

Minutes of the Abbott Library Trustees' Meeting - DRAFT
Abbott Library, Sunapee, NH
February 18, 2021

In attendance were Trustees: Carol Brudnicki, Chair, Jane Frawley, Vice Chair, Susi Churchill, Treasurer, Peg Lesiak, Secretary, Scott Rapoport (was not able to attend the non-public meeting), Suzanne Tether (did not rejoin the public session following the non-public session) and Betsy Bowen.

Alternates: Michael Parker, Jon Reed, Jim Harrison

Library Director: Mindy Atwood

Others: Andy Nichols, Jan Harrison, Russ Holden, Tim Eliassen, Jesse Tyler, John Augustine

I. Chair's Remarks

The meeting was called to order by Carol Brudnicki at 5:01 pm, Thursday, February 18, 2021.

Carol began the meeting by reading "A Checklist to Ensure Meetings Are Compliant with The Right-To-Know Law During the State of Emergency", confirming that the Trustees are:

- a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means,
- b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting,
- c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access;
- d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting.

It was also noted that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

II. Visit by the Sunapee School Board

Russ Holden, Andy Nichols and Jesse Tyler provided an overview of the proposed upgrades/renovations to the Sunapee Central Elementary School. The plan covers all the needs of the school at a lower cost than prior proposals. Also helping the financial aspects of the plan are the current historically low bond rate as well as the potential of a \$3.1 million grant from the State of NH Building Aid group. After a review of the slide presentation, questions were raised and answered. The Trustees appreciated the overview and the opportunity to understand the plan and to ask questions.

III. Approval of Minutes

Scott moved to approve the minutes of the Abbott Library Trustees' Meeting of Thursday, January 21, 2021, as amended. The motion was seconded by Susi. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote: Carol Brudnicki – yes; Jane Frawley – yes; Susi Churchill – yes; Scott Rapoport – yes; Suzanne Tether – yes; Betsy Bowen – yes; Peg Lesiak – yes.

IV. Treasurer's Report

A. Review of Financials

- Susi reported that the bank accounts have all been reconciled and the Town funding is current.
- Susi pointed out that the numbers in the Operating Account – Profit & Loss are from the 2021 budget. As that budget has not yet passed, the numbers are subject to change.
- Susi also shared that in the Profit & Loss Budget vs Actual report, under Library Materials/Non-Print, the large expense shown should come out of the 2020 budget. This will be corrected.
- Mindy has contacted Lynne Wiggins, the town Finance Director, to ask again about the insurance reimbursement for the power failure (\$488.55) and the remaining reimbursement for the GOFERR funds (\$6608.41).

- As discussed at the January Trustees' meeting, the \$4800.00 for ESC expenses will be deposited shortly into the Donations account.

B. Review/Approve Bill Manifest

Betsy made a motion seconded by Suzanne to accept the January 2021 Manifest of Bills. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote: Carol Brudnicki – yes; Jane Frawley – yes; Susi Churchill – yes; Scott Rapoport – yes; Suzanne Tether – yes; Betsy Bowen – yes; Peg Lesiak – yes.

V. Director's Report - Mindy Atwood

Mindy highlighted her written report:

• Planning and Development

- The library staff attended the Strategic Planning Convening Meeting, kicking off the work on the strategic plan goals.
- All materials for the library's portion of the Town Annual Report were submitted to Melissa Pollari. The operating budget was submitted with a notation that the report is both unaudited and incomplete (see below in Financial Management – outstanding invoices).
- Mindy received a proposal from a patron about painting a mural in the library with a diversity focus. Mindy attached the Art Exhibit Policy for the Trustees to review.

A lengthy discussion ensued, covering topics related to permanent artwork/alterations in the library vs. exhibits that can be rotated, ownership of artwork, approval of art, the role of the Board to initiate permanent changes to the library, etc. The discussion prompted the Policy Committee to ensure diversity and inclusion is one of the lenses that will be used when all policies are reviewed later this year. Comments were also made in regard to thinking through how a discussion can be had around diversity and inclusion, acknowledging the people who make up our community. Michael offered to draft a response to the proposal, with input from Jane and Suzanne.

• Financial Management

- The library's GOFERR claims submitted to the Town of Sunapee Finance Director are current. As mentioned above, to date, the library has not received reimbursements for the GOFERR expenses incurred from September 15 to October 15.
- The remaining invoices to be paid from the 2020 operating budget are for the LED lightbulbs and the Town of Sunapee (insurance).

