

1 **WHITING LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES – Regular Monthly Meeting – May 9, 2023**

2 **MEETING MINUTES - Draft**

3 In Attendance in Community Room: Chris Burks, Sam Comstock, Bill Dakin, Matt Gorsky, Donna McNeill-
4 Hudkins, Pamela Johnson-Spurlock (Library Director) .

5 Via Zoom: , Lora Cokolat, Jesse Bailey

6 Matt called meeting to order at 6:08 PM

7 Additions to items on the Agenda: Pamela asked if we put the discussion to take a vote on increasing
8 the budget here, or later in the meeting. Matt said, later in the meeting.

9 Approval of minutes from April 11th Meeting. Donna sent out early (April 17th to everybody), they are
10 posted on the web site, but, nobody had reviewed them. It was decided to pass this time and approve
11 at next month’s meeting. We still have not approved the March notes. Sam said they are important as
12 they record the new Trustee info and he will submit for next meeting.

13 Treasurer’s Report – Sam

14 After distributing hard copies to everyone. Confirmed receipt via email

15 Sam met with Cil to confirm that she’s happy with how Sam is doing things. He picks things up from the
16 Library and drops off with her. She did ask for a form to submit with Cash so she knows where
17 (accounts) to apply it to. Sam met with Pamela, and they put something together. Cil did not have Sam’s
18 email and he suggested that we set up a treasurer@whitinglibrary.org so it stays the same and as roles
19 change, the email can just be moved to new treasurer (can we do that?) Chris B said he’d check on it,
20 but it shouldn’t be a problem. Suggest also have a “board of trustees” email so it goes to all board
21 members. Chris said a Distribution list could be made, so if anyone sends an email to it, it would go to
22 all.

23 We are 1/3 of the way through the budget year. Wasn’t sure about the Profit & Loss spreadsheet and
24 worked on it. He explained what he had done. He has a projected column at the end.

25 As for “Income”, as of now, the towns have not “transferred” the approved funds to our account. Do we
26 know when it is transferred in? Sam asked Lora if she knew. Lora said she thought it was March, but,
27 he should check with Cil. Sam said it may be related to tax money. Not too worried about those
28 numbers. Do we “bill” Andover, or does the Town of Chester? We do have a checking account draw. He
29 has to check with that.

30 Donations are up. Concerns now are Fundraising. There will be a shortfall if we don’t start. Booksales
31 is under budget now. How did we do with the Booksale last week? Only \$97. But, it is currently on-
32 going and we will be doing a Book Sale on June 10th on the Lawn as well as in the Fall.

33 On the spending side, Payroll is coming in under, so he’ll check with that as to why. Maybe it’s timing.

34 Administration is up, but this is due to planned spending to improve the reading room. The funds are to
35 come from one of the memorial donations, once we apply the donations to Administration for the
36 furniture purchased, the Admin spending is only about \$349. (per Pamela).

37 Lines for Supplies & Books and Materials. We're running well under budget. Pamela is on top of this.

38 Equipment & Technology and Repairs and Maintenance. We've talked about these and the spending is
39 happening with the improvements discussed in mind.

40 Balance Sheet. Last year we finished in the positive. As this year progresses, this is being drawn down.
41 This is regular cash flow.

42 Wilmington Trust – down due to market conditions. We have recovered some of it this year, but have a
43 long way to go.

44 Overall, not seeing anything to be concerned about. Will monitor each month and update these sheets.

45 Bill asked if we've revised the budget yet; we will do so at this meeting. Bill also wanted to clarify that
46 the "to/from" fund on the spreadsheet line up with what the town says we have. The town should
47 recognize that it is our money to use. Sam is looking into many details to confirm, like why is the bank
48 checking account fluctuating.

49 Donna noted that she has found documents (legal) authorizing the transfer of signing power to the town.
50 Will make copies and show to the documents.

51 Motion to accept the Treasury Report made by Bill Dakin, and 2nded by Matt Gorsky. Motion approved.

52 Director and Youth Services Report – (see attached reports)

53 1000 more patrons in 2023 (so far). Statistics are trending up. New Cleaning Company will start in June
54 (once we approve the additional budget). New Technology also needs to have approval. We reviewed
55 the suggestions.

56 Motion to approve the Director/Youth Services report by Bill Dakin, Seconded by Sam Comstock. Motion
57 Approved.

58 Committee Reports - - Library Improvement Committee – currently on hiatus, until we get more
59 information on the grants and improvements. Pamela has a proposal from Larry on technology
60 improvements. Pamela sent this out.

