

# **MINUTES, NORMAN WILLIAMS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD**

September 28, 2021, 5:25 p.m.

## **Board Meeting**

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### **Attending (via Zoom):**

Ron Miller, Joe Boyd, William Colson, Brenda Metzler, Karen Copenhaver, Chris McIlroy, and Priscilla Marsicovetere (who joined the meeting at 5:40),

- Also Attending: Library Director Clare McFarland
  - Excused: Anthea LaVallee, Elizabeth Daniels
  - A quorum was present for all votes taken
  - Rachel Ringenberg and David Green joined the meeting by invitation as observers at 5:35.
  - Submitted by Karen Copenhaver, Secretary
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### **Zoom Meeting**

#### **Call to Order at 5:25 PM**

### **Opening Remarks & Announcements (Joe Boyd):**

- Joe reported on the Nominating Committee's success in identifying two proposed new Trustees, Rachel Ringenberg and David Green as discussed in Joe's memo to the Board prior to the meeting. The Board voiced their appreciation for the work of the nominating committee and enthusiastic support for a timely vote on the new Trustees.
- Joe sadly accepted the resignation of Allison Hankey from the Board and noted Allison's contributions to the Board and to the Library. Joe asked for volunteers to assume Allison's role as Secretary. Karen Copenhaver volunteered to serve as Secretary. It was noted that the Bylaws do not require the Secretary to be a member of the Executive Committee.
- Joe proposed that the anticipated strategic planning retreat be delayed until a weekend in the first quarter of 2022 when, hopefully, the Board can safely meet in-person for an extended time and all of the Board openings will have been filled. The retreat will serve as an important onboarding activity for the large number of new Board members. All agreed that this was wise.

### **Library Director's Report (Clare McFarland):**

- A written report was submitted
- Clare reported on a call she received informing her of extremely generous gifts to the Library from the trusts of Jean Marder and Anne Marder. These gifts, one of which has already been deposited, were declared "potentially transformational" by Ron and Joe. Brenda, happily, knew one of the sisters well and will work with the Board to find an appropriate way to recognize the gift. It was agreed that Brenda, Joe, Ron, and Chris would meet to consider the impact of the gift on the Library and how to make the best use of the funds and the opportunity that they represent. Karen suggested that Elizabeth be asked if she would like to join that group to provide input on the potential future demands for maintenance of the Library building.
- Clare reported that the very successful Rare Book Sale conducted on Saturday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, generating approximately \$1487.00.
- As detailed in her written report, Clare noted a number of grants awarded to the Library. Clare reported that Michael Ricci, the Library's extraordinary Development Director, has been appointed Assistant Judge for Windsor County. Michael believes that he will be able to continue to support

the Library in its development efforts but will not be able to continue to fulfill all of the non-developmental roles that he has played in recent years (e.g. builder of tools to enable replacement of chandelier lightbulbs without incurring the expensive of a rented lift). Clare is hopeful that this will be the case. Michael's support has been invaluable.

- Masks are now required for individuals at all times while in the library. Signs are posted throughout the library as reminders and disposable masks are available at the front desk. Clare reported that compliance with the mask requirement has not been challenged by anyone.
- Clare served as the Library's advocate in a requesting to the Town to supply a sign directing visitors, in particular those visitors who arrive on tour buses parking directly in front of the Library, to the public restrooms. This sign and other signs posted by the Library staff, and the reduced number of tour buses this season, has significantly improved the use of the Library's limited restroom facilities by tourists.
- Clare was very happy to report that Monica Horowitz has been hired to fill the youth services librarian position 20 hours a week. Clare looks forward to welcoming Monica to the staff.
- Clare has proceeded to obtain background checks through the Vermont Crime Information Center on employees and employees working with children, pending the adoption of a formal background check policy by the Board.
- Work on a wide variety of building projects continues, including the extensive work on the windows, electrical upgrades to the exit lighting, exploration of carpet replacement options, installation of a railing on the front steps.

### Approval of July 27, 2021 Minutes:

Motion (Joe Boyd)	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Vote
Motion to accept the minutes of the July 2021 Board Meeting.	Karen Copenhaver	Chris McIlroy	Approved unanimously.

### Approval of Substitution for Secretary:

Motion (Joe Boyd)	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Vote
Motion to accept Karen Copenhaver to fulfill the term of Alison Hankey as Board Secretary.	Chris McIlroy	Priscilla Marsicovetere	Approved unanimously by all director's casting votes (with Karen Copenhaver abstaining).

### Treasurer's Report (Ron Miller)

- A detailed financial report for September submitted. The library continues to be in a strong financial position.
- Ron reviewed some of the reports' highlights and noted that the receipt of the Marden gifts would have significant impacts on all aspects of the Library's finances. The deposited gift certainly made the transfer of funds into the checking account for current operating expenses unnecessary. Ron expressed his desire for the Board to take the time necessary to act as good stewards for the institution and thoroughly evaluate the appropriate use of the funds.

Motion (Joe Boyd)	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Vote
Motion to approve Treasurer's Report	Bill Colson	Chris McIlroy	Approved unanimously.

### **Library Staff and Volunteer Background Check Policy (Chris McIlroy):**

- The Board agreed to wait for the comments from counsel before discussing and adopting a proposed policy. In particular the scope of the employees or volunteers subject to the policy and the specific authorization extended to organizations that serve vulnerable populations will be reviewed prior to adoption.

### **Anti-Racism Task Force / Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (Chris McIlroy):**

- It was proposed and approved by the Executive Committee that the Anti-Racism Task Force be made a formal standing committee of the Board and retitled as the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. Chris will chair the new committee, joined by Brenda and Priscilla. Chris will report to the Board at its next meeting on appropriate meeting and report cadence for the committee.

### **Preparation of Annual Report (Clare McFarland)**

- The Board discussed the importance of preparing an Annual Report, particularly in this time. Clare has the information for many of the pieces but asked the Board to provide assistance in review and approval of the final draft. The Communications Committee was tasked to provide assistance to Clare in this regard and to report back to the full Board at the next meeting. Brenda suggested that either as a part of the Annual Report, or as a separate document, it is important that we tell the story of the Marden sister's gifts and tie that story to the importance of legacy gifts to the library as proposed by the Planned Giving study group.

### **Development/Planned Giving (Chris McIlroy)**

- In the absence of a separate Development Report for this meeting, Clare included the details of fundraising results since the last Board meeting in the Director's Report. With the departure of Laurie Chester, Chris has assumed the role of Chair of the Development Committee and working with Michael Ricci and Clare will be bringing together the final work product of the Planned Giving study group.
- The Committee asked the Board to support a Winter Appeal by providing hand written notes on mailings to individuals with whom the Board member has a close relationship. The logistics of getting these notes together in a timely manner without delaying the mailing will be further considered.

### **Town Representative:**

- Joe asked for a volunteer to serve as Laurie Chester's successor as the Town Representative. The volunteer's name will be submitted to the Town for approval and must be renewed on an annual basis. The Town Representative submits a written report to the Town once a year. The Town Representative must be a resident of Woodstock.

There being no further business, the Chair requested a motion to adjourn:

<b>Motion (Joe Boyd)</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Vote</b>
Motion to adjourn.	Brenda Metzler	Chris McIlroy	Approved unanimously.

**Thereafter the meeting was adjourned at 6:41 PM**

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Copenhaver, Secretary  
September 29th, 2021