

**PLAISTOW PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**October 13, 2015**

The Plaistow Public Library Board of Trustees held a regular meeting at the Public Library on Tuesday, October 13, 2015.

Present: Jennifer Kiarsis, Interim Chair  
James Peck, Treasurer  
Jane Query, Interim Secretary  
Michelle Sykes, Friends of the Library, Alternate (voting today)  
Rosemarie Bayek, Alternate (voting today)

Not Present: Catherine Willis  
Luann Blair

Others Present: Cab Vinton, Library Director  
Melissa Theberge, Minute Taker

**Call to Order**

Jenn called the meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 10:32am.

**Guest Presentation**

*Landscaping Presentation by David Jones*

Cab invited David to share his ideas for the library given that the current contract with Lavallee is ending soon. He has been working in this area for 40 years and brings extensive experience. David approves of a one-year contract to start the relationship with the library. During his walk-through on the property he noted dying or dead trees to remove, small plants under excessive mulch, other areas with thin mulch, pruning that needs to be done on several plants, and a need for removal of winter-kill to help plants thrive better. Pines on the edge of the property are extending too far out over the lawn as well. Cab has also noticed a lot of salt burn along edgings of grass.

Pruning is included in the contract and seasonal maintenance is standard. Pruning is largely done by hand except for the few plants that allow for gas trimmer use. Spring clean-up includes all tasks that need to be tended to by May 1. Maintenance continues through summer lawn care as well as pruning and trimming. Managing the watering program encourages best lawn root growth. The contract would be broken down to list what is included.

Cab indicated a concern with tree health and would like to know David's team is noting changes in trees and what kind of care is needed. Jim asked about how the estimate is calculated and David indicated that it is a combination of square footage, needs of the property, and man hours required. Rosemarie asked about new grass and if it's included and David said no. The contract would include maintenance

tasks of the lawn but not new lawn. They subcontract to Lawn Master or Greenskeeper for lawn. Jane asked about the wet area and if it can be made attractive. David said it's part of the lot plan for drainage but could be cut back in the fall and see what could be done. Jane asked about fish too, but no definitive answer was given on that.

Jim asked about other local customers and David referenced some recognizable properties in town for reference. Cab is seeking a balance between having a sharp and clean presentation without having the property look extravagant. Cab asked about the consistency of the crew and David said his team has largely been with him for many years and he likes to observe the worksites himself regularly so he can verify the work quality. Bob (who was present for the meeting) indicated that he is a regular participant in the actual maintenance and would likely be on the property every couple of weeks to see how things look or to do the actual work.

In answer to David's question about decision-making, the Board indicated that it would be soon, within a couple of weeks, due to the upcoming budget presentation.

### **Secretary's Report**

Jenn shared that Cathy is unable to attend meetings for October, November, December.

Motion to appoint Jenn Kiarsis as Interim Chair made by Rosemarie Bayek, seconded by Jim Peck.

Motion carried: Ayes 4, Opposed 0, Abstentions 1. (Kiarsis)

Motion to appoint Jane Query as Interim Secretary made by Rosemarie Bayek, seconded by Jenn Kiarsis.

Motion carried: Ayes 4, Opposed 0, Abstentions 1. (Query)

Rosemarie Bayek will be back up Treasurer to support Jim in that role as needed.

Motion to accept the regular meeting minutes of September 8, 2015 made by Jenn Kiarsis, seconded by Jim Peck. Motion carried: Ayes 5, Opposed 0, Abstentions 0.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Jim shared that the September report is fairly straightforward. Appropriation funds from the town have come in for the 4th quarter and are already reflected on the report. On the Legal line, the budget will not be spent since things were settled. Sprinkler cost was moved to the Liability line. Facility expenses are remarkably close to the plan despite difficult events of the year with ice damage and such. Materials continues to be under budget and most other categories remain on target. Payroll is favorable, due to a point earlier in the year when some staff positions were not filled. Dental will be more favorable as the year ends. Public Activities continues on the expected high trajectory, with a plan to take money from the library funds if needed, but this will probably not be necessary. Utilities are running slightly under budget as planned. The year as a whole looks to end just under budget. Rosemarie asked about Public Activities and Jim explained how the board was asked to expand programming. Now with the history of programming growing the town can get behind supporting a larger budget line. With Jen bringing in

outside money for summer reading, it essentially paid for itself. Total memorial funds are up slightly with recent donations.

