

**Topsham Public Library
Board of Trustees Business Meeting
Wednesday, May 24, 2017
Minutes**

- 1) **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Larry Fitch, President, at 7:00PM. Present: Jennifer Ecker, Anne Eustis, Irene Martin, Teri Schultz, Larissa Vigue Picard, Megan Theriault, Sally Von Benken, Director Susan Preece. Absent: Jerry Davis.
- 2) **Consent Agenda.** A request was made to remove the Minutes of April 19, 2017, from the Consent Agenda. The Board then reviewed the Consent Agenda, which included the Development Committee Report, Finance Committee Report, and Governance Committee Report. Sally made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda, Anne seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Sally then said that the April minutes showed she was present when she was absent. However, the minutes did accurately reflect that she was absent. Anne made a motion to accept the Minutes of April 19, 2017 as written, Teri seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
- 3) **Director's Report.** Susan noted the following items.
 - The dedication of the West Garden Patio went very well. About 45 people attended. Ruth Bouchard Klein was thrilled with the event and followed up with a thank-you note and check for \$500. She said she really felt like a part of the community and especially appreciated Larry's remarks.
 - A new sub, Kat Campbell, has been hired to take over if someone is ill or to cover staff vacations.
 - A local Girl Scouts troop asked to do a volunteer project and will be helping with gardening.
 - The library is adopting the Project Outcome model to evaluate programs. Project Outcome is an initiative that was developed by the Public Library Association (PLA) in 2015. PLA surveyed its members to see how best libraries can prove they're doing a good job, and how impact can best be measured. From that survey, PLA developed a survey tool focusing on seven areas of library use. TPL is one of the first libraries in Maine to be interested in the program. Initially, the questions in the survey tool were somewhat slanted or leading. A new and improved version came out in May and Susan went to a training on May 12. TPL will start this year by surveying Summer Reading participants, including teens and children, and their caregivers. All participating libraries use the same questions, and data will be collected across the country and Canada.
- 4) **Old Business:**
 - a) **Long Range Plan with Sue McLeod.** Sue McLeod, who facilitated the board retreat in January, led a discussion about how best to move the Long Range Plan forward, ideally by weaving the outcomes of the January retreat into the pre-existing LRP.

She first defined the terms Mission, Vision, Goals, Strategy, Objective, and Actions to make sure the board was comfortable with these standard parts of a strategic or long range plan. The board agreed that they would focus on goals, strategies, objectives, and actions specifically; TPL already has a Mission statement and may or may not adopt a vision statement at some future point.

Sue then said she and Larry had decided to start by using one of the three major outcome items from the retreat—Community Outreach—as an example to map out the related goals, strategies, objectives, and action items. The board would then ideally be able to work through the other two retreat outcome items—the Volunteer program and facility/space needs—independently using this same model.

The board discussed the concept of Community Outreach at length, but found it challenging to pin down the details as Community Outreach is such a large and somewhat amorphous topic. Eventually, the board identified the following:

- Goal: Serve the maximum number of Topsham residents with the best programs and services possible.
- Strategies: Prove our effectiveness to town and funders; Have a neutral meeting space to accommodate community conversations.
- Objective: Assess effectiveness of summer reading, book groups, story times during the 2017-2018 year.
- Action Item: Use surveys based on Project Outcome methodology.

The board then decided to switch to talking about a more concrete outcome item from the retreat—improving the Volunteer program, and arrived at the following:

- Goal: Draw more people into the library community.
- Strategies: Gain volunteers, use them in more/better ways, increase supervisory time.
- Objectives: Community engagement; improve staffing resources; increase programming opportunities; improve development and funding sources.
The reasons for these objectives include: Freeing up the staff for other tasks, promoting volunteerism in the community, connecting the library to its constituents, drawing on a variety of strengths/skills from the community, saving money, using expertise the staff doesn't have, impressing funders, potentially grooming future staff members
- Actions (per objective): Would include various “To Dos” regarding how to improve and run the volunteer program. This category should be left to the staff to flesh out.

Finally, the board discussed the issue of board vs. staff roles, noting that the board should remain focused on higher level aspects of running the organization, while staff is responsible for running the library day to day and developing action items for the long range plan. The long range plan holds both staff and board accountable.

Sue asked what the board learned during this discussion process. Most felt that talking about a more concrete issue (Volunteer Program) was easier than the more abstract concept (Community Outreach).

Next month the board will discuss the next steps in refining the long range plan, and the expectations of new board members coming into the process. It was recommended to create a long range plan working group to do the actually redrafting of the current document. Susan said she would send out an email to the board asking for volunteers for this group.

5) **New Business:**

- a) Governance will be doing candidate interviews in the coming weeks for three open trustee seats.

6) **Upcoming Events.**

May 31—Ed McCartan Artist Talk: 6PM

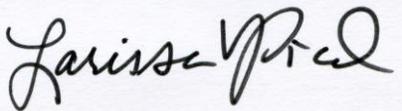
June 10—Volunteer Recruitment Session: 10AM-12 Noon.

June 17—Fishing Rally: 8-11AM; Summer Reading begins!

7) **Next Meeting:** Wednesday, June 21, 2017, 7:00PM.

- 8) **Adjournment** at 8:52PM. Anne made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Joe seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Larissa Vigue Picard
Secretary