• IT Management

- New public computers have been installed and Justin has been given the Assistant Director laptop with VPN.
- This is the year the Watchguard filter/router is scheduled for replacement which Mindy did not include in the proposed 2021 operating budget. The cost to replace this hardware is approximately \$2000.00 but this does not need to happen until the end of the year. Mindy anticipates being able to cover most of the cost for this by savings in other line items.

• Staff Management and Development

- Mindy signed up for the Executive Director's Roundtable cohort that is being offered by Empower Success Corps (ESC). The first meeting was on February 12. Mindy will submit a full report of this experience to the Trustees upon completion.
- The two-team staff approach is going well and the staff is adapting well.

- **Program Management**

- On January 28, Mindy presented the library's annual funding request to the Friends of the Abbott Library Board. A list of the approved expenditures is attached. The Friends Board approved a total of \$18,398.00 at their January meeting. Thank you to the Friends for their continued support in the form of both funds and time!
- Virtual Yoga had to be canceled due to an injury to the instructor.
- Online story time, book discussions and film discussions continue.
- An interactive, theater experience will be offered to families on February 20. This is in lieu of the in-library programming offered during February school break.
- A virtual paint-and-sip will take place on February 27.
- The library piloted a ten "LitLoot" program with some students that participated in the GaLS program in the summer of 2019. Students were asked to fill out a questionnaire and then they received a box with a book to keep, a library item selected for them and some other fun surprises. This program is modeled on the subscription box trend and was very well received. Sign-up will be opened up to the general public for an April LitLoot box. Kudos to Alexa Jenkins, our high school intern, who contributed greatly to this pilot program. A photo of one of the boxes was provided with this report to the Trustees. The Friends will sponsor this program.
- Author Ty Gagne will speak via Zoom about his new book "The Last Traverse" on April 8th. A summary of the book is as follows:
 - *"The Last Traverse; Tragedy and Resilience in the Winter Whites.* Ty Gagne masterfully lays out the events that led up to an epic and legendary rescue attempt in severe and dangerous winter conditions in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. More than a cautionary tale, it is a tribute to all the volunteers and professionals who willingly put themselves in harm's way to save lives. This is a must read for anyone who hikes the Whites."

This lecture is sponsored by the Friends of the Abbott Library in memory of Paula Conrad. Multiple copies of the book will be available in advance of the event.

- To date the library has had three check-outs of the Nintendo Switch and seven check-outs of the snowshoes! Mindy shared that all but one pair of children's snowshoes has been checked out and that the program is very popular (the Library has two sets of size large, four sets of size medium, and two sets for children). Mindy indicated the waiver for use of the snowshoes is drafted.
- John Augustine, the innkeeper at Dexter's Inn, raised a number of concerns about the snowshoe loaning initiative. To refresh memories, Mindy included the email that she sent earlier in the month that outlines the history of her communication with Mr. Augustine. Mr. Augustine also offered to provide coupons for free access to the trails at Dexter's Inn with the snowshoe check-outs.

After discussion, the Board agreed to accept the offer of the coupons from Mr. Augustine/Dexter's Inn. The Library will also provide information on other trails, trail maps, etc. John Augustine indicated he would provide maps to the Library, and Mindy will reach out to Ausbon Sargent about their snowshoe trail suggestions.

- **Community Outreach**

- Mindy attended the Coffee with the Chief on January 29.
- Nancy Heckle asked Mindy to provide some book recommendations for the LSPA newsletter. A copy of her recommendations is attached to this report.
- Planning for another Summer Book Club is underway, in partnership with the Sunapee Central Elementary School.

- **State of NH Libraries in the time of COVID-19**
 - Mindy continues to attend the New Hampshire Library Directors' calls, which will now occur once a month.
 - Mindy also continues to attend the New Hampshire Emergency Operations Center (EOC) call on Wednesdays at noon.
 - The library has promoted widely that the library staff will help people navigate the NH DHHS site and the CDC VAMS site as they register for a COVID-19 vaccination. An ad was placed in the Shopper, posters were placed around the community, and multiple posts were placed on the library's social media accounts as well as on the library's website and in the newsletter. To date the library has fielded five requests for assistance.
 - The NH Governor's Guidelines still call for "regular sanitation of high-moderate touch surfaces at least every two hours". Simply Clean continues to come on Mondays, Tuesdays and Saturdays to clean.

