Whiting Library, Chester, Vermont

Regular Monthly Meeting of Board of Trustees

Meeting Notes – July 9, 2024

In attendance at the Whiting Library Community Room: Matt Gorsky, Bill Dakin, Lyn Smith, Donna McNeill-Hudkins, Gail Zachariah, Jessie Krust and Marilyn Mahusky. Lora Cokolat absent, on holiday.

Bill Dakin called meeting to order at 6:30 PM

Additions to the Agenda? None

Approve Minutes for June 11th Meeting. Motion to approve. Approved.

Treasurers Reports – Lora submitted report, though she is absent. Motion to approve the report. Approved.

Discussion of Treasurer's Report - Lora is working with the Town to open an account with One Credit Union. Something required was copies of the meeting minutes approving Lora to do this. Those have been submitted. Hopefully, by next month's meeting the account will be opened.

The Treasurer report states that we have a total of $3,734 in donations. We will discuss in more detail during Fundraising Committee Report. The other point that is appropriate is to discuss the town report showing spending. What it does not show that the expenditures are paid for by grants that have come in. Is there a way that we can show income from grants, and then spending from the grant. Many people look at the library budget, do not attend meetings to ask questions and make decisions based on what they are seeing for spending and take positions.

Per the Director, there will probably be a balance in what we get for grants, and the spending. Are we concerned that it appears that we have excess money?

We are concerned that the budget shows spending and not the additional income. There is a grant income line item in the budget that was increased this past budget year. The question came up asking is there a way to change the way the budget report is seen. Under the revenue items are listed, like the Proteus Grant, is from the town, and not relevant any more, the Town put this line item in this report.

Matt suggested we may change an accounting practice. If we are required to buy something specific for a grant, we list it under grant spending instead of listing it under programs or books. Then people can see what we brought in in grants, and what we spent those grants on instead of showing the spending in other categories. This is a Great idea, and we must have this conversation with Laurie, the finance person in the town. Gail will ask Laurie to make the change. It would be better to track under a Grant Category. The grant income is increasing, which is great, but we cannot count on it each year.

Lyn, people ask why we do not use the money that is in the investment account. We should use the interest as income. The principal is for an emergency.

One of the way Matt has explained it to people, is that we can use that money to replace books quicker if damaged, or even for operating if needed. That money is to cover us.

MM – Did we look at the source of the funding. Is there anything that specifies how we use those funds? Gail has looked through paperwork, and did not see anything specific. MM suggested we put on a future agenda developing a process/policy on the distribution of those funds. How do we disperse

principal vs interest vs emergency spending. Matt suggested that the Policy Committee put something together. Lyn – asked about how long it would take to get funds if needed.

Gail indicated that a patron stopped by and indicated that he was a financial advisor in the past and has volunteered to look at our investment funds. Bill said that the interest must be voted on to move to an account. Bill suggested that we need to identify what percentage we want to spend each year. As this patron has knowledge, we may discuss to take him up on his offer. We do not have time to discuss.

Two Action items, we must develop a policy and two to decide as to whether that money is in the right place. Are we getting the best bang for our buck. If this patron is offering, we may consider taking that offer.

Our current fund manager just explained what we had, did not suggest what we should do.

Accepted Treasurer Reports.

Children's Library Report - Carrie has had quite a few successful programs. The High School loaned us some books. Bill asked for info on "Graphic Novels." Motion to approve – Approved.

Director Report - We are having a program on July 21st. We are a summer reading site for the VT/NH Literacy program. Illustrators and authors come and to a presentation to the kids, the kids get two books to bring home. We will be hosting this in Andover in the Town Hall/Meeting House. This way the Andover residents will feel more connected to the library. The youth population is growing there, and they are always coming here to Chester.

How accurate is the report on attendance. Very accurate. It looks like 15 to 20 attendees at the programs.

Building. Gail has sent a communication on items in the building that need to be addressed. Steve replied right away. Replaced lights in the Book Sale area. She thinks the parking lot is dangerous. Many holes and uneven surface. Also, issues with the carpeting, we must look out for tripping hazards. She feels the Town does not pay much attention if it is costly as they must take care of these issues.

