

**ABBOTT MEMORIAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEE MINUTES
NOVEMBER 24, 2014 MEETING**

The meeting began at approximately 7:20 PM. Present: Anne Bower, Carole Brown, Betsy Rhodes, Jenny Satterfield, Betsy Siebeck, and Cory Smith, Librarian. Absent: Emily Harrington.

The agenda was adopted and the minutes from the October 20th regular meeting were unanimously accepted.

REPORTS

Librarian: Cory distributed copies of her monthly written update on recent Library activities and upcoming events, a copy of which is attached. She reported that October was a busy month, thanking Carole again for leading a walk during the Peak to Peak event in Woodstock on October 18th and Chuck Gunderson and Robin Hirsch again for their “Country Mouse/City Mouse” reading on October 19th. She also thanked a long list of people who helped make the annual Halloween Party a great success on October 28th; at least 45 children and 25 adults attended, including new people who came over from next door after finishing their programs at Artistree. Cory then reviewed upcoming events, including the reading program she is working on with teachers Sarah Woodhead and Rob Hanson at the Pomfret School. Sarah is recommending *Salt* by Helen Frost as the discussion book. Cory intends to read it and get back to Sarah. Discussion about the Pomfret School reading program led to questions about the Library’s participation in the Vermont Humanities Council’s 2015 Vermont Reads program. Some present had had an opportunity to read the Council’s selected book, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* by Salman Rushdie, and found it difficult to finish. It was agreed that the Library would focus its time and energy on the local school program opposed to this statewide initiative in 2015.

Cory also reported that she had met with folks at Artistree to talk about programming and parking; they plan to have a person help with parking during big events and are trying hard to make it work. Discussion about the use of the Library parking lot during Library hours followed. By consensus, it was determined that the parking lot issue would be revisited as needed; for now, we would wait and see how Artistree’s new approaches work, such as having someone help with parking and designating an entrance and exit of the parking lot so traffic is flowing one way. Finally, the Vermont Department of Libraries Annual Report would be submitted electronically after the meeting, since the deadline was November 24th.

Buildings & Grounds: Outside of the cresting tiles to be discussed under Old Business, Anne had nothing else to report.

Community Liaison: Carole had nothing further to report that had not been discussed during the Librarian’s update.

Treasurer: Betsy S. was pleased to report that her work with the Town Treasurer, Ellen DesMeules, on the Abbott books was continuing to go well. Everything else that she planned to share would fall under “Investments” under Old Business and “Review of preliminary budget” under New Business.

Development & Chair: Jenny was happy to announce that the annual appeal letter had been mailed out on November 20th and thanked everyone for their help with the process. As donations arrive, she will coordinate with the rest of the Board to send thank you notes.

OLD BUSINESS

Cresting tiles: Anne reported that fundraising for this project was still underway. We should hear about the historic preservation grant by the end of December or in early January, and another check was received from Teago General Store for coffee sales on Thursdays. Meanwhile, a total of \$10,000 in matching grants had been pledged so far and donors continued to respond to individual appeals. Discussion followed and additional fundraising ideas were considered. Anne presented her new idea of a “Rolling Raffle” to be held monthly at the Library. She is willing to raffle off items from the estate of Frank and Ellison Lieberman, selling tickets at the Library and picking winners each month. Everyone thanked her for her generosity, thought it was a great idea and definitely worth a try. Anne agreed to pursue it.

Investments: Betsy S. reported that she and Betsy R. met with Eric Werner, the Library’s local financial advisor at Morgan Stanley, and set up the Library’s new investment strategy before Morgan Stanley’s internal transition took place, which has since moved the Library investments into a special municipal division with a new contact person in either Burlington or Boston. Eric was able to assist the Library in setting up two new funds, one of which is called the “Abbott Memorial Library Fund” that combines the Ira Abbott, 100 Year, and Wood and Harding Funds, and the other is the

“Reserve Fund” that contains the accessible cash reserves for designated projects. Betsy S. will continue to track the individual values of the Ira Abbott, 100 Year, and Wood and Harding Funds based on the percentage of each that made up the total of the new Abbott Memorial Fund (\$52,545.62) when it was established; the Ira Abbott Fund was 69.57% of the new fund, while the 100 Year Fund was 29.20 % and the Wood and Harding Fund was 1.23%. At the time it was established, the Reserve Fund contained the \$20,000 designated for the cresting tile project and \$5,000 for investment in a socially responsible initiative to be determined by the Board. Discussion followed. By consensus, the Board agreed to invest that \$5,000 in a clean water initiative (the Power Shares Global Water Portfolio) recommended by Eric. Betsy S. will contact him to make the investment and to determine if the remaining \$20,000 in the Reserve Fund is in some sort of interest bearing account.

