

Whiting Library, Chester, Vermont

Regular Monthly Meeting of Board of Trustees

Meeting Notes – February 13, 2024 - APPROVED

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

4 Matt called meeting to order at 6:15 PM

5 **Additions to the Agenda** – Nothing

6 **Approval of Meeting Minutes** from January, 2024 Moved to accept and approved.

7 **Treasurer Report** by Sam Comstock.

8 We do not have much data yet from the town. They (the town) do not have our budget numbers in yet,
9 and they have not reported expenses so Sam has not done his regular projection report.

10 Andover has paid their money for 2023. It is on the statement that the town provided. He doesn't
11 know when they close their books, so he doesn't have a summary. Other information here is the
12 expense from the Technology Spending that came through. Some additional expenses could be applied.
13 The expense for the Technology is \$1,700 and that falls in the budget we had planned on spending. It is
14 not worked into the budget for 2024.

15 Gail put together the Paypal account and the town has accepted. It was \$1,407. We have a report with
16 the names of those who donated thru Paypal. Donna has a copy. Donna said that some are in the
17 Kindful Database, and had to look for some addresses. Has sent Thank you notes.

18 The Net Ordinary Income, from the To/From account. We are negative \$31,000 a year. If you add in our
19 assets and gains, we are at a negative \$18,000. We are short to what we planned.

20 Switching to the Financial Balance Sheet – Money Market only earned .3%. We don't do anything with
21 that, we should look into putting that into a fund that earns more.

22 Preservation Trust only gained 2.8% over the past year. That is the Wilmington Trust. Question as to
23 whether that is handled through M & T. We will ask to have M&T come in to review our accounts and
24 what we could do to improve. When do we normally have someone come in? We had someone come
25 in from Wilmington Trust. They talked to us about the \$168,000 fund. New Treasurer can set up
26 something.

27 Are there any expenses with those accounts (fees)? Do we get the statements on those accounts?
28 Town does. We can ask for copies of the Statements. Laurie says that the M & T Statements have been
29 reconciled.

30 Sam also talked to the town about the "Cash Register". The process is now when income comes in, the
31 staff can designate the payments to different account. Sam uses that on an expense form that he fills
32 out with the Cash/checks. In February, when he picked up the cash, he said the cash did not match the
33 receipt and it was adding a taxable category. The tax isn't an issue as it is at "0".

34 Recently there was not enough cash and discovered that money was held back to have “change” in the
35 cash register so it balanced out.

36 Also the Petty cash account says it has \$200 in it. Nobody knows where it is. Gail said there is no
37 reason to have a Petty Cash account. Nobody has been using any Petty Cash for the past year. They
38 just use the Credit Card for everything.

39 We asked Lora if she ever used petty cash when she was Treasurer, and she had not. There was
40 speculation as to where that \$200 might have gone (Book sale?), but nobody has any idea. Town
41 Financial person suggested doing a note on the town. We will start following a process:

42 Close out cash register weekly, enter all checks into the register. Cash box will carry \$100 going forward.
43 The “hand off” of cash from the Library to the Treasurer will be more formalized. The register tax code
44 on Dept. 2 will be removed. The Town has also requested the Board sign all warrants prior to delivering
45 to the Town by Fridays (in time to present to the Selectboard). Lora used to sign the warrants.

46 Are there any questions. Is there anything we can do with the Money Market account to gain more
47 interest. Doesn’t see that we need it “liquid”. Perhaps put it into a CD. There is no reason not to. We
48 had talked about taking money out of that last year to balance the budget, but, we did not, because we
49 had money in the To/From account.

50 What do we currently have in the To/From account. That is what is “sitting” in the To/From account
51 for us to operate this year. It is money from last year (or year’s prior). This is also how the Town
52 operates. To Clarify, we have 3 accounts. The Wilmington Trust, the Money Market and the To/From.
53 The Town of Chester holds the To/From account and disperses where we direct.