61 FUNDRAISING – Donna contacted the town of Chester Lister for their Grand list – received a file of over
62 1800 listings. Checked with L. Gardner as the history has been to send out only about 500. Should we
63 send letters to ALL listings (2nd home owners) or only to Chester "homesteader" residents. Should we
64 do separate letters to 2nd home owners and/or businesses.

65 Bill suggests that we are careful about who we send to as the cost of mailing would be high.

66 Donna contacted Newsbank, they do not do printing anymore, they just have copiers. Do not do
67 envelopes. Donna will contact other printers in the area. Need to decide, do we just print letterhead
68 and envelopes? Print letters out on letterhead? Will get cost breakdowns on amounts. What is the cost
69 per copy to print on our own copier? We could use letterhead to just print some items in our own
70 copier.

71 We need to price the printing, envelopes, folding and postage. In the past, the Trustees had hand
72 written the addresses on the envelopes. That is very time consuming and labor intensive. Donna

73 suggested we do address labels from the lists, then review the lists and write personal notes on the
74 letter to those we may know.

75 Bill suggests we talk to the Family Center to see what they do. They send out many Fundraising letters.
76 In order to write personal notes we'd have to unfold the letter? Check that.

77 Chris noted that we do a regular form letter with signatures (scanned in – per Matt).

78 On the Kindful app, we can download the history of those who donated and merge with the town list
79 with their history of when they last donated.

80 It may turn out due to time restraints that we have to do this in a more basic form. Do we want to send
81 to all 1700+/- or just restrict? There were also many businesses. We need to do this at an efficient
82 level. Once we do this, we also have to follow up and send thank you notes, which would also be the
83 receipt for the tax deduction.

84 Matt – when will the Fundraising Commttee meet. We (Bill, Jesse & Donna) should finalize on a letter
85 and a process to present to the rest of the Trustees. The letter currently suggested is the one from last
86 year that was never sent out. Chris suggested we do a “bot” search of fundraising letters.

87 Letterhead – we get a regular letterhead, not with trustees names on it. Something basic and plains (like
88 the White House Letterhead). Less is more. Will come up with some examples of letterhead.

89 Matt: We will have to meet in 2 weeks to review all of this and approve. That gives us all the incentive
90 to get these steps done.

91 We have to get the letterhead printed, envelopes, cost to have the letters folded. If we do labels.
92 Again, we should talk to the Family Center (Nena). ACTION ITEM – Donna will contact Nena. Donna to
93 get quotes from Printers. Different amounts of printing. Donna, Bill & Jesse will come up with some
94 letters. Chris will do search for letters. So, by the meeting, we will have several letters to approve.

95 Matt suggests meeting on Tuesday, May 23rd to finalize all of this. Pamela is in training during the day,
96 but she really does not have to do this.

97 Bill – the letter is a big deal, but the process is a bigger deal. We have to come up with a process to work
98 in the time we have. Come up with a time-line.

99 Can we get the lists in a form that we can “massage” to what we need. Sam said he could work on it.
100 ACTION: Donna to get the lists to Sam and he will work on it.

101 Matt – in two weeks we will have letters to choose from. Donna, will contact Family Center to see what
102 their process is. Chris will do a search. Chris suggested we get pricing on different price point
103 amounts. Separate a plain letterhead job from the fundraising.

104 Can we get Bulk rate from Post Office? Donna will also quote from a mailing house (they print, stuff and
105 mail).

106 OLD BUSINESS – Pamela asks where we will cover the updated Strategic Plan. We should probably have
107 a separate meeting. Per Matt, we can also cover the Strategic Plan on the 23rd. The Fundraising should
108 probably be quick (we approve the plan and pricing, or not). No other old business.

109 NEW BUSINESS – we will discuss 3 things mentioned in the Director’s report, as well as other budget
110 items. Matta suggests we make the motion, discuss, then vote to approve or not

111 First – NEW CLEANING SERVICE. (\$150./week) More thorough cleaning than current service. Includes
112 an initial “deep clean” to start. Sam made a motion to increase the budget by \$4,800. 2nded by Bill.

113 Discussion - Current cleaning is minimum. Thought is that with the new cleaning, we will maintain the
114 look and cleanliness of the building. If we are going to spend money on updating the building, it doesn’t
115 make sense to skimp on cleaning. This is an on-going expense. We will have the info for next year’s
116 budget.

