

Thayer Memorial Library Trustees Meeting
December 9, 2015

Roll Call

Present were:

Emily Rose, Chair
Frank MacGrory, Vice-Chair
Frank Streeter, Secretary
Stephanné Fiori
Steve Piazza
John Schumacher-Hardy
Joe Mulé, Director, Ex Officio

Guests:

Susan Munyon, Friends of the Library

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

Move to Adopt Agenda

Member Fiori moved to accept the agenda; Secretary Streeter seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 6-0 vote.

Past Minutes

After reviewing the minutes from the November meeting and correcting a few typos,

Member Fiori moved to accept the minutes; Member Schumacher-Hardy seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 6-0 vote.

Secretary Streeter said he would correct the typos and distribute the revised version.

Next Meeting

The next Trustees Meeting will take place on Wednesday, January 13, 2016 at 6:30 PM in the Trustees' Room at the Library.

Chair's Report

Chair Rose opened the meeting by reminding the Trustees to respond to the Lancaster Town Clerk's email about the Conflict of Interest Policy governing all elected officials. While all elected officials need to take a training in the law every two years, they must respond to the Town Clerk every year indicating their assent to the policy.

In response to questions from the Board about the effects of the recent union ratification vote by town employees, Director Mulé reported on the current dual pay scales for union and nonunion employees. He feels that this will probably be changed at the Annual Town Meeting in May (2016) with the resumption of a single pay scale, but that of course is for Town Meeting to decide. Director Mulé also discussed the new union work rules and

their implications for the Library's contemplated changes in job descriptions under the new Strategic Plan. The only thing clear about these issues at the moment is that they are unclear and the situation will need to be actively followed going forward.

Chair Rose led the Board in a review of the MBLC's Library Trustee's Manual, focusing on chapter 3 and the legal requirements for public libraries in the Commonwealth. The Board reviewed the applicable laws and addressed some of the general policies needed as a result. The Board discussed chapter 4 of the manual, which led into a discussion of how to relate policies and issues laid out in the MBLC's trustee's manual to the Library's plans for policy revisions relating to the Strategic Plan. Chair Rose asked the Board to review chapters 5 and 6 for the January meeting.

Director Mulé discussed his concerns that the Library's policies should not be too prescriptive. He feels that the Library's policies should be written in relatively general terms to allow the staff some flexibility in dealing with the various operational issues that come up. Director Mulé then discussed how to integrate Library staff input into all new policies, as they are the ones who will be responsible for executing those policies. Both Director Mulé and the Board are very sensitive to the needs of the staff and the importance of not burdening them unnecessarily.

Chair Rose reported on the calendar template that she had distributed to the Board and appropriate adjustments to it. As one of the recurring items is revisions of policy, Secretary Streeter and Director Mulé will work together to prioritize a list of policies to revise, as well as a list of expired or redundant policies that should be formally deleted. Member Piazza brought up the idea of centralizing all policies into one document so there would not be a folder of different printed policies to sort through. Secretary Streeter noted that one of the big difficulties with this is the wide variety of formatting used throughout policy documents. Member Piazza and Secretary Streeter will explore setting up a standard style sheet in Word that can be used as a template for all future revisions.

Led by Chair Rose, the Board then reviewed the MBLC's calendar template month by month and revised it for the Library's and the Town's particular schedules. This was a detailed process and Chair Rose will distribute a revised calendar as a result.

The Board discussed the Library's upcoming volunteer appreciation event, which will take place at the Library at 5:30 in the evening on Friday, December 11. This led into a longer discussion of staff and volunteer appreciation events and when they can be scheduled. The Board noted that we had missed the staff appreciation dinner this year and felt it ought to be a priority for next year. The general sense of the Board was that the best month for these events is October, although the first few weeks of May also are a possibility. Director Mulé noted that all the Trustees are also volunteers and encouraged them to attend Friday's event.

Based on the trustee's manual, the Board discussed how best to revise the Director's review process to make it more efficient and useful. Chair Rose then reviewed the Strategic Plan's various service responses and asked each Trustee to address one and

report back at the January meeting. These are addressed on pages 33-39 of the Strategic Plan. Based on his work reviewing policies, Secretary Streeter will not make one of these presentations but instead will present a list of Library policies to be revised or deleted.

Chair Rose reviewed her plans for a Building Plant Subcommittee, which are supported by the Board. She recommended that the initial members should be Member Piazza and Larry Shoer, who has significant expertise in managing commercial buildings. Director Mulé will be an ex officio member as he is of all Board subcommittees. In relation to the physical plant, the Board discussed the broken window blinds in the Director's office and several other places around the building. Member Fiori asked for a list of capital priorities to try to ensure that the Library spends its limited resources where they are most needed.

Chair Rose reported that the estimated cost of new blinds for the offices are about \$800, and about \$1400 for the Dexter Room. There is wide agreement that these blinds are needed. Chair Rose and Assistant Library Director Karen Silverthorn will review the available styles and costs. It was the sense of the Board that no vote is needed relating to this issue.

The board then discussed the proposed loan of a Civil War flag from American Legion Post 96. As this proposal was received favorably by the Board,

Secretary Streeter moved to accept the loan of the flag; Member Schumacher-Hardy seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 6-0 vote.

Director Mulé will speak with Henry Richter of Post 96 to arrange delivery of the flag.

Library Director's Report

Director Mulé reviewed his monthly reports. There was some discussion of Verizon's proposal to give the library "Jetpacks" to circulate to provide mobile Internet access. The Board was disappointed that these would not be the traditional flying jetpacks, but this lead into a discussion of how these mobile access points would be lent out to patrons, and what liability the Library might or might not have if they were misused for illegal purposes.

Director Mulé noted that he did not have full information from Verizon at this point, so the Board should continue this discussion once he has full information and ideally a device or two in hand. The sense of the Board was that these could be very interesting and useful devices and that they look forward to discussing this issue further.

Relating to the circulation of unconventional items, Director Mulé noted that the Library's new telescope is actively circulating and is regarded as a success.

Financial Report:

Director Mulé presented his financial report and distributed spreadsheets from November and December showing the Library's expenditures and financial position. As has been the case recently, the Board was pleased that there were no financial surprises and commended Director Mulé for his stewardship.

New Business:

Member Fiori discussed a variety of issues that the Thayer Memorial Library Foundation and other charities have relating to employer matches of their employees' charitable donations, and the difficulty in identifying who the actual donor was in order to thank them appropriately. Apparently there is no easy solution to this issue.

Member Schumacher-Hardy noted that he and his father own the original sign from the Lancaster train station that was taken down when the station closed over 50 years ago. Member Schumacher-Hardy said that he and his father are prepared to loan (not donate) the sign to the Library for display. The Board was receptive to this proposal and asked for more information and a loan form as per the Library's policy for gifts or loans from Trustees, as well as perhaps a viewing of the sign, which Member Schumacher-Hardy said he would be glad to provide. Secretary Streeter encouraged Member Schumacher-Hardy to make sure that the loan is well documented, especially if the sign is to be on a long-term loan that has the potential to exceed the lender's lifespan.

Adjournment:

There being no further business for the Board to consider,

Member Schumacher-Hardy moved to adjourn; Secretary Streeter seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 6-0 vote.

The Board adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Frank S. Streeter, Secretary