

**Topsham Public Library**  
**Board of Trustees Business Meeting**  
**Wednesday, February 27, 2019**  
**Minutes**

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Anne Eustis at 7:30 PM.  
Present: Jennifer Ecker, Irene Martin, Joe Trafton, Hahna Patterson, Jim Demosthenes, Megan Therriault, Anne Macri, Owen Yabsira, Kevin Curnin, Helen Kincaid, Director Susan Preece. Absent: Larry Fitch, Diane Hender, Jerry Davis.
  
2. **Consent Agenda.** The Board reviewed the Consent Agenda, which included the Minutes of January 16, 2019 Board meeting, and the Friends Minutes. Joe made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, Helen seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.
  
3. **Directors Report.**
  - a. Report on budget presentation to BOS/FC  
Susan had presented right before the meeting. The Board of Selectmen (BOS) and town Finance Committee (FC) had a lot of questions on the bequest and how our investment firm manages library money. Our original presentation featured a 3% cost of living adjustment for salaries, but since the town has not begun contract negotiations there may be some play in terms of the payroll numbers. BOS/FS asked about the proposal to open on Mondays, and what would happen after the 3 years. Susan explained that we could then look at the data, and see whether or not it was a good use of resources. Irene said there was a lot of inquiry about where the library money is invested. There also seemed to be a hang up on the 3% longevity payments that should be in the salaries. The group wanted to know why this hadn't been in place before now. Jim asked about the next steps. Susan said that Monday they may choose to meet again to go over questions. FC does a proposal, BOS does a proposal, and they do a reconciliation meeting the end of March. April is the public hearing, and then it goes on the warrant. Music in March info is at the front desk. Anne M. asked when the town meeting is. It is on May 15th.
  
4. **Old Business.**
  - a. Finance Committee Report - vote to accept draft audit

Irene gave an overview of the audit. Irene said she learned some things she should have been paying more attention to. Any critique in the audit was around process and systems in place. For example, there should be more staff for financial oversight, but the library has to work with its small staff. Joe asked where the amount for the building comes from. Irene said it is the fair market value of the building and services. It is worked as in-kind since the town owns the building. Kevin asked if we usually get it this time of the year since the audit took place in September. Irene said sometimes we get it earlier. It was suggested it should be done in November with the 990. Kevin asked about having the auditor come in to talk to the board, and that could be helpful. Susan said it is the same firm the town uses to do audits, and they have very reasonable pricing. Susan said they have looked into bids from other auditors and they would be significantly more expensive. Kevin asked Susan to pass on that it would have been helpful to get the audit sooner. Anne M. made a motion to accept the audit, Kevin seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

b. Development Committee Report

Susan said there had been some frustration around development goals on the Committee, and what the focus should be. Susan and Dave (Development Coordinator) took a first attempt at coming up with a development goal and plan and presented it to the Development Committee. It was meant to be a starting point for discussion and would be part of strategic planning. One of the issues has been a smaller number of in-between donors. There will be a Spring donation push to try to get people to donate \$5 per month. Susan suggested it would be helpful to do some board training to help fundraising. Kevin talked about confidence in Dave, work behind the proposal, and Dave's ability to carry out the plan with Board support. The Solomon bequest provides a solid foundation to build bigger fundraising goals on. Anne M. said it feels like an objective and not a plan since there is not an explanation of how it would get done. She said she is concerned about setting the bar too high and would like to see a lot more how it might get done. Hahna asked about having Dave coming to a meeting. Susan said he is currently working on refreshing the Business Roundtable, but would be happy to come. Megan said one big decision is if one of the goals is to embark on a big campaign. Joe expressed concern that a larger endowment might mean less giving, and that he thinks it is important the town is invested in the library. Jim

doesn't think we should give up 85/15 ratio of funding with the town. Jennifer remarked on increasing recurring donation. There was a question about teen volunteers at the Whitten event with liquor being served. Susan said she would look into it.

c. Governance Committee Report and Strategic Planning for FY 20-23 update

The committee is gathering potential facilitator candidates. Governance recommends creating a committee to start preparatory work, with at least one representative from each of the other committees. Ideally, they would meet in April, review facilitator candidates, with the idea of having a completed strategic plan by October. Anne M. asked each committee to identify who they would like to have on the Strategic planning committee. Kevin asked whether we were committed to getting outside facilitation. Anne M. said we really should to have a facilitator. Kevin asked about whether a strategic plan was a requirement of the town. Susan said it was not, but has come to be expected. Megan said with the recent bequest it seemed important. Jim said planning around the bequest came up often in the BOS/FC meeting. There were a few questions about the process, which is yet to be determined.

d. Board Evaluation update

Board members who didn't finish the evaluation were encouraged to still submit. More to come at the next meeting.

e. Survey Committee update

Anne M. reviewed the findings. Overall there were no significant structural problems. Patron survey will be going out next. Owen asked about age range surveyed. Susan explained the survey didn't target younger folks as it was taken from the list of property owners in Topsham. Susan suggested we could reach out to the schools to see what students think. Owen suggested finding out what younger people want will encourage them to be life-long patrons. Jennifer went over some of the comment received. Overall they were very positive, and also didn't indicate any problems. Revisiting public outreach might be one place to see if there could be an improvement on event and program announcements.

**5. New Business.**

- a. Opening on Mondays in FY 20 - vote to authorize a 3-year commitment to Monday hours (9-5) from the Solomon bequest

Recommended by the Finance Committee. Jim said about 2/3 of investment distribution each year would cover the cost. Anne M. asked about what we normally do with distributions. Irene explained it goes toward operating expenses. Owen asked Susan if she expects a lot of people to come on Mondays. Susan said people already come on Mondays expecting it to be open. Jim suggested it might help space issues for program attendance if it was available an extra day. Helen confirmed it would be for 3 years, and then reevaluated. Joe made a motion to accept opening Mondays (9-5) for a 3-year trial period, Jim seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

- b. Fifteenth Anniversary plans  
Info is in the Board packet. Go to Susan with questions or comments.

6. **Next Meetings:** March 27, 2019, at 7:00 PM

7. **Upcoming Events.**

4 Saturdays in March beginning 3/2 - Music in March - 1:00 PM  
Mon. March 4, 2019 - Budget Discussion BOS/FC at 6:00 PM

8. **Adjournment** at 9:10 PM Helen made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Anne M. seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Ecker, Secretary