

Whiting Library, Chester, Vermont

Regular Monthly Meeting of Board of Trustees

Meeting Notes – Tuesday, November 14, 2023 – Approved as amended

1 In attendance at the Whiting Library Community Room: Matt Gorsky, Donna McNeill-Hudkins, Sam
2 Comstock, Bill Dakin, Gail Zachariah (Library Director). Attending via Zoom: Lora Cokolat, absent: Chris
3 Burks. Public: Lyn Smith

4 Matt called meeting to order at 6:08 PM

5 Additions to the Agenda –None

6 Approval of Meeting Minutes from October. Move to accept. No Discussion. Minutes approved.

7 Treasurer Report by Sam Comstock (attached).

8 Sam sent out his Treasurers Report. There is a fair bit of detail. We are most of the way though the
9 year. RE: Income from the Towns. The funds have not been deposited yet. It will be deposited by the
10 end of this month. We are coming in \$20,000 below budget (shortfall). That is offset partially because
11 Donations are up. There is PayPal Money that is there, we have not accounted for and he is working
12 with Laurie at the town to figure it out. Laurie said that there are fees and we have to designate. Lora
13 suggested Laurie talk to Cil as we never had to do that before. In the past, Lora would log in, manually
14 transfer the PayPal funds to the “checking” account. There was no fee if you gave it a few days to
15 transfer. Sam is looking at the page on PayPal. There are two options. There is also a fee that is
16 charged to the Donor (Gail). I.e. The donor donates \$10. And the Library received \$9.75. This may be
17 new information that Laurie is asking for.

18 On the spreadsheet, we have the 2023 actual, projected and the budget, last year’s budget (2022), the %
19 increase from 2022 to 2023 and the Year to Date. On the Income side he used Actual income, not
20 projected.

21 On the Expense side he used the Projected expenses. We are over budget. We knew we were, we
22 planned to be. On May 9th, we approved the additional spending for upgrading the computer hardware
23 and a “deep clean” for the library. We are \$9,000 over what we budgeted, but, within the additional
24 funds we had approved. It comes out that we are under budget on projected. So we’re good on
25 expenses, just short on Income. We are over budget on Administration, Fundraising and Supplies. This
26 is only 2% of our total budget. We have other areas to focus on. We have to focus on Fundraising.
27 The Town is already focusing on Dept. budgets. Do we have time to review our budget and get it
28 submitted to the Select Board. We would meet on Dec 11th and they meet on Dec. 20th. We can
29 schedule a “special” meeting to discuss and focus on the Budget.

30 We knew that we were approving the spending on computer and cleaning. Gail asks if we have a
31 replacement schedule. It is something we are going to work on and schedule. We will discuss with our
32 Computer Person. Some may need to be replaced earlier. We will discuss.

33 On the Asset print out, the “due/to” fund or the Town funds. The owed funds will be deposited there.
34 The Wilmington Trust fund is up. It is up over 7% from last year.

35 It is important that we are clear on our budget to be prepared to answer questions that we know will
36 come up.

37 There were a couple of more Donations that came in Memory of David Lord. Sam will bring the checks
38 to town tomorrow. Does the PayPal make mention if donations are in memory of someone? Gail said
39 some do.

40 We did have a donation that was a request to go towards "diversity programs" for children.

41 Motion to accept Treasurer's Report. No Discussion, approved.

42 Director and Youth Services Reports - attached.

43 Carrie talked about her programs. She has been out taking Comp Time and scheduled Paid Time Off.
44 Gail has just been getting used to the new system (KOHA). There were some issues with the history not
45 coming over with the records. She has been working on fixing these problems as at the end of the year
46 she has to submit the information and statistics to the State of Vermont Library Board.

47 There has been confusion on how holidays are taken and when. Gail requests the board get together to
48 detail out how and when paid time off is taken, or if they should be able to take "comp time". There are
49 currently no specifics. For next year we would like to avoid the confusion and come up with a policy.

50 Closing early on the day before Thanksgiving, do they take holiday time? There is nothing written in any
51 policy. The board did not approve. Everybody is doing something different.

52 There is nothing in our policy on comp time. Initially, we had allowed comp time for the Youth Librarian
53 as she was the only person working for a while. We need to review the holiday pay as many holidays
54 are on Mondays, and we are not open on Mondays. Do we just pay them, or ask that they take the
55 holiday within a certain time. Closing on Mondays was recent as the people wanted two days in a row
56 off, their "weekend." Will look for the History.

57 The Town does not keep track of any of the time. We should ask about that as the payroll program
58 should.

59 Gail has been here 1 month. She feels the carpets are dirty and needs to be cleaned (Patron's too).
60 There should be a copy of the Cleaners contract, we should review. The town suggested we keep the
61 cleaning in a separate category. We should review when we do the budget.

62 Motion to accept the Youth Librarian and Director reports. Approved.

63 Fundraising Committee - Spoke to our printer about doing a short run of post cards. They didn't have
64 time to do it. So thought was that perhaps to do email blast, put on the Social Media pages. Maybe a
65 QR code on the FB and Instagram pages. I did go into Kindful to see if we can just do an email blasts, it
66 wasn't easy. Need to look into it more. We could send out a Library email and include a note about
67 donations needed either for giving Tuesday or, as Gail suggested for the end of the year. Some people
68 need to spend money at the end of the year for taxes.

