

Meeting of the Westhampton Public Library Board of Trustees

Via Zoom

Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 7 pm.

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

1. Call to Order at 7:03 pm

2. Minutes from last meeting: Moved to accept by Nevins, seconded by Mulvehill.

Unanimously accepted by roll call.

3. Treasurer's Report: Library Building Project \$3594.48, State Aid is at \$0 (pending);
Deferred Town Monies: \$66,988.61; Gift \$23,716.51

4. Director's Report: As written, and:

-Cooper brings up issue of whether lighting a tree for "wishing tree" would be considered to be Christian. Celeste says it's much different from the crèche. Schwelm clarifies that this is an existing tree not a Christmas tree. If we go ahead with it we should get an inexpensive timer so that nobody needs to turn lights on and off. Schwelm will also explore whether there are any Asian cultures that use "wishing tree" to be careful that we are not appropriating.

Mulvehill shares that the Supreme Court ruled that "holiday displays" are allowed and do not try to willfully encourage religious participation. Approved a Santa and a crèche so our lit tree should be fine.

Cooper suggests voting on the issue pending that we don't see any barriers: Motion is made by Cooper: We vote to have the wishing tree lit in the front of the library provided that the

Selectboard deems it is acceptable. Seconded by Nevins. Accepted unanimously by roll call.

Schwelm is approved to use Gift Account to purchase lights/extension cords.

Re: Strategic Plan: Action plan works within the same 3-4 goals that are within the longer range plan. Schwelm will submit for FY22 by December 1. **Schwelm will share report with O'Reilly before submitting.**

5. **Friends Report:** drive for Fill the Shelves is going well. No other news.

6. Old Business

- a. *Follow-up on lawn and field maintenance:* walk through on October 23, learned a great deal. About 12-15 people present. The people who came were happy they came, it was informative. Mulvehill shares that concerns had lain around use of pesticides, learned it was minimal and very specific at a particular time for a particular cause. In terms of fertilizer and runoff - in a worst case rainstorm it would only be 3-4 feet. There was no sense that any excess was being used and every sense that everything was being carefully and thoughtfully applied. Would be curious to hear how much the organic products would cost just for us to know. Nevins recalls 3 times the current price. Mulvehill suggests we look at the budget. Person who registered the concern did not attend the meeting, which was disappointing to the trustees. Steve's explanations were very scientific and hard to communicate.
- b. At some point we will have to circle back with Steve to talk about costs. There is no burning rush but we would need to make a decision, change the policy if need be if we decide not to go with organic products. **Nevins will ask Steve at what point we would need to make a decision in time for him to do our usual spring stuff.** Schwelm shares that even organic materials are chemicals. Our policies are very specific because they were part of our LEED certification. Steve's integrated pest management is even used by Audubon. So it's possible

that using integrated pest management outside would not impact our LEED certification. Schwelm will ask if what we do in the yard impacts the certification. Discussion of how cleaning products that are suggested for COVID are technically incompatible with LEED/Policy but we have to use them anyway. Whiting shares that if the exterior membrane is distressed it's no longer replicable— there must be something less caustic than bleach. Schwelm shares that citric acid/hydrogen peroxide cleaners will also work. Mulvehill shares that the way you use a chemical impacts whether it works.

b. *HVAC*: Got an email from Phil Dowling and also shared the email from the Board of Health. Update from PD: At select board meeting generally concluded that maximizing fresh air along with masks/distancing is best. UV lights in ductwork was discussed as well as ionization but CDC does not think either will be effective in COVID reduction. Continue to limit the number of people in the building and ensure good air exchange. In BOH letter suggested that windows should be halfway open and doors open for significant air exchange. Very cold in library!

Suggests that after Thanksgiving we will go back to curbside only. We cannot keep windows open all winter! Trustees agree that the world is moving back in the direction of closing down. As for volunteers who don't want to come in with windows closed— suggestion that it's really up to Schwelm. If she wants volunteers more than warmth she can keep them!

c. *Maintenance/Fire Alarm*: Schwelm reports that the fire alarms have been quiet. Reports that Hackworth said that industrial alarm systems can be triggered when the power goes out. However, Hackworth won't call in the middle of the night if that happens— and there is a message on the alarm that will indicate that the alarm is because of lost power.

d. *Restructuring Board*: Discussing the sharing of the Board Chair position: Mulvehill shares that the duties of Chair are indeed at times overwhelming. Nevins states she has no objection to

having a chair and a co-chair. Whiting says it makes sense to have some redundancy. O'Reilly says that we would need to define exactly what the co-chair would do: beyond taking over meetings if the chair was unavailable and also receiving any emails that the director sends. That would increase the number of folks accountable. **O'Reilly will take the description that is in the bylaws and will tweak it so that we have distinct chair and co-chair roles.**

e. Director Evaluation: Schwelm leaves the meeting to provide time for trustees to discuss the director's situation. Trustees suggest we list her strengths and what we're impressed by. In the past we've done it with goals. Goals now are to get through the pandemic. **Cooper will type up the informal evaluation and meet with Schwelm before the end of the year.**

7. New Business

a. Request to meet in the library: Knitting group as well as an individual who wanted to help another individual with technology. Knitting group has rescinded request because the BOH has recommended that no more than 5 people use the Community Room and KC gets up to 10 people. Second request made by an individual so that she could help someone else with technology. Schwelm is concerned that the person needing the help was perhaps less invested and was uncomfortable being helped in the confined space. BOH is recommending that the quarantining of books be moved into a different room.

Mulvehill requests that we should use the space for what we want to use it for. If it's working best for Meaghan to use it to quarantine books the space should continue to use the space that way.

Cooper agrees.

Mulvehill also shares that we're moving into a more dangerous space so all requests should be really thought through.

Nevins says we don't need to be doing anything that will make it any harder for people who work in the library.

Whiting says it's easy to suggest moving the books but there isn't a real alternative.

Suggests that Schwelm redirect folks looking for a place to meet to the Town Hall.

b. Request to use field and fire pit: one made by an individual and also Pastor Tadd has an interest in doing a bonfire in the library yard. Schwelm says it would have to be a closed program and follow the guidelines for numbers of people and have contact tracing. Mulvehill recalls that its the responsibility of the people booking to contact the fire department and the board of health. Schwelm will check with the board of health and ask them what they think. Trustees think as long as it's clear that it's not a library event and the board of health approves it's OK.

8. Any other business to come before the meeting not anticipated at time of posting.

Next Meeting: 12/10 at 7 pm

Adjourn: at 8:41 pm, moved, seconded, and unanimously accepted.

Submitted by Carol McMurrich