

Topsham Public Library
Board of Trustees Business Meeting
Wednesday, December 21, 2016
Minutes

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Larry Fitch, President, at 7:03PM. Present: Jennifer Ecker, Anne Eustis, Irene Martin, Joe Trafton, Sally VonBenken, Larry Fitch, Teri Schultz, Megan Therriault, Director Susan Preece. Absent: Larissa Vigue Picard, Bruce Kingdon, and Jerry Davis.

2. **Consent Agenda.** The Board reviewed the Consent Agenda, which included the Minutes of Nov 16, 2016 Board meeting, Development Committee Report, and the Governance Committee Report. Anne Eustis pointed out two grammar corrections to Minutes of Nov 16, 2016 Board meeting. Anne Eustis made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, Sally VonBenken seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

3. **Finance Committee Report.**
 - a. **Monthly Reports.** We reviewed the Balance Sheet, and Comparative Cash Balances. Irene pointed out the Comparative Cash Balances report which shows the checkbook balance compared to previous years. She noted the unrestricted budget line which is down significantly from previous years, but will change once the annual appeal is recorded. Megan asked about whether or not grants were always considered as restricted. Susan explained most grants are restricted as they are usually designated for a specific purpose. Irene pointed out the Business Roundtable line also fluctuates as not everyone pays at the same time. Megan asked if the Business Roundtable money would ever be unrestricted, and Susan explained that if it exceeded the needs it was designated for then it could become unrestricted. We reviewed the Profit and Loss Comparison, and Irene noted that contributed support is up, as well as payroll and employee benefits, supplies, and materials expenses compared to last year. Irene explained we are moving to use Quickbooks online, and there are some challenges with the way it generates reports that she is working through. We reviewed the Budget Progress Town Appropriation report, and the TPL Budget Progress Report. Since we had just started the annual appeal, there would be more info on that next month. Finally, we reviewed the Friends Report.

4. **Adult Services - Emma Gibbon.** Emma explained she would talk about two areas specifically, programming and collections. She pointed out that her mission is to serve adults in Topsham, and this year she is focusing on trying to better serve everyone, not only those who are more vocal. She talked about the library being the “community’s living room”, as a cozy happy place for people to gather.

For programming, she finds that lectures about nature and history are very popular. Book groups are also very popular. She emphasized that it is all about getting people in the door, so that they can then learn what the library can offer. Some new programs that are being offered include a community member led discussion group on moving on after a spouse’s death. Emma also advertises specific hours the “Librarian is In” to encourage folks to ask reference questions. She did note that librarians are always available to answer questions, but this seemed to make it more accessible to people who were unaware of this. Emma has heard praise from other libraries and the Maine Humanities Council on a new graphic novel book group, which is most likely the first in the state.

Emma has been reviewing the collection development policy. She explained we are a popular materials collection library that responds to what people we want. Since we have access to all the books from Minerva, she can focus on what is popular. She said she likes to have “something to offend everyone”, since we all have different viewpoints. Sally asked about people wanting to take things out of the collection. Emma said it happens more with children's books but it does happen. Emma said the collection development policy covers how that is handled. To determine what to purchase she looks at data, holds, popular authors, and professional reviews. She also listens to what people are talking about, and what is in the cultural imagination. Some trends she is seeing right now include a swing toward physical items (books, records, etc.), science fiction and fantasy by people of color and women, heartwarming titles that are going to be made into films, and graphic novels. Emma shared a variety of adult graphic novels available at the library. Megan asked about what happens to books that we have several copies of once they are no longer popular. Emma said the extras go in the books sale once it is determined that there is no demand for them. If there are 6 or 7 holds on a book Emma will buy another copy of that book for circulation. Larry asked about how to reach people who live in town in Topsham but don’t go to the library. Emma said this was a goal for her this year, and she is doing more community outreach to answer that question. She was asked to participate in the Topsham AARP committee on aging last spring. This committee was attempting to find out about the needs of those “aging in place” in

Topsham. Through this committee there was discussion about reaching beyond some of the barriers that prevent the entire community from using the library. She said people have fixed idea of a library, and if we can get them in the door we can show them all the other things there are to offer. Susan said that at the Midcoast Chamber event they had a lot of comments about how surprised people were at the services available at the library. Susan emphasized the importance of outreach, but did explain that there has to be a balance, as it has implications for staffing. Joe asked about local authors, and Emma said she is happy to take book donations from authors and put them in the collection.

5. **Directors Report.** Susan announced we have been awarded \$5,000 from the Helen Clay Frick Foundation. There are no restrictions on what we use the funds for. Also, she expected to be hearing soon about the Senter Fund grant. Sharon and Susan will be meeting with a woman who offered to volunteer to help with grant writing. She is former library director that recently moved to Topsham. Susan explained that there were a few bumps, but they are getting a handle on coordinating snow cleanup and other winter maintenance. She gave a quick update on the annual campaign for so far this year, totaling around \$32,000. Sally asked about how many new card holders we get, and Susan said it is around 30-50 per month. Per the Minerva consortium recommendation they purge cardholder records after 3 years. Around a third are used actively.

6. **Old Business.**

a. **FY18 Municipal Budget Draft.** We reviewed the first draft of the budget. A significant change for FY 18 is to make the children's librarian a full time position with health insurance benefits. Another change is increase Susan's salary halfway to match the comparable town position of Economic Development Director. There will be a meeting with the joint library and town committee in January to talk about the budget draft.

7. **New Business.**

a. **FY 16 Audit approval.** Susan explained that we had no problems with the audit. Sally asked about donated fair market value of rental for \$40,000. Irene explained it was like an in-kind donation, as it doesn't change bottom line. Anne Eustis made a motion to approve the FY 16 Audit, Teri Schultz seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously

b. **FY 16 990 approval.** There were no questions on FY 16 990. Anne Eustis made a motion to approve the FY 16 990, Teri Schultz seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

- c. **Prep for Board Development Workshop - Sue McLeod.** Sue McLeod, who will facilitate our board retreat, introduced herself and spoke about what we needed to do ahead of the board retreat. She outlined that we want to think strategically about what is next for the library. Also to keep in mind, a couple of simple things we could do differently to make things work better. Friday night we will all have dinner together, and do an icebreaker exercise, which will help us to get thinking about the future. Saturday morning we will be talking about what can we do differently in the future. There are a set of questions we will fill out ahead of time to help spur thinking. Saturday afternoon will be how to put our ideas in motion, and what are the next steps. Sue will be available for the next year to check in quarterly on our progress. Megan asked if staff would be involved, and Susan explained that the senior staff would attend as well as the Friends president. Larry explained we are welcome to bring wine or beer to the dinner. Dinner will be around 5-9pm, and the Saturday session will run from around 8:30am-5pm. Sue passed out the questions, and requested we fill them out and give them back to Susan by Jan. 6, 2017.

8. **Upcoming Events.**

- Jan. 21 - Joy of the Art Reception 1-3pm (Awards 2pm)
- Jan. 24 - Brown tail moth lecture/discussion
- Jan. 27-28 - Board Development Workshop
- Feb. 3 (snow Feb. 4) - Whitten Event from 6-8pm

9. **Next Meeting:** Wednesday, January 18, 2017, 7PM.

10. **Adjournment** at 8:30pm. Teri Schultz made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Anne Eustis seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Ecker
Trustee