Are there physical aspects of the building that need to be addressed. Do we have to put together a list of what needs to be addressed with the time.

MM asked about why the Personnel Files are kept at the Town as we are not Town Employees. We will discuss during the Personnel Policy Review.

Gail reported on some items she has purchased for the library.

Lyn asked if there was a process for putting in for a work order. Gail says she just sends an email to Steve. Lyn noted that the sink was slow draining.

Motion to approve the Director Report. Approved

Fundraising Report. There were a bunch of checks that have come in. Gail will be going through the cash register every day. Laurie suggested we put all donations into the cash register. It is coded as fundraising or donations. Donna reported that Lora sends her a list of those donations that have come in with their addresses. Donna enters Kindful, and sends Thank You note. There were some PayPal

donations as well. Treasurer report states that we have brought in $3,734. We think that may be higher. We want to know what has been raised from the mailings. This is what the Town reported.

How does this compare to last year? The Town report does not show any income from last year. MM suggests that the Fundraising Committee, we summarize what has brought in from the date of the mailing to the date of our next meeting.

This sounds like Lora must let us know. We want to compare how many letters were sent and how many donations have come in from those letters.

We will get a Fundraising Report from the Fundraising Committee for next meeting.

The Town report is not helpful as it is not up to date.

We must start planning on what we want to do with a November mailing.

Lyn, Lora, and Donna will get together shortly to plan the Book Sale on the lawn in September. The logistics, and the layout. Gail thinks she should also be on the Book Sale Committee.

Library Staff – We have two new people. Kale was the substitute, and is now the Library Assistant. DM asked when did she start in the new position. We need to know what that is. She was a substitute, now she is a regular employee. Gail will report back to us on what her official start date was.

Best practices would be that whenever a role is changing, a letter should go out with the details of a start date and any pay increase.

Personnel Policy – 3 people were to review the Personnel Policy with the additional text. It was shared and merged with previous policy. Can we go through it now, we can start. Job descriptions, process for job postings, where to post position. Town of Chester has two newspapers of record. Job Descriptions, applications should have some details, not necessarily salary range.

Reasonable accommodations will be made. We have detail for job descriptions and details. Does detailed job descriptions create discrimination? i.e. a Library Assistant must lift a book. We must look at the required tasks.

Applications need to be kept on file for 6 years. Where do we keep these files? Files used to be kept at the library and now the files are kept at the Town Hall. The library employees are not municipal employees. There is an agreement in place handing the Town the responsibility to keep the Personnel Files. Who is responsible for keeping the files legal in case of an audit for the government.

The Town is our support and accounting system. They may have to keep some files there. Do we want to have to go through all the processes of changing. If the Trustees want the library to follow the Town policies, we may have to change them. We should have to receive.

The Town did not give us an option as to what to pay towards the Child Policy. How much to we want to push the town?

MM will look at the Personnel Policy and we will report to the next meeting. Gail does not feel everything needs to be in the policy. Donna will share policy with Gail to review as well.

PTO, if awarded on anniversary of hire, when is it active for? Calendar Year?

FMLA -we are not eligible for FMLA as we do not have enough employees. We must have 10 employees. If we stand with the town, they may cover us, but we would have to have that conversation.

Old Business – None

New Business (for next meeting) - we need to discuss in August as the fall festival is in September. Personnel Policy. Funding moved. Need to find a way to discuss our endowment. We will come up with an endowment policy and get better financial advice. If there is documentation on the use of the current endowment and what to do with it. We need to find it. We need to adopt a policy that reflects what any specifics are for the endowments. Gail will talk to Lora about talking to the bank and finding out if they have any background on restrictions.

Donna and Gail will look through paperwork to see if we can find anything. Should we contact M Boch to see if she can give us any insight.

Public Comments - No Public in attendance.

Next regular meeting is August 13th at 6:30 PM

Motion to adjourn approved. Adjourned at 7:56 PM

Submitted by Donna McNeill-Hudkins