

Minutes of the Abbott Library Trustees' Meeting
Abbott Library, Sunapee, NH
January 21, 2021

In attendance were Trustees: Carol Brudnicki, Chair, Jane Frawley, Vice Chair, Susi Churchill, Treasurer, Peg Lesiak, Secretary, Scott Rappeport, Suzanne Tether and Betsy Bowen.

Alternates: Michael Parker, Jon Reed

Library Director: Mindy Atwood

Others: Doug Osbo, David Atwood

I. Chair's Remarks

The meeting was called to order by Carol Brudnicki at 5:03 pm, Thursday, January 21, 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. Approval of Minutes

Carol moved to approve the minutes of the Abbott Library Trustees' Meeting of Thursday, December 17, 2020, as amended. The motion was seconded by Suzanne. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote: Carol Brudnicki – yes; Jane Frawley – yes; Susi Churchill – yes; Scott Rappeport – yes; Suzanne Tether – yes; Betsy Bowen – yes; Peg Lesiak – yes.

III. Treasurer's Report

A. Review of Financials

- Susi reported that the bank accounts have all been reconciled and the library has received all of the Town funding for 2020.
- In December, 2020, the library made the final payment of \$1200 to Empower Success Corp (ESC) for the strategic plan consulting contract. The payment was made from the library's operations account. The two prior payments to ESC, totaling \$4800, came from the Donations account, which housed the proceeds from prior Trustee Book Sales. These monies were used to fund as much of the strategic planning costs as possible, as the costs for this effort were not part of the budget.

In the "Operating Account – Profit & Loss Budget vs Actual" statement, under "#62100 Contract Services", there are funds remaining under legal and accounting fees. For consistency and to use some of the funds remaining from 2020, the Donation account could be reimbursed \$4800 from the operations account. Having the funds available in the Donation account would give the Board flexibility for library expenses in 2021 that were not anticipated in the budget. While this transfer does not require Board approval, the Board Treasurer and the Library Director wanted to discuss this with the Trustees at this meeting.

After discussion, the Trustees agreed it made sense to move \$4800 from the operations account to the Donations account.

- Susi shared that there are two reimbursements that the Library has not yet received from the Town. One is for the final COVID-19 related GOFERR claims (\$6,608.41) and the second is an insurance reimbursement (\$488.55) related to the power failure expenses. The Board asked Mindy to request of the Town that these reimbursements occur by the February 18, 2021 Trustee meeting.
- The library is also waiting to receive a 2020 insurance invoice from the Town.
- Mindy reminded the Trustees that until the Town voters approve the 2021 budget on March 9, 2021, the funding for January to March 9 is based on the prior year's budget funding. If the 2021 budget is approved, the funding is adjusted accordingly. If the Town budget does not pass, a default budget is in effect. If that were to occur, the salary and benefit expenses stay as planned in the 2021 budget, but there would be no increase to the operating budget or the cost-of-living adjustment.

B. Review/Approve Bill Manifest

Scott made a motion seconded by Betsy to accept the December 2020 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.

IV. Director's Report - Mindy Atwood

Mindy highlighted her written report:

- **Planning and Development**
 - The library staff have been given their Strategic Plan goal assignments and have met with Mindy on these.
 - Mindy sent the library's narrative report to Melissa Pollari for inclusion in the Annual Town Report. In addition, Mindy has sent circulation statistics, collection statistics and financial reports on all accounts except our operating budget. Mindy will submit the operating budget at the last possible date so as to have the most complete report of the library's operating budget.
 - Since reopening the building on June 23, 2020, the library is averaging 36 patrons a day. The busiest times are Monday and Saturday mornings. The quietest time is Tuesday evening. Mindy asked the question as to whether the library should expand or contract its current open hours which are Mondays 9-3, Tuesdays 1-7 and Saturdays 9-3. After discussion, the Trustees agreed the current open hours should remain as they are. This will be re-visited on a regular basis.
- **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.
 - There remain a number of invoices to be paid from the 2020 operating budget. These include: Amazon, LED lightbulbs, Ingram and the Town of Sunapee (insurance).
 - This is the first year the library will report in the Annual Town Report on the funds the Trustees hold from the sale of the old Abbott Library. Mindy provided the following refresher on the topic of the funds in order for all Trustees and Alternates to feel prepared should a town resident ask questions.
 - The Abbott Library Trustees received \$249,120 as equity from the sale of the old Abbott Library building.
 - In October 2019, the Board moved to establish donation line items as follows (see the minutes from this meeting, which Mindy provided, as reference):
 - Martha Abbott Trust/Principle - \$125,016.00