54 Move to accept treasurers report. Accepted.

55 **Review Director and Youth Librarian reports.**

56 Other than the statistics, Gail reported that we have been approved for 2 grants. One for \$11,000 for
57 Climate resiliency programs, and the other grant for \$20,000 for ADA. Gail submitted a proposal to get
58 these grants.

59 Gail will keep track of spending the money and report on it.

60 Motion to accept the Director and Youth Librarian Reports for January. Approved

61 **Committee reports –**

62 Building Improvement reported on the meeting this morning. We walked through the library with the
63 Town manager, architect, Facilities person and landscape architect. This is for a Grant for ADA and
64 Internet access. Gail thinks we have a good chance of getting the grant.

65 Proposed removing the lower doorway, moving the ramp to the back, this will force all people to come in
66 upstairs (traffic control). Has to go through with Fire Marshall. Discussed adding ADA desks/table in
67 Suzy Forlie Room and elsewhere so people can plug in laptops and work without creating a mess with
68 cords updating outlets.

69 There is another grant that they have not opened yet. Might be something we could get as well.

70 Suggest some adjustments downstairs to make kitchen accessible and changing the Vermont Room door
71 and making the “Trustee” office into a private “zoom” room that could be used for Tele-health calls.

72 **Old Business** – Nothing

73 **New Business** -

74 **Letter for a Grant** – One of the Grants needs a letter from the Board. We will get it written. Matt will
75 work with Julie

76 **Pet Policy.** We had a patron ask that we not allow dogs in the Library because they are uncomfortable.
77 We have no formal policy. Gail talked to some other libraries in the area, and most do not allow Pets
78 and have some kind of Pet or Behavior policy. One of the examples we saw is what the ADA allows the
79 library to ask if it’s a service dog (what service does it provide). There was some discussion as to what a
80 Service Dog, and whether or not they are “in training”.

81 What is our experience in this library? Gail suggested some dogs come in just to get treats, it not like
82 the patron is coming in to get books. Lyn asked people who are dog people what they thought, and
83 they reported that the Library is not a place for dogs. We should follow the ADA policy on pets. This is
84 to protect patrons, children and the Library. We don’t even know what the insurance coverage is for
85 liability for the Library.

86 Motion made to adopt a formal Pet Policy per ADA requirements. Policy will be written, approved and
87 set up with a formal start date. Public will be notified in advance. Motion Approved.

88 **Clapper Valve** -Matt described what happened when he was listening to the Selectboard Meeting, Julie
89 asked us to discuss whether or not the Library can pay to replace the Clapper Valve, and not the Town.
90 We are NOT required as the town owns the building. Matt told Julie he’d put it on our agenda and we’d
91 discuss. Right now the funds are allotted from the ARPA money. So, the Town would use the ARPA
92 money for something else?? We do not know.

93 Can’t we find out if it can be done for less money.

94 Concern is that all the money in the To/From account is what we operate on. Will this put us in the
95 “red”. The money in there is technically our “extra” money. This is a build up from the past 10 years.
96 Can we split it with them? The Clapper valve is an immediate need where as the sprinkler system won’t
97 be replaced for 2 or 3 years.

98 Overall view is that this is a building/maintenance issue, and the Town is responsible. There may be
99 other issues we can help with.

100 **Phone System** - Problems with the current system. Phones don’t work, can’t transfer, can’t put on hold.
101 Current system is very old. Can’t move phones around, can’t substitute with other phones because the
102 connections are for a specific phone system. We either revisit the current option, replace current
103 connections, or look at a new Commercial Phone system. Decision from board is to have Gail contact
104 VTel and get proposals to replace system and phones or just repair system and not have any services like
105 hold, transfer, etc.

106 **Policy Review** - Not this week.

- 107 **Public Comments** - No Public in attendance.
- 108 Motion to adjourn approved. Adjourned at 7:54 PM
- 109 Submitted by Donna McNeill-Hudkins