

MINUTES, NORMAN WILLIAMS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

December 13, 2021, 5:15 p.m.
Board Meeting

Attending (via Zoom):

- Ron Miller, Joe Boyd, William Colson, Brenda Metzler, Karen Copenhaver, Chris McIlroy, and Anthea LaVallee, Rachael Ringenberg, David Green and Priscilla Marsicovetere
 - A quorum was present for all votes taken
 - Also Attending: Library Director Clare McFarland
 - Excused: Elizabeth Daniels
 - Submitted by Karen Copenhaver, Secretary
-

Zoom Meeting

Call to Order at 5:18 PM

Opening Remarks & Announcements (Joe Boyd, Chair):

Joe called the meeting to order at 5:18 and confirmed that a quorum was present.

Approval of October 2021 Minutes:

Motion (call for a motion by Joe Boyd)	1 st	2 nd	Vote
Motion to accept the minutes of the September 2021 Board Meeting, as amended.	Ron Miller	Chris McIlroy	Approved unanimously.

New Trustee

Joe reported on his conversations with Phil Robertson. Phil has decided that he does not want to pursue a position on the Board but was willing to join and assist the Building Committee, which is where he feels he can be most helpful. Joe was hopeful that Phil might be willing to serve as the Library's Town Representative. Joe clarified that the Board only makes a nomination for the Town Representative; the Representative will be appointed by the Selectboard for a one-year term. The Representative must be a resident of the Town of Woodstock. Joe asked all Board members who are Woodstock residents to consider serving in this capacity. Joe will ask whether there is any reason why he, as the Board's chair, should not serve as the Town Representative at the same time.

Anthea suggested that the Board seek more of a youth perspective on the Board by inviting a local Woodstock High School graduate who has remained in the area to join the Board. The Board enthusiastically agreed that this was desirable and Joe and Clare agreed to identify one or more appropriate candidates.

Library Director's Report (Clare McFarland):

- Clare provided a heartbreaking update on Meg Brazill's continuing decline. Clare has been working with the staff as they support each other and Meg's family during this time. The staff is collecting cards and letters from Library patrons to send to the hospital in Boston. Brenda suggested that Clare look into Invest EAP which is a program in Vermont to provide cost-effective Employee Assistance Programs for Vermont employers. In the weeks and months to come it might be helpful to have a well-established way to provide more support to employees dealing with loss in these challenging times.
- Clare reported on the successful mailing of the annual appeal letters on time. Clare requested the Board's input on a decision regarding the annual Library Gala in the Spring. The Board's assessment is that a Gala should not be held in the Spring of 2022 due to continuing uncertainties regarding appropriate COVID protocols.
- Clare reminded the Board that the petitions are available for signature in the library. We must have the required signatures before the end of December – which will be significantly more difficult during COVID restrictions.
- Clare reported on the posting of the NWPL Annual Report and also on the completion of the detailed Public Library Annual Report that is required by the state board of libraries for compilation of state wide statistics regarding library activities.
- Clare reported on several new local and state program initiatives.
- Clare has begun a review and rewrite of various job descriptions to better describe the role rather than to be tailored to the personal gifts and attributes of the individual in the role at this time.
- Clare provided updates on a number of ongoing building projects, including replacement of the carpeting, window repairs, fence and handrail installations, a review of the water leak by the stone mason involved in the last building renovation project and his encouragement to undertake a project to preserve the pillars in the front of the library that are noticeably degrading, and the reseating of the front door. These topics are covered in detail in Clare's very helpful written report.

Treasurer's Report (Ron Miller)

- Ron prepared and submitted for the Board's consideration a detailed financial report, through the end of October, covering the first four months of our fiscal year.
- The library continues to be in a strong financial position, but Ron noted a few points that the Board should continue to monitor.
 1. The proceeds from our various appeals – last year's year end annual appeal, this year's Spring appeal and this year's annual appeal (for which the letter was mailed in early December) – are not neatly separated and direct year to year comparisons do not necessarily give an accurate representation of our progress toward our annual goals. We have had a generous response from our donors during these unusual times, but we still have quite a bit to bring in to meet our targets.
 2. We included a significant goal of \$25,000 for amounts to be awarded as grants. We have seen only one grant come in this fiscal year, in November, for \$4300. We should revisit the basis for the original target and address any shortfall that is realistically likely to occur.
 3. As of the end of October and what we know about November all looks positive, but we need to keep an eye on expenses and continue to make progress on grants and the results of our appeals to the community for support.

Motion (Joe Boyd)	1st	2nd	Vote
Motion to approve Treasurer's Report	Karen Copenhaver	Priscilla Marsicovetere	Approved unanimously.

Development/Planned Giving (Chris McIlroy)

Chris reported on continued progress in the development of an appropriate mailer to encourage public participation in a planned giving program. He hopes to have a draft for the Board's review for a launch of the program this Spring.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (formerly Anti-Racism Task Force) (ARTF)) (Chris McIlroy)

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee is still in a formation stage. It will be meeting as soon as in person meetings are possible, perhaps in January. Chris has proposed a quarterly meeting cadence and encourages any Board member who would like to participate to join Chris, Brenda and Priscilla. The Board confirmed its passion for this work and its appreciation for the work to date in identifying ways in which the Board can be a catalyst for real change in the broader community.

Other Business

The Board established a new day for its meetings beginning in January, 2022. The Board will convene on the fourth Monday of each month at 5:15 p.m. The Board meetings will continue to be conducted over Zoom until further notice.

Joe and Brenda have been exploring appropriate ways to acknowledge the phenomenal generosity of Anne Marder. They are currently discussing an event around the time of Anne's birthday, May 30th, that will share Anne's story with the community. The shape and timing of the event will of course be affected by the status of appropriate COVID protocols at that time.

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

Motion (Joe Boyd)	1st	2nd	Vote
Motion to adjourn.	Brenda Metzler	Priscilla Marsicovetere	Approved unanimously.

Thereafter the meeting was adjourned at 6:20 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Copenhaver, Secretary
December 13, 2021