

Ashburnham Advisory Board Meeting  
December 8, 2014  
Ashburnham Public Safety Building  
Training Room

Meeting called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Members present:

Bill Johnson, Chairman   Gail Dumont   Allison Weissensee  
Bruce Whitney   Ronald Putnam

Guests present:

Emily Donnelly, Library Director   Ed Vitone, Library Trustee Chairman  
Maggie Whitney, Library Trustee

E. Vitone made clear that there was a vigorous interview process for the position of Library Director and the Library Trustees were very confident in their selection of Emily Donnelly. Welcome Emily and thank you.

E. Vitone went over the magnitude of financial improvements that have been implemented for the Stevens Memorial Library. (see attached) New computers purchased for the library out of the trust fund for staff and public use. Staff will have town e-mails, is using Guardian as well as Munis coming soon. M. Whitney said review of policies for the library is ongoing with review of one policy per month. There are 149 items on the action item list.

E. Donnelly said she is working closely with Doug on all aspects of functioning and making sure all communication is clear. She is attending all staff meetings.

E. Donnelly plans for next year to become part of C/W MARS. A co-op for Central and Western Mass. E. Donnelly believes everyone should have access to information in the state.

**What is C/W MARS?**

C/W MARS stands for Central-Western Mass Automated Resource Sharing. Their goal is to provide efficient sharing of resources and rapid access to information among its member libraries. C/W MARS has over 140 member libraries with a combined collection of more than 6 million items. C/W MARS has a shared online computer system that allows for searching not only the Town Library card catalog but the collections of the other member libraries as well.

**What does this mean for me?**

It means that from any internet connected computer, patrons can search the Ashburnham Library collection for materials of interest. If they can't find what they are looking for in the Ashburnham collection, they can then search the collection of the other member libraries. If they find what they are looking for,

using their C/W MARS library card, they can order it through interlibrary loan. When the materials come in, the Ashburnham library staff will notify them that they can pick up their materials at the Ashburnham Library.

The Library Board of Trustees and the Library Director feel they are headed in the right direction. However there is much work to be done and they have done an extensive staffing assessment (see attached) and recommend adding a 40-hour week position to improve performance levels, such as; Reference and Reader's Advisory, Filing, Record Keeping, Outreach to the local schools, Senior Center, Historical Society and Parks & Recreation, Strategic Planning, etc.

The Advisory Board reviewed the Fall Special Town Meeting, commenting on what we did and didn't do and why. Our goal is to be an active participant in the budget process and to do a better job presenting the budget. Anticipate the questions and have the answers without looking to the Town Administrator to answer all the public's questions. This is our Budget and as so, we need to be prepared and able to answer the hard questions. More information needs to be on the town's website regarding budgets, capital planning and road paving. Any information the citizens need to make informed decisions at town meetings should be available.

The Board of Assessors requested a Reserve Fund Transfer of \$7,700 for wages. (see attached) A motion was made by B. Whitney to approve the request. Seconded by R. Putnam. Unanimous.

The school department received a \$350,000 grant to replace the boiler at Overlook Middle School. The balance of monies needed to complete the conversion to a wood pellet boiler came out of the school's E&D account.

Reviewing of our Financial Calendar reveals the Town of Ashburnham has not paid their assessment owed to the Regional School System on time. This has to do with the timing of our tax bills and when those monies are received and revenues being low at the early start of a new fiscal year. A Regional Agreement Committee is being chosen to review the two towns Regional Agreement. B. Johnson made a motion to have A. Weissensee on that committee to represent the Ashburnham Advisory Board. Seconded by B. Whitney. Unanimous. Duncan Phyfe will be representing the Ashburnham Board of Selectmen.

A motion was made by G. Dumont to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by B. Whitney. Unanimous.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30.

Respectfully submitted,

~Gail Dumont