- Martha Abbott Trust/Investment Income – to be calculated upon maturation of the CD
 - Mabel Davis donations - \$115,104.00
 - These monies (Davies and Abbott) were gifted to the old Abbott Library over an 80-year period and are legally required to be used for “library use”.
 - Per the library’s attorney, Robert Wells, no further court filings are required to use the Davies portion of the sale equity (income and principal).
 - Also, per Attorney Wells, while the investment income and the principal from the Martha Abbott Trust must be accessed for “library use”, the principal can only be accessed by going to the Director of Charitable Trust/New Hampshire Attorney General.
 - The Town voted that construction costs for the new Abbott Library would be paid with a private/town funding strategy which was specifically noted in Town Warrant Articles.
 - Donation for the new Abbott Library building were solicited on the premise of, and many were contingent upon, \$975,000 being paid by town taxpayers.
- **Staff Management and Development**
 - Justin’s annual review is complete. It was Mindy’s great pleasure to provide Justin with a two-step increase this year, as this was truly a “break-out” year for him. Please see the document Mindy provided for the comment that accompanied his review.
 - The training for Nichole Marcy, who filled the new Library Aide III role for Technology and Outreach, continues. Nichole’s prior public library experience is evident and very positive.
 - With the hiring of Nichole, Mindy has been able to split the library staff into two teams. This is best practice given the COVID-19 pandemic as it means that if a staff member has exposed his or her co-workers, and they need to self-isolate or quarantine, the other team can ensure a library closure is not needed. The teams are as follows:
 - “The Morning Joes” – Mindy, Teri, Barbara and Liz
 - “The Tonight Show” – Justin, Nichole, Katy, Joni, Ruane
- **Program Management**
 - Virtual Yoga began on Wednesday, January 20. This will run for six weeks.
 - The Book Discussion and Film Discussion groups continue.
 - The library has purchased a Nintendo Switch and 8 pairs of snowshoes to loan. This is intended to make these items the beginning of a “Library of Things” to loan. Feedback will be solicited from patrons about other things they might like the library to loan.
 - On January 28, Mindy will present the library’s annual funding request to the Friends of the Abbott Library Board.
- **Building Management**
 - With EOY 2020 operating funds, the propane level in the generator tank was returned to 80%.
 - The library was able to purchase replacement LED lightbulbs for the entire library with the help of a rebate from Eversource. The bulbs should arrive in the next few weeks and the library can submit for the rebate once it has the receipts from this purchase. Thanks to Craig Heino for alerting Mindy about this opportunity and helping her with the purchasing process.
 - Mindy provided to the Trustees a scan of an article that appeared recently in the Union Leader. It provides a helpful summary on how the iWave technology works. The library utilized GOFERR funds to have ARC install this technology in the fall of 2020.

- **Community Outreach**
 - Mindy plans to attend the Coffee with the Chief on January 29.
 - Mindy indicated that Superintendent of Sunapee Schools, Russ Holden, would like to join the February Trustee meeting to discuss the school system's Warrant Article relating to renovations of the elementary school. The Trustees agreed to having this on the February Trustee meeting agenda.
- **State of NH Libraries in the time of COVID-19**
 - Mindy continues to attend the New Hampshire Library Directors' calls, which occur every other week.
 - Mindy also continues to attend the New Hampshire Emergency Operations Center (EOC) call on Wednesdays at noon.
 - Mindy provided a (rather massive) spreadsheet that summarizes the state of NH libraries, both public and school. Trustees can click on the tab "LUV Co-op+", which is a listing of the libraries in this immediate area.
 - Mindy continues to monitor COVID-19 statistics and she provided the Trustees a spreadsheet that shows the data points she monitors. The source is: <https://www.nh.gov/covid19/dashboard/overview.htm>

