



Stevens Memorial Library
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Summary of Stevens Memorial Library Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes of October 8, 2013

Present: Paula Dowd, Margaret Donovan, Paula St. Laurent Kuehl, Debra Mercier, Mary Kate Romano, Joseph von Deck, and Cheryl Paul Bradley

Barbara Hallowell was in attendance.

Paula Dowd called meeting to order at 4:01 P.M.

Minutes of September 19th meeting were read amendments were made and the minutes were approved. Margaret made a motion to accept the September 19th minutes with the amendments made. Joe seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Doug Briggs, Town Administrator, came into the meeting. At 4:13 P.M., the Board and Doug started a conversation about town policies and procedures that had become a concern of the Board and Library Director.

Paula Dowd asked Margaret to tell Doug her concerns.

Concern one: Department Head Meetings

Margaret asked Doug why, since the Library Director had been reinstated, she had not been informed of three Department Head meetings.

Doug stated that they were his meetings and that he preferred the Library Director not be there.

Margaret asked if this was a new policy. The Library Director had always been informed of Department Head meetings. Even when she was on administrative leave, she had gotten emails about meetings. Margaret also stated that it was a part of a Department Head's job to attend these meetings.

Doug stated that he has no authority over the Library Director and therefore does not want her there.

Joe asked Doug why he invited other Department Heads that weren't under his authority. Doug stated he has interaction with those Department Heads on a daily basis.

Margaret asked if the Library would be able to get copies of the meeting minutes. She felt it was important for the Director to know what the town was doing as part of her responsibilities as Library Director. She also stated that it was unfair that, as a Department Head, the Director was not allowed at these meetings anymore.

Doug stated that the minutes were available on line. He said that he would ask Sylvia Turcotte to send the minutes to the Library.

Paula Dowd asked if he had a scanner.

Doug stated that he personally did not; however, Sylvia did and she would be the one to scan and send copies.

Concern two: Payroll Documentation. Did not discuss not under Doug's authority.

Concern three: Trustee meeting minutes. Margaret had spoken to Linda Ramsdell about minutes needed.

Joe asked if executive session minutes were always made available by the town.

Doug stated that executive session minutes were not made public if they contained information dealing with personnel or any type of personnel nature until the issue was determined or resolved. However, the public by law can get copies of any meeting minutes approved or not. Many times the town has stamped "draft" on minutes that have not been approved. When all three Selectmen aren't at a meeting, "draft" will be stamped on those minutes until approved by the whole Board.

Concern four: Email/Interoffice memos

Cheryl asked if she would be receiving emails and interoffice correspondence from the town or would it just be sent to Paula Dowd.

Doug stated that any email is public record. If you go to the towns web site www.Ashburnham-MA.Gov the information is there. The town uses Guardian to back-up all emails used through the towns email account.

Doug suggested that the Board members set-up individual email accounts through the towns email. The email account is [HTTPs://74.94.153.81/Exchange](http://74.94.153.81/Exchange). This way the Board members would receive town information.

Paula Dowd asked if there was a form that needed to be filled out to get on the town email.

Doug stated that there was not. The board members could contact Sylvia for instructions.

Doug spoke about cameras being installed around town. He said that it was a proactive move. These cameras will be connected to a monitor at the dispatch board. This will allow the police to know what is going on as it happens. An example: We have a camera already at the Meeting House Hill water tank. The camera picks up infrared images. It picked up something near the fence and sent a signal to the dispatch. The dispatch was able to radio an officer. When the officer arrived at the water tank a man was climbing over the fence. The officer was able to speak to that person. It turned out that he was just trying to retrieve a Frisbee that had gone over the fence. The monitoring system made it possible for the police officer to get to the water tank while the person was still there. He continued to say that a camera will be mounted to the back of the Library. This will enable the town to keep Winchester Park free of vandals. The park has suffered a large amount of damage in the past. Again being proactive will save the town money.

Concern five: Chain of command

Margaret stated that she thought the Town Accountant was under the Town Administrator. However, recently she was told the Town Accountant was under the Board of Selectmen.