69 In defense of our spring fundraiser letter . . . it went out the week before the Flooding . . .

70 Bill talked about "rack" cards that are put out that people can pick them up. We may look at cost of
71 printing.

72 If you do a printer/mail piece we could look at pricing.

73 Gail and Donna will get together in the next week or so to look at a fundraising campaign.

74 NEW BUSINESS - Gail wanted to discuss the Book Sales. She heard we were going to do away with the
75 book sale. That was the previous Director. We have a bunch of books. There are several ways to think
76 about. The Book sale is a service for the community. It is a place for people to bring their old books. It
77 works better if it's ongoing, instead of once a year. She gets the impression that a lot of people watch
78 for the booksale. She put the table in the Booksale area. Perhaps having the Book Sale on Fridays and
79 Saturdays. Have an activity on Saturday with the Booksale. There are services that will discard the
80 books, but, it's at a cost. Recycling is too much work as you have to rip the cover's off.

81 The board knows that what happened with the downstairs area is contingent on the grants that Julie
82 gets. Gail feels that the downstairs area is not a good place to move the youth library downstairs.
83 Nobody really wants to do that. Gail feels that if we have two floors, we have to double the staff. If one
84 is down here, then there's only one upstairs. Even today a patron came in that made people
85 "uncomfortable". Reminder, we need to talk to Steve about getting a "panic" button.

86 Gail needs to get to the books in the "office". That room has been cleaned out, but, she needs better
87 access. The plan was to get rid of that office. We need to take all of the books out of there. Right now
88 there are a few gifts still left in there. We (the board) does not use the office. We went through it and
89 brought everything to be shredded. We don't have any hard copies. We just have to keep what the VT
90 Library says we have to keep.

91 Speak with Trustee Candidates. One has not showed up, Matt will follow up with him to see if he's still
92 interested. In attendance is Lyn Smith who has indicated an interest in being on the Board. Why is she
93 interested? She'd like to give back to the Library. Her mother was a big patron of the Library, she just
94 passed and the Librarians here were so good about keeping track of what she had read. Her
95 Grandparent's had lived here and she spent her summer's here growing up. She eventually moved here
96 and raised her kids here. Lyn was interested when we started to discuss moving the Children's Library
97 as her kids always were so interested to see what was the Window Display was!

98 Lyn likes the Audio Books. She plays them when she travels.

99 Gail talked about Libby vs one of the other apps to get the books on-line. There is a State consortium,
100 the books are leased. Each book is different. You have to lease one copy per copy that is being used.
101 Sometimes the wait is 52 weeks . . . that's crazy. The State of NH has a service called _____ where you
102 pay each time it's used, but, it's not one copy, per user. There is no limit or wait. It would be more
103 expensive.

104 We are learning that Volunteers are important. We need to get more volunteers. That's one of the big
105 focal points that we need to address as a board. If we promote volunteers. (we don't have a volunteer
106 policy either). Note that the High School will have students do community service and they can choose
107 to work at the Library. Donna will give Gail's name to the school.

108 There was at one time a group called "friends of the library", this was a group of volunteers that we
109 could get together. The "friends" would work with the board of trustees on Fundraising and getting
110 volunteers.

111 Back on topic . . .

112 Policy Review – suggest we push that to next month. It is Social Media Policy, we do not have one. We
113 started to work on one. Gail could present us with a draft that we could review.

114 Gail worked with the NH policy and their Right to Know Law. We need to see what Vermont’s law is and
115 get the working right. There may be something for staff in the Personnel Policy as well as a Social
116 Media Party.

117 Public Comment: - Lynn asked about the Social Media, to clarify, through comments, they may not post
118 something. They cannot post in the name of the Whiting Library. Gail said, what is the purpose of Social
119 Media for the Library. Some would be that it could be Programs, books that are popular, some libraries
120 limit to programs and services.

121 To share with potential board member. We are a busy board, and we are there to support the Director.
122 Our main functions are fundraising and to review and set policy. The other role could be reviewing
123 Programs. We tweaked policy or requirement that the Director should let the board know what the
124 upcoming programming will be. Due to history of this Library. The board does not “approve” but
125 should be informed on upcoming programs. In previous boards, there was a Program Committee. This
126 board decided that the Programming was up to the Director, we needed to know in advance to support,
127 share the information and or budget. The Strategic Plan would be a guide for Programming.

128 Motion to enter Executive Session to discuss employee Benefits.

129 Entered into Executive Session at 8:00 PM

130 Exited Executive Session at 8:24 PM

131 Motion made to approve offering VMERS Group B to all qualifying Library employees effective 7/1/2024.
132 Current employees will be given an election to join 7/1/2024; any employees hired after the date of this
133 vote will automatically be enrolled in VMERS Group

134 The Library will budget for the employer contribution.

135 All voted in favor. Motion Carried and Approved.

136 Motion to adjourn approved. Adjourned at 8:26 PM

137 Submitted by Donna McNeill-Hudkins