

Johnson Public Library Board – Final Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 14th, 2020

Meeting via zoom

Present: Jeanne Engel (Librarian), Jessica Bickford, Jasmine Yuris, Kelly Vandorn, Sabrina Rossi (left at 6:53 when Kelly took over notes), Stacey Waterman (late arrival at 6:50).

1. Call to order: 6:09 pm
2. Review and Approval of September 9th meeting minutes: Under 5c Jeanne noted that in her discussion of the cold patch of the library parking lot and Brian Krause's resignation from the town, she wanted to clarify that she was discussing ongoing communication with a new Highway foreman when hired if the project was not able to be completed before Brian left his position. Jasmine keeps up this communication. Kelly motioned to approve the minutes with this change, Jasmine seconded, all board members in favor.
3. Librarian's Report
 - a. All is going well at the library. Jeanne just returned from a 10-day break, resulting in the library not being opened yet per the last meeting discussion. However, Jeanne has been doing some research about libraries opening and has a solid plan. Initially the phased reopening plan discussed being open by appointment, however libraries in Stowe and Hyde Park skipped that step to be open and have had success. Jeanne proposes the library does this as well while ensuring the safety of the staff and patrons as her priority. Opening will require some rearrangement of furniture, displays, and such. She plans to open not this next week, but the following week.
 - i. Jessica asked about how many patrons would be allowed. Jeanne will finalize that number based on the state guidelines and there will be signage outside of the library providing directions for entering the library.
 - ii. Jeanne provided detail that not all rooms would be open, the desk will be moved to provide additional space, tables will be relocated, and directions will be provided for browsing to limit contact with materials by patrons if they are not borrowing them.
 - iii. Jessica asked if Jeanne would seek approval from the town? Jeanne said that yes, she is finalizing the plan, will send to Nat Kinney and seek approval from the Emergency Management Team.
 - iv. Jasmine asked if curbside will still be available and Jeanne said yes that it was going well and worked for many patrons so it will continue.
 - v. Jeanne stated there will not be access to computers yet and the librarians will continue to complete the scanning and copying for patrons.
 - b. Background checks – Jeanne did check into background checks and there is not a standard in libraries in Vermont that she found. Some do once upon hire, others do multiple based on schedules. Jasmine wondered about a schedule and if it could be built into a library policy document? Sabrina noted that it is part of the hiring process and is included in job descriptions, but just the initial screening. Jessica noted that due to the long agenda, that this discussion could be tabled in the interest of more research and getting to other important topics.

- c. Jessica motioned to accept the librarian's report, Sabrina seconded, all board members in favor.

4. Facilities - Jasmine

- a. Gardens: Sue Lovering from the tree board (and an avid gardener) met with Jasmine and Jeanne at the library to look at the gardens. She outlined a plan for a low maintenance garden by adding new plants and cutting back old shrubs and bushes. They will clean out the leaves, weeds, and remove some topsoil. They will then back fill with new topsoil and/or compost. In spring hostas and daylilies will be planted with the existing plants, add mulch, and prune plants as needed. Sue committed to pruning the plants and donating additional perennials from her own garden. The high estimate for completion of the project with new materials as needed is \$400.
- b. Parking Lot: The parking lot will be cold patched when the town does Plot Rd.
- c. Ramp: Kyle Nuse had posted a recommendation on Front Porch Forum regarding Eric Sorenson's carpenter skills. Jasmine had contacted him but hadn't heard back from him until recently when it was discovered her messages had gone to Eric's spam folder. He is interested in the project and will be giving an estimate on the ramp and railing separate. The plan will be to stick to a spring project on the ramp.
- d. Railing: Jeanne noted that while the library is receiving bids on wood railings, she is still exploring the idea of repairing the existing metal railing. She contacted a sandblaster in Swanton for a quote and is waiting to hear back from them.
- e. Flood gates: Jeanne communicated with Brian Currier regarding the installation of a flood door. Brian had concerns regarding a door that had regular use and maintained a solid seal over time. Brian Krause put Jeanne into contact with Richard Downer from FEMA and Jeanne sent him the Steven and Associates building recommendation document. Dr. Downer noted that any gates or door over a certain height could cause hydrostatic lift in the basement causing the basement to buckle. Downer recommended a Press Ray barrier which other residents and businesses have in Johnson. Jeanne had spoken with Kasey and Howard Romero, residents with this flood gate, that noted that if the gate is on the outside of the building, it would have to be regularly cleared of ice and snow so the gates could slide into the tracks. Howard noted that if the basement door opened out as most business exterior doors do open, the gates could potentially be installed inside the basement. Jeanne will ask Dr. Downer for clarification because it is important that the library has professional guidance as much of the advice the library is receiving can be contradictory. If the gates are installed outside, an overhang may need to be built. Additionally, board members wondered if the library was not according to building codes if the library door opens inwards on the basement. May be a good opportunity to rectify two problems. Jeanne noted that the library is okay for now, but we do need a solid permanent fix for these situations.

5. MOU – Jessica lead

- a. Jeanne sent the draft document to Lara Keenan for review. Lara also sent to Gary Deziel at the UVM Extension offices (who does workshops for HR and Finances in libraries). Both provided feedback.
- b. Jessica noted the biggest feedback was a monetary threshold or distinct projects that the library versus the town would be responsible for at the library.

(6:53 PM Sabrina had to leave the meeting, and Kelly continued taking minutes. Stacey joined the meeting.)

- c. Discussion of the MOU and comments by Lara Keenan and Gary Deziel continued. After quite a lengthy discussion, it was decided to focus the MOU on facilities and remove portions of the document which referred to the endowments and staffing. Jeanne and Jessica will refine the MOU and send a draft to the Trustees for approval before sending it on to the Village and Town.
- d. In addition, further investigation into the handling of the endowments and how other Libraries handle them may be helpful and we will pursue this. Gary Deziel is an expert and could be a good resource.

6. Budget Discussion

- a. Stacey reported that it is time to begin considerations for the upcoming budget. Stacey does not have the year-end actuals yet, but it looks as if most categories will remain the same. Grant money will be less this year, but if we have less money, we will spend less, so that really does not affect the budget. Stacey reported she adjusted the Endowment figures, and most of our expenses will remain the same. The town hasn't released figures on salary raises yet. Last year it was 2.5%, so we will wait to adjust salaries until we have that information.
- b. Two categories where we need to make decisions are the Building Maintenance and Building Capital Expenses.
 - i. Under Building Maintenance, we have an increase over last year due to mowing, shoveling snow and cleaning. We also have an increase due to Covid and the sanitation supplies required. The board decided to increase the budget for Building Maintenance to \$6000.
 - ii. Last year under Building Capital Expense, we listed \$9,700. This was to include flooding supplies, including a shop vac and new basement windows and money for parking lot repaving and improvements. Stacey will request the left-over money be moved forward to go toward the ramp/railing project. We will request \$7,500 for this category. \$5000 of this will be for general expense and \$2500 will go toward roof maintenance.
- c. Stacey will turn in the updated budget after the November Meeting.
- d. Jeanne reported that Sterling Market is not selling gift certificates. We had planned to purchase gift certificates for those who won tickets to the Paula Poundstone performance which was cancelled. It was decided to buy gift certificates from Foote Brook Farm stand.

7. Policy Discussions: Due to the Pandemic, we have tabled our policies discussions again. 😊

8. Adjourn: Jessica moved to adjourn, Stacey 2nd. Meeting Adjourned 7:40 PM

Next Regularly Scheduled meeting November 11, 2020 6 PM.