Motion to accept the September Treasurer's Report was made by Jenn Kiarsis, seconded by Rosemarie Bayek. Motion carried: Ayes 4, Opposed 0, Abstentions 1. (Peck)

### **Friends of the Library**

Michelle shared that the Antiques Rodeo brought in just over \$800. The appraiser stayed late to tend to all the guests and the event was a success. The Friends learned a little about what they would change another time, including monitoring the number of items people have appraised. The appraiser's assistant was unavailable so he had to do work the event himself. The Friends gave him \$50 as an honorarium. Set up and prep for the Friends was fairly reasonable to be repeated. The food truck vendor reported that she had a good day. Jim suggested having more appraisers handy to serve more guests. Jane suggested rearranging the video feed so observers could see better.

The Mother-Daughter Tea Party went very well and made \$400. Food was donated, and the fashion show was fun. Funds will go to the summer reading program for next year. The American Girl Doll raffle has begun. Cab suggested that thank you notes be sent to donors and Michelle made a note of this for their upcoming meeting.

After the Super Bowl, the Friends are looking at having a father-son get together with a different theme. Jim & Cab suggested doing this before Super Bowl to build excitement.

Vendor Fair work is beginning. They have only received 2-3 responses from vendors so far. The event is on November 21.

Jim asked if there were new Friends members and Michelle said there were not.

### **Southern NH Library Cooperative**

Cab said there's not much new to report. They have been discussing their "holds" policy. They are talking about maximizing holds to maybe 25 to manage the system better. There is also a problem with holds being placed and then not getting picked up before expiring. Currently patrons have three days to pick up a hold. There is no penalty for not picking it up and Cab feels it is wasting staff resources. Cab is considering a fine of some sort for this inconvenience. The co-op does not wish to fine. One suggestion by the Board was to allow only two days for pick up. Jim suggested taking action with just the offending patrons rather than instituting a fine for all. Cab said he could look into this.

Cab shared information about BiblioBoard which is a publishing platform to create an ebook which gets loaded to an online platform and is shared throughout the state. Art and music can also be shared this way. This might be a way to connect with schools and students who create media in print, art, music, etc. This would host their work in a public forum. The cost is \$700 per year. The cooperative is looking at how libraries are using this effectively.

## **Director's Report**

*Staff*--Alice is doing a great job since beginning about a month ago. She is currently researching health insurance options for the library. Cab is also considering having her come up with an a la carte menu of ways patrons and community members can contribute. She is also looking into having a local pediatric dentist come in for a series of programs. He hopes there is a proposal ready by the next meeting.

*Technology*--Cab recently purchased a NAS (Network Attached Storage) device. The current shared files server is running Windows 2003 which is no longer supported. The new technology includes RAID format and 2 hard drives, which provides redundancy. The library will switch over to this in the next week or so.

*Building*--Rich is doing a great job and has recently waxed the floors, repainted the bike rack, and he assembled the complicated new desks. Cab gave him a gift card as a special thank you. His office is very tidy and organized. Also, the people-counters could be updated with more effective tools that are available. New versions allow better data collection as well. Alice recently made a suggestion of removing one library entryway in the front, by closing one door and repurposing the space. Not only would this require only one people-counter, it may provide a small savings. The Board prefers to leave the entries as is, citing the intent of two doors at the time of construction relative to the two parking lots.

*Grant Station*--Cab has purchased a new membership to this resource which allows research of relevant grants.

*HVAC*--Cab reports that he has taken no new action. The Board wants Cab to make it a priority. It must be done this year as it involves encumbered money.

*Recent Incidents*--Cab reported that a heroin addict recently required care in the restroom. Also someone drove into a light post. The town is taking care of the light post incident. Repair estimate has come in at about \$2000 with an LED light. Cab needs to contact the town about the process so that the repair matches the current lights. An additional incident included a request for library cards for children, without proof of residency or permission. The request was denied. Cab looked for confirmation from the Board regarding approval of how it was handled.

