

Topsham Public Library
Board of Trustees Business Meeting
Wednesday, February 28, 2018
Minutes

- 1) **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Larry Fitch, President, at 6:59PM.
Present: Jim Demosthenes, Jen Ecker, Anne Eustis, Diane Hender, Anne Macri, Irene Martin, Hahna Patterson, Larissa Vigue Picard, Megan Therriault, Joe Trafton, Sally Von Benken, Owen Yabsira, Director Susan Preece. Absent: Jerry Davis.
- 2) **Consent Agenda.** The Board reviewed the Consent Agenda, which included the Minutes of the January 17, 2018 Business Meeting, Development Committee Report, Finance Committee Report, and Governance Committee Report. Anne Eustis made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda, Diane Hender seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Larry noted that there would be a change to the agenda due to Mariah being ill. Instead, Barbara Hawkes, the new Development Coordinator, provided a presentation to the board

- 3) **Barbara Hawkes's Presentation.** Barbara said she is glad to be at TPL and that she has been hearing many good things about the library as she talks with various patrons and business partners. She is working on better defining the library's relationship with the Business Roundtable to determine exactly what businesses would like to get out of the relationship. She feels networking events are extremely important and she wants to be out of the office as much as possible to meet with people. She recently met with Southern Midcoast Maine Chamber director, Cory King, who is eager to find ways to collaborate with the library. She also met with Lee Toyota owner, Adam Lee, who may be interested in serving on the Development Committee.

Barbara was also interested in knowing what trustees would like to see happen with development efforts, and how to make the Development Committee as effective as possible. Joe said he would like to see a focus on increasing the endowment and securing more grants. Hahna said he personally would like to see more direct asks when support is needed.

Each trustee was asked to describe what he or she liked best about the library. The responses:

- It feels like home away from home; sense of community; humanity
- Staff. (Mentioned several times): "If I've had a bad day, they make me feel better."
- Accessibility; Internet access (mentioned twice)
- The collection (mentioned twice); the ability to save money on books; audiobooks
- Interlibrary loan (mentioned several times); business databases
- Good hours, especially in the evening
- Staff interactions with children
- Meeting people I wouldn't have met before
- Community room exhibits/artwork
- Programs
- How the library fits into the quality of life of Topsham; how it can help the town become what it needs to become

Prior to continuing with the agenda, Larry mentioned that Larissa's term would be up in June and that the board will need a new secretary. He hopes someone will volunteer.

4) **Director's Report.** Susan highlighted the following, in addition to her written report.

- Barbara has been fantastic so far!
- A gasket failed between two sections of furnace, resulting in a leak. Susan contacted Rich Roedner and Titan Mechanical. If we are "lucky," the repair will be \$3,000-\$5,000. If the sections have to be rebuilt, it would be \$10,000-\$12,000. The cost will come out of the town's capital budget. They will be working on the furnace on Thursday 3/1, so there will be no heat in the library that day.
- We are waiting on the fabrication of metalwork for heating ducts.
- Susan spoke with Transco, TPL's copy machine vendor, and got a good deal for replacing the current machine. With the upgrade, TPL received the first three months of service free.
- A representative from Wells Fargo called Susan to let her know TPL is the beneficiary of a third of a deceased's IRA. We do not yet know the amount. This was unexpected and from someone who lived at Highland Green and was not well-known to the library staff.
- TPS is getting 75 free tickets for the *A Wrinkle in Time* movie on March 15, which will be first-come, first-served.
- Safety training was done the week TPL was closed to public in January for painting. The staff got a lot done that week.
- The staff is very grateful to the board for their annual lunch out.
- The town budget schedule has changed slightly. The March 21 meeting might change.

Sally asked why the Development Committee felt the seating didn't work well at the Whitten Event. Susan said while they tried fewer chairs this year to get more people to mingle, the people who came earliest took all the seats and didn't leave them. Later arrivals who needed chairs were not able to get them.

Susan mentioned that part of the library's safety training including training for active shooters, the mentally ill, and those with dementia. Strange, unsettling, and violent behavior is an unfortunate fact of life in any public venue these days. Police Chief Chris Lewis has told the staff to call 911 at the earliest sign of trouble. TPL has a "panic" button under the circulation desk.

5) **Old Business:**

- a) **Budget Presentation FY 19-February 26.** Larry said Susan did a great job at the presentation. There were four minor questions, but no real concerns. Susan said the library trustees have sent a consistent message to the Selectboard over time that we want to work with them.
- b) **Long Range Plan update.** Susan highlighted sections to discuss, primarily having to do with doing a community wide survey by June of this year. She spoke with someone from USM's Muskie School about providing assistance with a survey. It would cost \$17,000 for them to assist with survey design and formatting for a 7-8 minute survey, creating an

online version with individual links, launching the email, doing three reminders, format a paper survey for the Cryer, post-analysis, and providing a written report. There was considerable discussion on this matter. Some trustees felt strongly that the price was very high, and that a sub-committee could perhaps create the survey in-house, and do most of the same kinds of outreach. An ad hoc committee was created, chaired by Anne Macri, to begin this work. Jen and Larissa agreed to be on the committee. It was suggested that Tori [last name?] might also be a good addition. The survey is likely to be pushed back to the fall or later.

Another part of the Long Range Plan calls for a presentation to residents about the library budget session prior to the final budget presentation to the town. Since there is not time to do such a presentation at this point, it was suggested that TPL do some kind of presentation, or community “listening” event prior to town meeting. Alternately, it was suggested that TPL do a “Town Meeting 101” program, using library examples. It was suggested that the League of Women Voters was the right group to lead this, but some were skeptical this a program of this kind would draw an audience. It was eventually recommended that any program of this nature be put on hold until we have the results of a community survey.

6) **New Business:**

- a) **Personnel Policy—Discussion and Vote.** Upon recommendation of the Governance Committee, the board was asked to vote on the revised personal policy. There were two changes since the board saw the committee’s prior recommended revisions at the January meeting: 1) Any new staff must be at 20 hours to accrue prorated sick and vacation time, but current 15 hour and above employees are grandfathered in for those benefits. 2) Staff designated to work on a day that the library closes due to inclement weather will still be paid for their time. Anne Eustis made a motion to approve the recommended changes, Jen seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
- b) **Long Range Staffing for Budget Process.** Rich Roedner asked all town departments to provide position titles, the number of people in those positions, the major tasks of each department, short-term major unmet needs; and long-term major unmet wants. Susan distributed a spreadsheet of the answers she provided based on TPL’s Long Range Plan. Needs and wants included: an additional 5 hours for a library tech, an additional 6 hours for a volunteer coordinator, increasing library open hours to 59 hours (requiring 30 extra staff hours), a full-time Development Coordinator, a building manager/more custodian hours, a children’s library aide to assist with programming, a new teen librarian position to alleviate Cyndi from having to do that in addition to being assistant director, and additional building space. This will be the basis for broader conversation as to where the town is going in the next 10 years. Susan was asked to prioritize the items on the spreadsheet, as well as provide ballpark numbers for each item.

7) **Next meeting dates:** Mar. 28, Apr. 25, May 23

8) **Upcoming Events:**

Wed. Mar. 21, 6PM: BoS/FC Joint Review meeting (tentative)

Thurs. Apr. 12, 7PM: Public Hearing on Town Meeting Warrant and Budget (tentative)

Wed. May 16, 7PM: Town Meeting

- 9) **Adjournment** at 8:42PM. Anne Macri made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Sally Von Benken seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Larissa Vigue Picard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L".

Larissa Vigue Picard
Secretary