loss and balance sheets were an end-of-year summary. He said 2021 ended in
14 the black. Several grants were received in 2021 which were not part of the planned budget and
15 contributed to the positive financial outcome. Donations and Book Sales exceeded plan. The
16 2021 fundraising total was \$16,358. Copier use and lost books income was lower than planned
17 due to the pandemic.

18 On the expense side, Payroll and Payroll Expense were down, fundraising expense was up
19 because the Kindful donor management service was not a planned expense. Administration,
20 books and materials were down a bit. The checking account draw of \$3,802 was not needed to
21 balance the revenue and expenses. The planned withdrawal of 1.8% from the Preservation Fund
22 was taken and has been put in the 2022 budget.

23 Ed noted that the 12/31/21 balance sheet does not show the \$3,120 withdrawal from the
24 Preservation Fund, \$175,400. It will be seen in the 2022 records. The money market fund
25 earned \$13 during 2021. About \$13,000 was added to the General Fund during 2021.

26 Ed recapped the discussion of the library budget at the December 29, 2021 Selectboard meeting.
27 The library trustees present at that meeting explained the \$11,370 item which is intended as a
28 stipend toward health insurance for the librarians, with the goal of achieving parity with other
29 Chester municipal employees by 2023. The final proposed 2022 budget has a modest increase in
30 Book Sales over 2021 and includes a line for a silent auction.

31 Ed asked if the trustees needed to make a motion to increase the People's credit card spending
32 limit. Robert thought the Treasurer and the Library Director would have the authority to make
33 that decision. Lyza thought there was a spending policy in place for the library, separate from
34 the mechanics of spending money. The Town Clerk Deb Aldrich has a form to be filled out in
35 order to raise the spending limit on the card from \$1,500 to \$2,500.

36 Ed then discussed the plan for health benefits. He said currently the library offers the two staff
37 members a stipend of \$6,365, the amount the Town of Chester pays for a single person plan-. He
38 said a single person Silver plan from the Vermont Health Connect also costs \$6,365. Ed said
39 progress was being made toward the goal of parity with Town of Chester employees for the
40 librarians.

1 Robert thanked everyone for working so hard to keep the library in good financial shape during
2 the pandemic. He particularly mentioned Ed's efforts to manage the budget and bring the library
3 staff to parity with other municipal employees

4 A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report (Lyza, Rosamund) was made, seconded and approved.

5 **STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT**

6 Deirdre said the committee was working on a draft of a Strategic plan. The plan will define
7 goals and action steps to achieve them. She would know better how close the committee was
8 to agreement on the plan after the meeting of the committee which will be held the next day.
9 Once the committee agrees on a final draft it will be presented to the trustees for feedback.
10 Deirdre mentioned the possibility of finding a copy editor and graphic designer to work on
11 the final document. Lyza offered informal graphic design help.

12 **FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE REPORT**

13 Lyza said the committee will meet Wednesday January 19, 2022 at 4:00 PM. She believed
14 that the November Drive may be the most successful drive to date at about \$17,000 so far.
15 The meeting on the 19th will set a fundraising strategy for 2022 including how many direct
16 mail campaigns will be undertaken in 2022 and what other strategies to raise money will be
17 considered. Lyza noted a donor gave \$5,000 during the November drive and she wanted to
18 discuss honoring and tracking large donors at the Fundraising meeting.

19 Lyza gave details about the November campaign. About \$1,100 in contributions came in
20 through PayPal. The new names added to the donor list from voting and property transfer
21 records brought in \$125. There are a number of undeliverable pieces of mail from the
22 November campaign to be dealt with. Robert said some corporate matching funds came in
23 through Your Cause, a program where employers match employee contributions.

24 Ed said there were 190 different donors to the 2021 drives. One gave \$5,000, three gave
25 between \$1,000 and \$5,000, 72 gave over \$100. Lyza said the conversion rate for the
26 mailing campaigns is very high. Robert suggested that it would make sense to focus on and
27 pursue corporate donors.

28 Rosamund asked what portion of the \$17,000 donations were due to the \$1,000 and up
29 donors. Ed and Lyza figured the total to be \$9,000. Robert said he had not seen a donation
30 from the Vermont Country Store in this campaign. The size of a corporate donation being so
31 much larger than most individual donations meant that it would make sense to put more
32 effort into managing those corporate relationships. A phone call or visit might be needed.
33 Rosamund suggested that corporate donors sometimes prefer to fund a specific program. She
34 suggested the fundraising committee and the program committee could connect on this issue.
35 Lyza asked for help from the other trustees with managing corporate donors. She is very
36 busy with the mechanics of fundraising.

37 **NEW BUSINESS**

38 Robert suggested a date of January 26, 2022 at 8:30 AM for the first meeting of the Program
39 Committee. The meeting will be a combination Zoom and in-person meeting.

40 **OLD BUSINESS**

1 Robert reminded the trustees that nomination papers will be due by January 24, 2022. Cathy
2 Hasbrouck said she would not be running for her library trustee post and had recruited Donna
3 MacNeil Hudkins to run for a trustee position. Lyza Gardner said she was encouraging
4 Donna to run. Rosamund Conroy said Carolyn Frisa was also planning to take out
5 nomination papers.

6 Robert brought up the issue of having a branded e-mail account for each trustee and staff
7 member as a way to isolate library business from personal e-mails. The Freedom of
8 Information Act can require that people turn in all e-mails pertaining to library business.
9 This can be awkward if the e-mail account also has personal e-mails in it. FOIA can request
10 all e-mails from an account and not allow the selection of only library e-mails. The question
11 of whether to use Google for Business or a .gov e-mail account was discussed. Lyza had had
12 difficulty managing Google for Business and preferred a .gov account. Rosamund had not
13 had difficulties with Google for Business. Robert said he would check with the Town Clerk
14 about using a .gov e-mail address. The issue of document sharing was also brought up.
15 Sharing documents is not tied to e-mail addresses and the board decided to address that issue
16 separately.

17 Ed Grossman said there had been a striking exhibit of watercolor paintings at the Unitarian
18 Church and had been asked whether such an exhibit could be had in the library. Kathy
19 Giurtino was the contact for a water color exhibit.

20 In answer to a question from Rosamund about whether the library is open in bad weather,
21 Deirdre explained that the library is open if Will Wilcox can get his car out. She does not
22 decide based on whether schools are open.

23 **EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS STAFF COMPENSATION FOR 2022**

24 A motion (Cathy, David) was made to enter executive session at 9:34 AM.

25 The Board returned from executive session at 9:39 AM.

26 A motion (David, Lyza) to increase the hours for the Youth Services Librarian from 28 to 30
27 hours per week was made and then amended to say that the change would begin on February 1,
28 2022. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

29

30 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

31 There being no members of the public present, there was no public comment.

32 Ed Grossman asked what will happen if the town does not pass the budget as proposed on March
33 1, 2022. Robert said if the budget is not approved on March 1st, the money for the health
34 insurance stipend will stop and the library must make other arrangements. This is no different
35 than the budget process in other years.

36 Lyza moved to adjourn the meeting. Rosamund seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the
37 meeting was adjourned.

38 Respectfully submitted,

39 Cathy Hasbrouck, Secretary