

## **Meeting of the Westhampton Public Library Board of Trustees**

Thursday, September 9th at 7:00 PM

Community Room, WPL, 1 North Road, Westhampton

**In attendance:** Meaghan Schwelm, Anne Marie O'Reilly, Caralyn Whipple, Mikki Nevins, Angela Griefen, Brian Mulvehill and visitors Charlotte Wood and Sue O'Rourke

**Meeting Called to Order:** 7:01 PM

**Minutes from the Last Meeting:** Deferred until next month

**Treasurer's Report:** Library Building Account has \$3,594.48; State Aid has \$277.47; Deferred Town Monies \$91,180.13; Library Gift Account \$20,974.02

### **Presentation by Visitors to Meeting:**

-Charlotte Wood comes to sell Cow Pie Bingo tickets (many trustees purchase)

- Sue O'Rourke: American Recovery Act (COVID 19 funding) O'Rourke spoke to Bill Tracy about using the funds for the second floor and the basement of the library. O'Rourke proposes that this be put into the 10 year plan. Schwelm says it can't be just library, there isn't staffing. It should be things that have been identified as shortcomings during the pandemic: heating center, cooling center, community resources etc.

Phil Dowling came to Friends meeting on Wednesday and mentioned that sprinklers and elevators would be necessary to use the second floor. So it would be half a million to get 2nd floor up to code. It has taken town 10 years to get the town garage built, so we should start planning now if we ever want to do it.

Regarding the leak in the roof: this brings up the issue of maintenance. Solar panel income goes to general funds. Dowling is willing to donate time, materials, and half the scissor lift (and Friends will fund the other half). But Friends need to fund big time an endowment that will maintain the building. The Friends believe the town should be responsible for the maintenance of a town building.

Large discussion ensues regarding why the town does not pay for the library maintenance, and how difficult it would be to transition maintenance to the town.

O'Reilly asks: what is our role in the town government? Should we be talking to the selectboard to figure out where do we fit in, and in the long term, how does this building carry on?

We do need to get on Capital Planning, though the list goes out 20 years.

Nevins highlights the fact that it seems Phil Dowling's plan was, if we can fundraise to build the library, we could fundraise to maintain it.

Mulvehill- if we go that path, we are reinforcing the fact that we fund our own maintenance.

### **Director's Report:**

*As Written, and:*

Trustees approve the potential use of the cub scouts using the Community Room

*Hotspot Program:* will research purchasing one Verizon or AT&T to ensure coverage in the whole town. Schwelm created policy:

Looked into purchasing a laptop but there are huge backlogs in ordering them through the library system. Schwelm might have to go to Best Buy and just acquire that way. Schwelm says she is not seeing an expressed need for a device at home, but it would be nice to have one in the library that people could move around.

*Masking:* Board of Health says that all groups meeting in town meetings need to wear masks. Schwelm sent emails to the knitters and the Scrabble players to inform them.

*Building Issues:* leaking water from improperly installed solar panels. Had two leaks. Phil Dowling is willing to plug the holes with caulking.

*Endowment Proposal:* Schwelm thinks that it would actually be a great idea in the long run so we don't have to fight for funding for the things that we need. Endowment provides stability that we won't ever get from the town. We will not have Phil Dowling forever. Sadly it's more difficult to argue the practical use of a library than a highway department. Mulvehill suggests that we should ask for more money next year in our budget and make it clear that even if we fundraise it is their responsibility to pay for this building. Schwelm says we should itemize the in-kind donation value of Phil Dowling's donation. Mulvehill says we need to be very specific about what we're spending it on. If an endowment is mentioned we say: it's none of your business. We can spend that on whatever we want to.

*Statistical reporting* forms have been submitted. New Strategic plan would be due in a year from October so we might want to begin to discuss it at the next meeting.

#### **New Business:**

**Correspondence:** note full of accolades for Meaghan and Emily from Michael Stacy.

**Basement water:** we need to acquire a second dehumidifier. Whipple suggests getting a super-efficient industrial dehumidifier which may cut energy costs.

**Anything else not anticipated:** alarm went off today because the telephone line went out; Nevin's name is still on Hackworth's list. Schwelm will investigate and get Schwelm onto the list.

#### **Old Business:**

**Director's Evaluation:** Conversation among trustees about Schwelm's exemplary work as director.

**Adjourned:** 8:35 pm

**Date of next meeting:** 10/14/21 at 7:00 PM.

Reminder for agenda for next meeting:

- Discuss strategic plan
- Think about a proactive conversation with the town regarding future building maintenance

O'Reilly: Using Evaluation Sheet and Job Description noted:

Under library and collection part of job description: collaborate with trustees to create policies for safe and effective use of the library. In the midst of the pandemic, what was outstanding and deserving of extra mention: taking initiative, taking risks.

Mulvehill points out the value of her connections to other libraries. She knows exactly where to go. Has cultivated connections and resources. Uses local resources well.

Great sense of the needs of the community-- has seen her go above and beyond. Handles challenging patrons very well.

When she presents a need, there are always solutions already researched.

Schwelm now confidently takes ownership of her role, knowing what building needs, what library needs, and articulating that to us. Has a great sense of where trustees need background and does that in a respectful way.

Extraordinary job with community programs

Excellent leadership of Emily-- who is doing wonderfully.