117 Maintenance – Pamela brought up that the Library also has to budget for snow shoveling. Point was
118 brought up that we should talk to Steve and the town about shoveling the walk. As the Town insures
119 the building, if someone slips & falls, it is their responsibility. The town already plows the driveway, why
120 wouldn’t they shovel the walk? Matt said he’d have a conversation with Steve at the town. The town
121 owns the property, so they should be responsible.

122 We have the motion to add an additional \$4800 for cleansing to the budget. All approved Motion
123 Passed.

124 Sam, as treasurer, will inform the town of the updated budget.

125 Next new Business is upgrading the LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE. This is a one time expenditure.
126 This would be \$2,000. Pamela had given us the details of this. The ongoing costs is the same as we
127 currently paying. This brings our Library Software up to the level of most Libraries in the state.

128 This increases services to the patrons.

129 Sam suggests we put this type of information up on the screen so we can all review.

130 Motion to add an additional \$2,000 to upgrade the Library Software. All approved. Motion Passed

131 TECHNOLOGY UPGRADE – we have a proposal from Larry, we had asked him to give us a list of his
132 suggestions. It would be \$10,000. One time to replace and improve computers & technology.

133 Motion made to spend no more than \$10,000 to improve our Technology and Computer Systems. The
134 only issue Matt had is that he thinks the monitors should be 32”, not 24”. The Director would need 2
135 monitors. The increase would be about \$480. Over Larry’s estimate.

136 Lora suggested we talk to the Town to see if they have a supplier where we can get a better pricing. We
137 can give the town’s supplier the list to check. Then if someone asks the question, we can say, yes we
138 did shop around.

139 Pamela did send out a spreadsheet with a list of everything that would be purchased (sent to everybody
140 on May 2nd). Sam wanted to look at the list. He’s worried that \$10,000 is inexpensive.

141 Upgrading WiFi, maybe one for staff and one for the public. We’ll talk to Larry about it. It could be easy
142 to set up.

143 Do we want to table the Technology Update (which will delay ordering and setting it up). We don't want
144 to vote on this unless everyone is comfortable. Motion made to spend not more than 10K - all
145 approved. Motion passed

146 TRAINING FOR NEW SOFTWARE. It will probably only take a couple of days, Carrie and Pamela will work
147 out the hours. This is no additional costs.

148 BENEFITS - Matt wanted to discuss Benefits for the Library employees. Should the town cover benefits
149 or not. Looking for opinion on hiring outside employment lawyer to see what our legal standing is push
150 to have the town cover health benefits and retirement. There is a precedent for this, but we don't
151 know the details. How would we proceed. Bill – the only way is to get a 3rd party to look into this. We
152 don't have enough information. If we do this, what is the cost, who is available, how do we pay for it?

153 Lora said she was under the impression that we could add the town employees, but it would be a
154 significant cost to the Library. There are a lot of unknowns, so that's why we talk to an expert to get
155 their opinion. Before we talk to anybody, we should talk to the town, and let them know what our
156 concern is. That we are not comfortable with them telling us what we can or cannot do. Know that if we
157 do have this conversation, it will introduce adverse reaction. "we vs they". Our goal is to get the right
158 answer, but to keep our good relationship with the town. We need to be discreet on how we proceed.

159 It would be worth talking to the Ed Grossman, as he did so much work on the Health Stipend to see what
160 his understanding was. Jesse – is it worth looking at the idea that the town would take over the Library.
161 Pamela disagrees. The Library now has the Board of Trustees to "protect" it. Without it, the town
162 could cut budgets etc.

163 We need to be careful that we aren't overloading the Selectboard. Even if we only get an opinion, it
164 would appear that we are moving on it, even if we aren't. We want to keep our employees happy.

165 PAMELA'S DESK. – she would like a standing desk for health reasons, and clearance for space. This can
166 be costly – cost would be \$1,500 and under. It could be considered reasonable accommodation.

167 Motion was made to shelf this for now and Pamela will get desk info out to everyone for discussion later.

168 LIBRARY SUBSTITUTE – Pamela suggested we hire a per diem Substitute Librarian to cover when
169 someone is out on vacation. There should always be 2 people on staff at all times. She has someone in
170 mind that would work. Motion was made by Chris and 2nd by Donna to approve.

171 MONTHLY POLICY REVIEW – May – Court Ordered Community Service Policy. Motion to approve with
172 changes indicated – all approved. Pamela will update and publish.

173 FEDERAL HOLIDAY – Juneteenth is a Federal Holiday. We should add to our Library Calendar.

174 Motion to Adjourn Meeting approved at 8:28 PM

175

176 Submitted by Donna McNeill-Hudkins 5/16/2023