Whiting Library, Chester, Vermont

Regular Meeting of Board of Trustees

Meeting Notes – February 11, 2025

In attendance at the Whiting Library Community Room: Bill Dakin, Gail Zachariah, Jessie Krust, Donna McNeill-Hudkins, Matt Gorsky. Attending via Zoom: Lyn Smith and Lora Cokolot. Absent - Marilyn Mahusky

Public Attendance via Zoom: Carrie King

Bill Dakin called meeting to order at 6:34 PM

Additions to the Agenda – None.

Approve Minutes from January 14th, 2024 – motion to approve. Approved.

Treasurers Reports –

Motion made to accept Treasurer Report – approved.

From Lora's report – Laurie from the town provided me with a new report through January 31, 2025, the new year. The new proposed budget has not yet been voted on and thus it's not yet posted, so we do not have any of the figures we would received from Chester.

Actual Revenue through January 31, 2025: $9,173

Total Payroll Expenses through December 31, 2024: $119,058 (Total Budget for 2024:

$127,504) Total Other Expenses through January 31, 2025: $8,436 for payroll and $663, other expenses.

Assets:

Petty Cash: $100

Due To/From Other Funds: $109,038.86

M&T Money Market Account: $29,272.10 The CD is now open, and it has to be back dated to December. The expiration date will be January 2026

M&T Wealth Management Account: $186,832.65

Total Assets: $325,243.61

Revenue Highlights:

- Book Sales: $235
- Non Resident Fee: $75
- Fundraising: $4,119 (in response to letter sent at the end of the year)

On the expense side, some items to highlight are:

- Books & Materials : $213
- Cleaning Charges: $150

Motion to accept Treasurers Report – Approved.

Youth Services Report – Motion approved to approve the report. No discussion. Matt said that he heard about the Lego Buildings Club and that it is very good. Carrie responded, the kids have returned to the library since the start and have worked very hard. Bill asked what the age groups are, Per Carroe. kids range in age from K thru 6th grade. There were 15 kids. The kids returning are in the 10 yo age group. They are brining their siblings to join in. They look forward to doing it again. Tomorrow they are doing snacks from around the world. Carrie had reached out to Black River to get more info on the Lego Club. It starts conversations and stories**.** Very Successful.

Motion to accept Youth Services Report – approved.

Director's Report – Gail wanted to discuss the Vermont Reads program. She would like to have a information table at election day. They would like to go to Andover on Monday and the Town of Chester had asked they do it on election day, the Tuesday. Kale and Nikki will work the table, looking for volunteers to help out and take some time there. We want to give some books (the Gather) out for people to take, along with book marks.

Copiers – we reviewed. We would like the capabilities to do 11 x 17. If people find out that we have that capability, it would bring people in. Matt's main concern is whether we get the new machine vs the used one. How responsive is the service when there is a problem. Gail needs to get some additional information before we make a final decision.

Gail reports she has been doing a lot more programs and having much more use of the Meeting Space.

Motion to accept Director's Report approved.

Fundraising – Jessie says it's a short report. We are still getting funds in. WE have to start thinking about the June fundraising. We need to decide whether we do one big push, or a more targeted mailing. While our Library has usually done two mailings a year, the November one seems to be more as we get end of the year funds in. Briefly – we've done 1 townwide letter. We can't afford to do it twice. We also used materials we had on hand. We are out of many materials now. IF we don't use an envelope, we may not use it. The conversion rate on just using post cards is much less. Maybe do a post card push in the summer, and a do a bigger letter in the winter. Donna noted that she's used up the Thank you notes and we need to print more, or do we just have Kindful produce letters and we mail them out. Jessie will look at the cost differences.

Would he timelines be the same to send out the fundraising events? Probably, as it's not an election year, we could do the fall mailing earlier. Gail suggested we also sell some books and artwork that are here in the library.

Grants – Today, Julie Hance came to discuss a $500K grant for town buildings. It would cover the heating, insulation and ADA accessibility in the downstairs bathroom and the Vermont room. Question as to whether those improvements jive with what we need. Gail brought up the lighting, she will look for a grant to improve lighting. Julie says that the funds are good, held by the state, and not to worry about the Federal cut offs. Timing

Timing will be important. We will look at whether we shut down the library all together for installation, or do it a little at a time. The sprinkler is pending approval by the town. We would do the sprinkler and lighting at the same time. Until the sprinkler system is approved, we can't schedule installation.

Gail is applying for a Federal Grant, we are going to go forward with a proposal, there is also another one from the State that something may delay. This is a $40K grant. We have not spent anything yet, but, the first item will be expensive as it sends Gail & Carrie to Long Island.

Gail did talk to the Chester Telegraph as they asked about any issues we have with the Federal grants, or the Dept. of Libraries services.

We just have to keep our eye on the Building Bright Futures Grant.

Library Policies – We discussed the questioned the reducing the Holiday policy schedule and additional Library Hours. We need to go back to the drawing board. It significantly affects staff PTO. We need to be able to attract and retain employees. We should go back to the floating holiday policy. There was board action to add the floating holiday back in 2020, it was just never entered into the policy. Agree that the Monday holidays should be PTO, but need to decide when they take that time off.

Per Gail, we need to look at all of the Benefits, not just not the Paid Time Office.

Bill suggests that Gail draft a proposed policy and we, the board, review it and approve. We are trying to avoid having the Policy committee go through it, and then have to go back and forth with the Director. The Director can submit a policy proposal to the Policy board for review and approval by the full board.

There are some policies that involve benefits and things that are not just library related (like meeting rooms). Maybe we should get an outside consultant with some of the policies.

Motion made to change how policy is drafted by at the direction of the board, the director will draft a policy and present it to the policy committee, unless the policy requires outside legal or professional consultation. The policy committee reviewing and presenting to the full board.

Motion submitted for approval. Motion is adopted. That said, the policy for PTO, we will direct the Director to draft a policy addressing Holiday Time off. We will wait until that is done before we discuss.

We may need an outside consultant to revise our personnel policy. We will look at what is being done and decide what we will. Do we want to find out who the Town used and ask them to review the policy once we have the bones of it done. Marilyn had done a policy re-write and forwarded. We will look at that.

Endowment Information. Lora had reviewed the Endowment information and we used the language they suggested. They did not use that language. We need to confirm if the document is correct. Initially, what we saw had a 5% distribution, when the board approved 4%. We need to clarify that they have the correct information. Lora had signed it, as had Deb Aldrich. We will re-affirm with Wilmington, get the copies of the meeting minutes to them, and copy Deb. Lora has not heard back from them. There was a question as how the distribution would be made. We are not clear where in our reports the funds received will be shown. Laurie from the town will have to let us know.

Motion to enter executive session to discuss Personnel Matters related to Director Evaluation.

Entered Executive Session at 8:12 PM

Motion to exit Executive Session – approved - Exited Executive Session at 8:27 PM

Lora asked Gail if we had increased the price of books in the book sale area yet. Gail had not. She will do so. Double the price of books

Next regular meeting is March 11th, 2025 at 6:30 PM

Motion to adjourn approved. Adjourned at 8:30 PM