

**Northwood Libraries
Board of Trustees
MINUTES
Board Meeting
August 11, 2023**

APPROVED

Attending: Betty Smith, Chair; Janet Story Clark, Secretary; Irene Kreider, Alternate; Margaret Walker, Alternate; Donna Bunker, Library Director

The meeting began at 9:02 AM.

It was MOVED/SECONDED (Janet/Betty) and APPROVED to have Irene Kreider serve as a voting member of the board in the Treasurer's absence.

Minutes – It was MOVED/SECONDED (Irene/Betty) to accept the minutes of the July 14, 2023 meeting with corrections. The motion was APPROVED.

Treasurer's Report – It was MOVED/SECONDED (Janet/Betty) to table this item until the next meeting. The motion was APPROVED.

Director's Report – During discussion, it was noted that the various library usage numbers were very good, despite the 6 days in July that the library was closed (5 days for vacation to stay within our budget and 1 day when the staff worked the library activities at the Northwood 250th celebration at the recreation fields. *The director will add attendance statistics to the section covering how many took part in library activities that day.*

Expenditure Report – We remain on target for the first 7 months of this budget year.

TRUSTEE BUSINESS

Library Policy Review – This item was tabled until the next meeting. The director is trying to locate an expert on First Amendment Audits to speak with us so that this section can be strengthened. The director reported that 2 small NH towns have been “audited” with one “passing” and another “failing.” In the second instance, a library patron called the police and thus the library was given a failing grade. Janet pointed out that by using the terms of the “audits”, such as pass and fail, legitimacy is given to this process that is not designed to strengthen a library's policies but to antagonize and to create tension between the instigators, library staff and patrons. Our director and staff have worked hard to prepare themselves should someone bring this activity to the library.

Personnel Policy Review – A vote by the board on our recent changes/updates, etc. is needed. *The board asked the director to remind the board that this vote is needed on the next agenda and to come to the meeting having reviewed the changes and be prepared to vote.*

Trust Funds – The director and staff are working on putting together the lists of large print books and CDs that will be purchased with the trust fund income when it is received from the Northwood Trustees of Trust Funds.

Chesley Plumbing/Toilet Failure/Closure – On Tuesday, August 8, while the director was on vacation, the only toilet at the Chesley Memorial Library failed. The staff notified the Trustee Chair and working together, the town was contacted. On Wednesday, the 9th a plumber came and was unable to fix the backup, and Roto Rooter was contacted. On Thursday, the 10th, the clog, at a 90-degree elbow in the pipe out to the septic tank, was taken care off and the library was able to reopen just after noon. The director will thank the new town administrator and the public works foreman and ask them to let us know any details we should know to keep this problem from returning in the future.

OLD BUSINESS

Bryant Library – Issues related to this library building were reviewed. Margaret mentioned that some of the building needs and wants were reviewed at the recent Friends’ meeting. Future funding needs include: roof (inspect and follow-up. We were reminded that the town DPW foreman had replaced a few roofing slates in the recent past.); front pillars (inspection and follow-up); walkway and steps up to front door (inspection and follow-up); basement window casings; brick work (inspection and follow-up); dehumidifier.

We will invite the Northwood Historical Society leadership to our October meeting to update our MOU with NHS.

No further information has been received regarding the application to add this library building to the NH Register of Historic Places. *Janet will email Andrew Cushman for an update (UPDATE: this was done on August 18, 2023).*

Libraries MOU with the Town – The Board reviewed the town-signed MOU from the Board of Selectmen. It was noted that there was no place for the Library Board to sign or show acknowledgement. Therefore, it was MOVED/SECONDED (Janet/Betty) to accept the July 25, 2023 Northwood Libraries Memo of Understanding Building and Grounds Maintenance as written and signed by the Northwood Selectmen. The motion was APPROVED.

The secretary will create a cover letter to be signed by the Library Board of Trustees and sent to the Town indicating our acceptance of the MOU.

CIP – Betty and Janet reported on the Capital Improvement Plan meeting they attended at which our two projects, the accessibility lift and the generator. We were advised by the CIP committee to turn to the Town Administrator to develop bids for these projects. Based on the most recent MOU signed between the town and the libraries’ Board these projects will be handled by the town. The new TA, Neil Irvine, will be invited to our September 8, 2023 meeting [NOTE: he has accepted the invitation] and this issue will be discussed with him then.

First Amendment Audits – In addition to the above Policy development discussion, *the director will email the board members a checklist for non-confrontational response to such an “audit.”*

Water System – On Monday, August 21, McBride’s, that won the bid to fix/replace the water system, will be starting that work.

Zone Dampers – The Board asked the director to forward the information received from 2 vendors concerning the removal of the zone dampers to the Town Administrator asking for his/the Town’s feedback on that removal. The cost, estimated to be under \$500, will come from the library budget but we would welcome the Town’s input on the suggestions.

NEW BUSINESS

Big Reads – CML’s application has been chosen to be one of several libraries throughout the state to take part in this statewide book discussion. CML will receive 50 free copies of *The Bear* by Andrew Krivak to be discussed on Wednesday, November 1 at 7 pm. As part of the program, CML will be partnering with the Friends of the Northwood Libraries for the book discussion and the Recreation Department for a Wilderness Survival Workshop with Dennis Haig.

Technology Librarian – The director reported that this now-vacant position will be filled temporarily on a very part-time basis (one day a week) by a former employee. We will continue to seek someone to fill the 30 hour per week position.

Topographical Maps Donation – Donna showed us a recent donation of 4 local-area topographical maps. The donor understood that some of the maps might not be kept. Donna would like to keep the Northwood area map, get it framed and hang it in the library. She suggested that she could ask libraries in the other 3 maps if they would like the maps for that area. It was MOVED/SECONDED (Janet/Betty) to accept all of the maps; that the Northwood map be kept for CML; that the other 3 maps be given to local libraries in those areas; and that the Friends be asked to cover the cost of framing the Northwood map. The motion was APPROVED.

Toy Drive – The Board approved a request from a Coe-Brown student to support a Senior Project by putting a collection box for toys at CML.

Harvey Lake Women’s Club/potential donation – As one of the few remaining members of the club, Betty explained that they are disbanding. The Club’s bylaws state that if/when the club disbands, any funds remaining in the treasury shall be turned over to the library with no other stipulations. The gift will be given to honor past and present members of the club. The Board was saddened to hear of the Club’s disbanding but understood the pressures on the current members and we are overwhelmed by their generosity. *At our next meeting in September, we will hold a Public Hearing, as required by law, to accept the gift. Notices will be posted.*

OTHER BUSINESS

Square Dance Sign – The local square dance group has asked to place a sign at the library. They can post it in the NHDOT Right of Way, along the road.

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 11:23 PM.

Future Date: The next Board meeting will take place on Friday, September 8, 2023 at 9 AM.