Doug stated that he had authority over all town departments with the exception of the Town Accountant, Light Company, and Library Director.

Margaret stated that she thought previous town accountants had been hired by the Town Administrator.

Doug stated that it would be a conflict if the Town Accountant was under his control. This way there are checks and balances.

Concern six: Information requested

Cheryl asked Doug to explain, to the Board, his email to her on the Library's former employee being able to collect unemployment benefits from the town if that employee was to quit another job.

Doug explained the rules and regulations of unemployment. He stated that at a recent MIA meeting this subject came up. The group is currently working on a plan of recalculating these benefits to help ease the burden of municipalities.

Margaret asked why the town gave the Piano Museum a ten year lease when the Board had written a letter to him stating that the Board wanted a three year lease. The Board was never notified by him or the town that a ten year lease had been awarded.

Doug stated that the Selectmen had read the current lease, which stated that the lease could be extended for ten years if the Piano Museum wanted it. He went on to say that they were excellent tenants and have never been late with the rent. He felt that instead of having to write a new lease for three years it was better to extend the current lease. He was told by the Fredericks that they would be retiring before the ten years were up.

Cheryl asked for a copy of the signed lease.

Cheryl asked Doug why in the FY13 budget \$450.00 was transferred to the Library. Grants, Trusts, or other revenues are usually used to fund deficits.

Doug stated that the Library had been negative and in order to close out the year they had taken \$450.00 from the Dispatch budget. The state gives towns a small window to interchange money between departments without Town Meeting approval. The extra was returned to the town's general fund.

Cheryl stated that the town had an oil contract. She wanted to know who it was with and the price per gallon.

Doug stated that the contract was with the same company as last year. The price right now was \$2.86 per gallon with a \$.11 or \$.17 per gallon delivery charge this price would go up per quarter.

Cheryl asked which price was the Library.

Doug stated the Library would be paying \$3.02 per gallon.

Paula Dowd asked Margaret if she had any further questions for Doug. Margaret thanked Doug for taking the time to meet with the Board and Director and answer their concerns.

Doug left the meeting at 4:42 P.M..

Paula Dowd stated that she had been in contact with Erb & Erb and the town about question 5 in Cheryl's August 22nd letter. She was waiting for an official response and had not received anything yet.

Cheryl asked why Paula Dowd had given her letter to the town and who it had been given to. The letter was to the Trustees and had nothing to do with the town.

Paula Dowd stated that she had given it to Doug Briggs. She said that she had wanted the Town Counsel's advice.

Cheryl showed Paula Dowd the Declaration of Will for the Whittemore Trust from Erb & Erb. She read it to the Board. She also presented two documents written by Jeff Lawrence (former Trustee) explaining all trust received by the Library in the past. She asked if any of the other Board members would like a copy of these documents.

Paula Dowd stated that she wanted all Board members to have copies.

Paula Dowd stated that she had no trust fund report. The trust fund checkbook was balanced up to October. She had not received the monthly statement to date. She gave Paula Kuehl the trust fund checkbook.

Joe asked about a letter the Trustees had received from the Town Accountant referring to delinquent bills.

Paula Dowd stated that she had received an e-mail the Library was not submitting bills for warrants.

Margaret stated that to her knowledge the Library had not missed any warrants except when Cheryl was first put on administrative leave and Paula Dowd had stated that she did not want any money spent. Later, Paula Dowd had given the Library staff permission to order books and submit bills for payment.

Margaret stated that she was currently helping Cheryl do bills as she and the staff were busy with other priorities.

Paula Dowd stated that she wanted all staff to know how to do bills and ordering.

Cheryl stated that both Keith and Jan knew how to do both.

Paula Dowd asked Cheryl why she had seen trust fund checks written out to Ashburnham Light, Verizon, and Demco. These should be bills paid out of the Library town budget.

Cheryl stated that if at the end of a fiscal year bills needed to be paid and there was no appropriation left in the Library budget these would be paid by trust funds, grants, or other revenue.

Paula Kuehl stated that she felt there was plenty of room on the trust fund check for two signatures. Going forward there would be no misunderstanding about why a check was written.

