

Meeting of the Westhampton Public Library Board of Trustees  
Via Zoom Videoconferencing  
Thursday, March 11, 2021 at 7 pm

**In attendance:** Mikki Nevins, Lynn Cooper, Celeste Whiting, Anne Marie O'Reilly, Carol McMurrich (taking minutes) and Meaghan Schwelm  
Absent: Brian Mulvehill

**Meeting** was called to order at 7:05

**Treasurer's Report:** Library Building Account: \$3,594.48 State Aid: 0.00 (waiting for first check to be issued \$2,042) Deferred Town Monies: \$35,640.73 Gift account: \$24,435.75

Regarding Deferred town monies ~ Meaghan renewed our solar monitoring service today after her director's report had been printed.  
Cost \$440 for 5 years and was deducted from this account. Meaghan will update that total amount.

**Director's Report:**

As written, and:

-Overdrive statistics have increased by about 25%. See report for details. Brief discussion of the cost of eBooks and the length of time the library gets to keep them. That varies by publisher but they're much more expensive than hardcover books but necessary during this time of the pandemic.

-New staff computers are up and running and are "wonderful". A low electric bill allowed Meaghan to shift some money around from the Operating budget and gift accounts to go towards the purchase of the new computers.

-On March 4, 2021 Meaghan, Mikki and Annemarie met with FinCom to present our budget. It seemed that most of the FinCom members were supportive. During a discussion about the exterior of the library needing to be painted & the cost, a FinCom member suggested that maybe a "fund raiser" could help raise money for that. Immediately, Dave Blakesley, who is on the Capital Planning and Property Maintenance Committee, remarked that the library is a town building and the trustees should meet with them to get the project on the calendar.

One other more urgent repair is the deck rail. It's in desperate need of paint. Trustees' consensus was that replacing it with composite material is a better option than having to repaint it as often as necessary. Meaghan is going to check with Phil Dowling to see if he has thoughts about who we might hire to do that.

-Nevins will reach out to Chris Brooks to ask him how we would meet with him to discuss the Capital Planning committee on our radar.

Schwelm: as part of the grant we received from the American Library Association will plant pollinator friendly plants in the front corner of the Judd house, which is currently sparsely planted. Help with planning from Tom (Schwelm's partner, works with Audobon) and also the Conservation district is offering input. There is a group of gardeners who have been meeting regularly, have brainstormed plants that will thrive in full sun. Suggestion is that some mediterranean herbs could work; Schwelm also wants to introduce some native flowering plants. Friends have given \$300 additional dollars to the \$300 we have.

Schwelm doesn't want to drop the ball on updating the sustainability policies. LEED certification website suggests a re-certification process which would be a good idea. Schwelm realizes there is quite a bit in the LEED language that is difficult to understand, and would like to be sure we're doing it all by the books. Whiting asks what cost might be associated with recertifying: and also are any of our other relationships dependent upon remaining certified? Do we lose anything if we don't get recertified?

Conversation re: Dr Seuss books is enormous in youth services. Schwelm and Emily have decided that instead of pulling the books they will put language inside the book that suggests that parents use this opportunity to talk about their children about the racial stereotypes in the book and why they might be harmful. Will present to the board before we do that.

Board agrees that we would prefer to encourage the conversations so that it is a learning opportunity.

**Friends Report:** Sue O'Rourke is on the permanent sign project. Draft is already made.

### **Old Business:**

**Lawn Care plan:** Schwelm recalls that we decided not to make a change this year because we didn't factor it into the budget. She told Holt this year to go ahead with the

regular regiment this year but to prepare the cost plan for the organic plan so that if we choose to do it next year, we can factor it into the budget.

### **New Business:**

A person wants to do a presentation based on a book: Ann Averill wants to do Teacher Dropout: Finding Grace in an Unjust School. Teaching in a local urban middle school. Wanted to donate a paper copy and an e-book (not possible, but did accept the paper copy) but Averill also wanted to do a reading/program which she's open to doing via Zoom. Clear in the video about this book is that she is saved by the grace of God: our mission on the website is serving the community with parity, so there are concerns about having a program that can feel like we are promoting the agenda. However: Schwelm did have a thought: there are other local self-published authors. What if we had several "self-publishing showcase" authors present. Would then be upfront with the author about how we strive to serve with parity, it's my understanding that it comes from strong faith and remember that all patrons don't share that faith. Writing is something that is grown in Westhampton: maybe if we approach it from the writing perspective we will get other participants.

Reopening: Schwelm will meet with board of health next week; may re-open in April or early May. Thinking of re-opening the whole library (kids and teens as well) and would be by appointment for at least the initial stages of re-opening. Questions for board of health include: how many days can we realistically be open; previously they were advised to sanitize the building between open days, hoping that this will be removed. Also hoping that we can remove the need to wear gloves and decrease the quarantine time. Trustees would love to see us open up service as much as we can. Schwelm was thinking that April vacation week - April 20th could be opening day. Discussion of contact tracing: could keep appointments; or could have people sign into the library and out of the library to do contact tracing. Question: Will people still want curbside? Schwelm hopes that there will not be much demand for it anymore, could still provide it for those who want it.

Prospective Board Members: Checking in with who is up for re-election, etc. Need to be pro-active and have time to do that. Whiting is up for re-election and she needs to step off, she's not local very often anymore. Cooper is also stepping off, feels 13 years are enough. Suggestion of Angela Griefen, Schwelm will ask Griefen. Looking for representation of someone with younger children: Nevins suggests Carolyn Whipple; Carol McMurrich will reach out to her through FB to discuss. Trustees will discuss again at next meeting.

Whiting points out that this is not a board issue: in the end people need to show up to caucus and it's only our role to make people aware of the vacancies.

No other business to put before the board.

Net meeting: April 8th

Nevins proposed adjournment at 8:21 pm seconded by Whiting. Unanimously accepted.