V. Chair's Report

- Carol shared the verbal and written thank you notes from library staff for the holiday gift bags.
- Carol reminded the Trustees there will be a non-public meeting session this evening to discuss the Library Director's annual performance evaluation.
- Mindy sent out an email on the NHLTA's virtual roundtable for Trustees. This Zoom meeting will be January 27 from 2-3pm. Trustees must notify them if interested in attending as the participation cap is 100. Carol and Suzanne plan to attend.
- Carol reminded the Trustees whose terms are ending to register for the Town ballot next week.

VI. Strategic Planning Update

On January 12, Carol sent all Trustees and Alternates the final strategic plan report, the plan document, and all related documents. Mindy has hard copies available for the Trustees who requested these.

In order to launch the Goal Leaders' work, Peg suggested the idea of holding a "Convening Meeting" for all leaders. The goals of this meeting would be:

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

It was agreed that this was a good approach. It was suggested that, if possible, the library staff assigned to each goal should attend. It was determined that Thursday, February 4, at 1:00pm would work for this meeting.

Peg will send out an email to the Strategic Plan committee to set up a time to reconvene prior to the above meeting.

As was mentioned at the last Trustee meeting, ESC has offered to conduct a training session on "The Role of the Trustee" at no additional cost under the contract. While initially discussed as being scheduled in February, Peg explained this had been re-thought and March was targeted.

Questions were asked about the date and whether we have to wait until after the election. Peg will reach out to ESC to find out more information about the scheduling for this session.

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

A. Abbott Library Foundation

- Mindy shared that the Foundation has received over \$12,000 in donations, and that those who were repeat donors (from the prior year) had donated at the same or higher levels.
- Mindy also shared that the Foundation is working on having a plaque made that would highlight those who had played a role in the creation of the new library. This is a practice that usually occurs for a new municipal building.
- A question was raised regarding the previously-discussed need for a storage shed and whether this is something the Foundation might lead. The group was reminded that this had been tabled in light of the strategic plan goal relating to multi-purpose space needs. Currently, the book sale-related equipment can remain stored in their current locations; however, there remains a storage need for the equipment at the front entrance of the library. More discussion may be needed on this topic.

B. Friends of the Abbott Library

As was mentioned previously, Mindy will join the Friends meeting on January 28th, at 6:30pm, to discuss the library's funding requests. Trustees who would like to attend should reach out to Caitlin Clapp.

VIII. Old Business/Other Business

None.

IX. Public Comment

None.

X. 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.*

Carol made a motion to adjourn to a non-public session. This was seconded by Jane. By roll call vote, the Trustees voted to adjourn to a Non-Public Session under 91-A:3 II(a) at 6:22 pm. Carol Brudnicki – yes; Jane Frawley – yes; Susi Churchill – yes; Scott Rapoport – yes; Suzanne Tether – yes; Betsy Bowen – yes; Peg Lesiak – yes.

Carol made a motion to resume public session, seconded by Jane. Approved unanimously by roll call vote, the Trustees returned to public session at 8:12 pm. Carol Brudnicki – yes; Jane Frawley – yes; Susi Churchill – yes; Scott Rapoport – yes; Suzanne Tether – yes; Betsy Bowen – yes; Peg Lesiak – yes.

Motion made by Peg, seconded by Suzanne, 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
	Scott Rappeport	Yes
	Suzanne Tether	Yes
	Betsy Bowen	Yes
	Peg Lesiak	Yes

XI. 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; Scott Rappeport – yes; Suzanne Tether – yes; Betsy Bowen – yes; Peg Lesiak – yes.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Peg Lesiak, Secretary
January 24, 2021