VI. Chair's Report

- Carol and Suzanne attended the NHLTA zoom meeting that was held on January 27th. The meeting included the sharing of many positive outcomes (home deliveries, hand-picked bundles of books for patrons, help with the COVID-19 vaccination registrations, assisting patrons not connected to the internet or having technical skills, etc.) that have occurred due to the pandemic.
- The date of Thursday, March 11, at 5:00pm via Zoom, was finalized for the ESC training on the Role of the Trustee.
- Carol read a thank you note from Katy Hurd in regard to the holiday gift bags provided by the Trustees to the library staff.
- Carol reminded the Trustees that the Board will go into a non-public session to complete the Supervisor Performance Evaluation. Jon will be sending out the link to access the non-public session.

VII. Strategic Planning Progress Update

On February 4, Trustees, Alternates and library staff who are aligned with strategic plan goals attended a "Convening Meeting" to kick-off the work on the library's strategic plan. The goals for the meeting were to:

1. Create a sense of the collective effort/collaboration
2. Ensure each leader understands/is comfortable with the action items
3. Provide each leader the chance to ask questions and offer their ideas
4. Outline how the ongoing efforts/work will be communicated/reported

Mindy reviewed "how we got here", giving some history on the work completed to develop the strategic plan. Peg then led a discussion on each goal (Goal 1A will be discussed at a later date as all goal team members could not be present at this meeting), answering questions, providing background, etc. Good ideas and questions were offered. It was agreed that ongoing communication will be important throughout this work. Strategic Plan Progress Updates will be an agenda item on each monthly Trustee meeting. One suggestion was that the entire team working on the goals should meet quarterly. There will be more follow up on the topic of communication. The minutes of the Convening Meeting were provided to all Trustees, Alternates and library staff.

The next step is for each Goal Team to connect and plan their first steps.

VIII. Reports from the Abbott Library Foundation and the Friends of the Abbott Library

A. Abbott Library Foundation

The Foundation has not met since the last Trustee meeting.

B. Friends of the Abbott Library

Jan Harrison provided an update on the Friends of the Abbott Library, including the many varied programs the Friends are sponsoring (e.g., Paint & Sip, partnering with the school on the summer reading program, author talks, etc.). Jan highlighted the upcoming author talk with Ty Gagne on April 8 at 6:30pm via Zoom (see the Director's Report – Program Management section for additional information). Jan indicated that the Friends are also considering developing a scholarship for Library interns.

Questions were raised about the Trustees' Book Sale, as a "take-out" approach is being considered by the Friends for their pancake breakfast. It was clarified that these two events are separate efforts and they do not have to move in lock step. In terms of the book sale, Jane will reach out to Russ Holden, Superintendent of the Sunapee Schools, to discuss the feasibility of using the Sherburne Gym given the current pandemic situation.

At the last Friends meeting, Mindy provided an update and submitted her request for 2021 funding. Some Trustees and Trustee candidates were able to attend this meeting. As was mentioned above, The Friends approved over \$18,000.00 in funding, for which the Trustees are extremely grateful for their continued support!

IX. Old Business/Other Business

None.

X. Public Comment

None.

XI. Adjournment to Non-Public Session 91-A:3 II(a)

*The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, **unless** the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.*

Suzanne made a motion to adjourn to a non-public session. This was seconded by Betsy. By roll call vote, the Trustees voted to adjourn to a Non-Public Session under 91-A:3 II(a) at 6:55 pm. Carol Brudnicki – yes; Jane Frawley – yes; Susi Churchill – yes; Suzanne Tether – yes; Betsy Bowen – yes; Peg Lesiak – yes.

Susi made a motion to resume public session, seconded by Betsy. Approved unanimously by roll call vote, the Trustees returned to public session at 7:30 pm. Carol Brudnicki – yes; Jane Frawley – yes; Susi Churchill – yes; Suzanne Tether – yes; Betsy Bowen – yes; Peg Lesiak – yes.

Motion made by Peg, seconded by Carol, to not publicly disclose the minutes because it is determined that divulgence of the information likely would:

☒ X Affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of the Board, or

☐ Render the proposed action ineffective, or

☐ Pertain to terrorism, more specifically, to matters relating to the preparation for and the carrying out of all emergency functions, developed by local or state safety officials that are directly intended to thwart a deliberate act that is intended to result in widespread or severe damage to property or widespread injury or loss of life, which shall include training to carry out such functions.

Roll Call vote to seal the minutes: Carol Brudnicki Yes

Jane Frawley	Yes
Susi Churchill	Yes
Betsy Bowen	Yes
Peg Lesiak	Yes

XII. Adjournment

Betsy made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Jane. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote: Carol Brudnicki – yes; Jane Frawley – yes; Susi Churchill – yes; Betsy Bowen – yes; Peg Lesiak – yes.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Peg Lesiak, Secretary
February 22, 2021