*Trustee of the Year*--Cathy Willis was recognized as Trustee of the Year from NH Library Trustees Association. The board offered its sincere congratulations.

*Meeting Room Fees*--Cab and Brianna would like to let people know in advance of a fee schedule. There was discussion about the difference between public and private groups and appropriate fees. Jenn suggested starting with the lower fee schedule Cab presented and revisiting it in a year.

Motion to direct Cab to follow the printed fee schedule (included below) effective January 1, 2016 was made by Jim Peck, seconded by Jenn Kiarsis. Motion carried: Ayes 5, Opposed 0, Abstentions 0.

Meeting Room Fee Schedule:

*Half of the Nelson Room or History Room*

\$20 for 2 hours

\$40 for 2-4 hours

\$80 for 4+ hours

*Entire Nelson Room*

\$40 for 2 hours

\$80 for 2-4 hours

\$125 for 4+ hours

**New Business**

*Contact Tree for Disaster Plan*

Jenn suggested the Board needs a key contact person long-term. She will talk to Raven about this plan as well. It was decided that Cab will be first on the list, Jim can be second, and Jenn will be third. The key contacts will need a key and security information. Cab will update the town contact list accordingly, as well as Pulsar. The Board also felt that Paul Lucia should remain on the list for police contact. Cab asked about the need for police reports and though the board doesn't find this necessary, he did indicate that he tracks incidents on his own. Jenn will contact Raven about moving forward with disaster planning and will arrange a meeting with Cab too.

*Holiday Schedule*

Cab suggested keeping the schedule the same as last year, with the normal hours on the Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend. For Christmas, the Board suggested being open for a half-day before Christmas, Saturday the 26th off, and and early closing at 3pm on New Year's Eve.

*Unitil Windfall*

After thinking the Unitil error was the electric portion, Jim discovered it was an overage in the gas bill for 25 months at about \$100 a month. Jim would like to know how this happened and how to know it hasn't been going on longer. Jim said he will call Unitil with these two questions. Due to this discrepancy Jim has adjusted the future budget to reflect this overage as well as the correct rates.

**Old Business**

*Budget Review*

Jim presented the 2016 library budget proposal. The legal fees line will go down to a normal level. Electricity will be down. No final rates are available yet for health/life/disability line, which will be available on October 17, so he will make adjustments then. Jim expects it will go up based on family plans and other reasons. The green highlighted lines on the document indicate items that will be the same as the current year. Areas of increase are highlighted in red, with percentage increase noted.

Supplies increase reflects slight increase to match programming increases. Gas does not include a locked-in contract but he estimates only a slight increase. Bookkeeping received a standard increase to be safe. Landscaping increase would be significant. Cab said the current landscaping is done poorly but the percentage increase to switch to David Jones is significant. There was discussion about weighing the cost, quality, and quantity of landscaping work. Jenn suggested a negotiation with David to include the contracted work to Greenworks as part of the price, rather than as an add-on. Jim requested a Board consensus on the dollar amount on the budget, even with landscaping negotiations ongoing. The Board supported leaving the \$8700 in the budget for the presentation. Cab will look up the increase Lavallee intended as an additional comparison for consideration. Jim continued on with Public Activities and with the increase in programming the Board is asking for a little more from the town. The statistics regarding programming support the increase and based on the bottom line going down overall Jim expects that the presentation of the budget to the town will go well.

On the third page, there is a listing of Library Funds Expenditures that do not need to be itemized on the main budget but that need to be indicated in order to be spent.

Jim sought consensus from the board that the budget is acceptable for presentation. He will be going to the Board of Selectmen on October 19 at 6:30pm and the Board is encouraged to attend in support. He then goes to the Budget Committee the next day, on October 20. Jenn will share with the Selectmen about Cathy's award.

#### *Strategic Plan Planning*

Cab would like to pursue this in winter.

#### *Other*

Jim mentioned the mural plan. The artist is preparing a miniature version to show the Board. The plan would be to place the murals above the study rooms.

Motion to adjourn was made by Jenn Kiarsis at 1:10pm.

Next meeting: November 10, 2015 at 10:30am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Theberge  
Minute Taker