Joe made a motion that any check written from the trust fund account be signed by the treasurer and the chairman.

Deb seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Cheryl asked if the Library would be using the same snow policy as last year.

Paula Dowd stated yes, if the schools are closed the Library will be closed. Also Cheryl could use her own discretion.

Paula Dowd stated that as in the past, if she felt it was getting unsafe she would close the Library.

Cheryl stated that FY13 expenditures were at 100%. She had requested a detail of all Library accounts. FY14 was at 15% this is under budget. She had not received her documentation from the town on Town Meeting approval of \$15,000.00 for capital improvement for the Library. She had received one written quote for the outside painting and expects two other written quotes shortly. She will be writing to the Town Accountant on clarification of travel reimbursement this week.

Cheryl stated that the Library would be closed Friday, October 10th for carpet cleaning. This will give the carpets time to dry completely.

Cheryl also stated that she would be attending a meeting on October 15th, at 9:00 A.M. in Gardner. This was a meeting of the M.L.A.A. to discuss grants for the Library. She asked what paperwork would the Board like from her.

Paula Dowd stated that Cheryl needed get to a signature from the M.L.A.A. verifying that she was there, and to make sure that it had the date, time, place, and what the meeting was about. She said that the board didn't want any problems. She felt that it was best if the Board didn't take any chances.

Cheryl stated that she would like approval by the Board to hire a sub for between 12 and 15 hours a week for special projects that need to get done. The staff and she are doing many projects and an extra person is needed.

Cheryl went on to say that grant money left from FY13 and grant money for FY14 would be allocated. This individual would be paid at a rate of \$10.00 per hour, 15 hours a week until June 30, 2014 approximate cost \$6300.00. The individual that I would like is Noel McGonigle.

Paula Dowd asked if a volunteer couldn't work on these projects.

Cheryl stated that currently the Library had two volunteers that came in on a weekly basis. Margaret being one and the other is out with foot surgery.

Margaret made a motion to approve Noel McGonigle for 15 hours a week at \$10.00 per hour until June 30, 2014.

Deb seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Cheryl went over FY13 statistics and FY14 Holiday Schedule with the Board.

Paula Kuehl made a motion to accept the Holiday Schedule.

Deb seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Cheryl asked if, while she was on paid administrative leave, anyone had gone into her office and taken any items.

Paula Dowd stated that she had been very careful in regard to Cheryl's office. She had locked the office. She and Margaret had gone into the office once to put money in the safe.

Cheryl asked if anyone knew about papers missing from her office.

Paula stated that she did not.

Cheryl asked Paula Dowd which keys she had made and where they were.

Paula Dowd stated that she had them at home.

Cheryl asked Paula Dowd for a list so it could be added to the Library inventory of keys.

Paula Dowd stated that she would make a list for Cheryl.

Paula Dowd asked if there was any other business to discuss.

Barbara Hallowell asked to address the Board.

Paula Dowd stated that she could.

Barbara stated that she was very concerned about the condition of the Library's handicap ramp. One of the Art Group members uses the ramp and needs assistance to get up the ramp. The ramp is unsafe and needs to be looked at immediately.

Barbara continued stating that the Board should get a contractor to look at it right away.

Margaret stated that the ramp was patch several years ago. At that time the Board had felt that it was too expensive to build a new ramp. She did not know there was any problem with the ramp. Patrons using the ramp had never complained.

Paula Dowd asked Cheryl to look into the ramp.

Cheryl stated that she would and stated that this was the first time this situation had been brought to her attention.

Cheryl told the Trustees that the four staff computers needed to be replaced. After having them looked at to repair them she was told it would be cheaper to replace them. These computers were given to the Library by the Light Company six years ago after they got new computers.

Paula Dowd stated that she would like to see if the Library could get computers donated instead of using trust funds.

Paula Kuehl stated that she would ask her husband, he works in the computer business.

Paula Dowd stated that the next Trustees Meeting would be November 12th.

Joe made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Paula Kuehl seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Meeting ended at 5:20 P.M.

These minutes were amended and accepted by the Library Board of Trustees on December 3, 2013.