Speaker series: Those present discussed various ideas for speakers for the winter series. Presentations on the following were considered: historic preservation; invasive plants; history of Pomfret; ticks and mosquitoes; forest management; sweet and hard cider production; and a fermentation demonstration. A Chinese New Year celebration and Winter Moth were also considered. It was agreed that the following programs would be pursued this winter: a Moth storytelling in February (Betsy R. to make initial contact with Mark Binder); ticks and mosquitoes in March (Carole to contact Alan Graham about speaking); invasive plants in April (Betsy R. to talk with the Pomfret Invasive Species Committee about a presentation); and sweet and hard cider production (Cory to contact Ben Watson to see if he is willing to come sometime). Next year, in conjunction with the Library’s anniversary and the completion of the cresting tile project, it was agreed that the focus should be on history, including presentations on historic preservation (Anne to contact folks in the State Historic Preservation Office) and the history of Pomfret, among others.

Annual appeal: Jenny had nothing further to add to her earlier report.

NEW BUSINESS

Review Preliminary Budget: Betsy S. distributed copies of the preliminary budget and explained the challenge of compiling a budget when we are only part way through our new fiscal year, ending June 30, 2015. In the past, the fiscal year ended December 31, and we had nearly a year’s worth of data to work with when discussing the budget to present in the Pomfret Annual Report voted on at Town Meeting in March. Because decisions are being made with less information, it may be more difficult to forecast the Library’s financial needs. Consequently, at some point the Board may wish to have a philosophical discussion on how to deal with greater shortfalls and surpluses should they arise. A brief philosophical discussion followed, and it was agreed that the Board would revisit the issue as necessary. For now, we would do the best that we could to budget accurately with the information on-hand. A lengthy line by line discussion of the budget followed. Betsy S. agreed to incorporate changes, gather more information from the Town about particular items and run the budget with various scenarios, so the Board can see the impact of each on the bottom-line. Due to the tight timeline for the Pomfret Annual Report compiled by the Town Auditors, Betsy S. asked that a budget subcommittee be formed to complete some of the work prior to the next full Board meeting. Those present felt that it was a good idea, as long as the working meetings were properly warned. Jenny and Betsy R. agreed to serve on the subcommittee. Betsy S. will be in touch as needed.

A brief discussion of the Pomfret Annual Report deadlines then took place. Jenny agreed to let the Town Auditors know that the Library’s annual report would be approved at the Board’s December 15th meeting and shared with them as soon as possible.

In closing, the time and place of the upcoming December Board Meeting were discussed. It was agreed that it would be nice to combine the meeting with a holiday potluck, the way it has been done in previous years. Anne graciously offered to host again. So, the meeting will take place at her home at 6 PM, and the potluck will start at approximately 7 PM. Anne will provide the main dish, Jenny the appetizer, Betsy S. salad, Carole bread, Cory squash, and Betsy R. pies for dessert. Everyone was urged to bring wine if they like, and Anne will invite Sue Heston and JoAnn Webb.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30 PM.

Next Board of Trustee Meeting will take place at Anne Bower’s home on Cloudland Road at 6 PM on Monday, December 15, 2014.

November 24th Minutes respectfully submitted by Betsy Rhodes on November 29, 2014.

To: Trustees of the Abbott Memorial Library, Librarian's Report [November 17, 2014]

1. Circulation Statistics in October: 269 (last year: 279; in 2012: 318).

2. Patron Tally in October: 279 (last year: 300; in 2012: 291).

new patrons in October: 4.

Computer use in October: 15 users/ 7.25 hours (last year: 8 users/ 3.75 hours).

WiFi use recorded in October: 1 user/ .25 hours.

Volunteer hours for October: 53 hours (desk coverage, library tasks. Halloween Party).

3. Programs in October:

Carole helped lead a story walk during the Peak to Peak event in Woodstock on Sat. Oct. 18.

Thanks Carole!

“Country Mouse/City Mouse: Two Writers Reading” took place Sun. Oct. 19 at 1 p.m. with 19 in attendance. Thanks to Chuck Gundersen and Robin Hirsch.

Our annual Halloween Party took place on Tuesday October 28 from 5 – 6:30 pm. Many thanks to Alecia, Andrew, Anne, Betsy, Betsy, Blake, Brook, Carole, Celia, Charles, Hayley, Jenny, JoAnn, Judi, Kaelan, Kelly, Philippa, Rosalie, Sarah, Sue, and Thomas for their help with advertising, decorating, providing and monitoring refreshments, running games, helping with crafts, socializing, fortune telling, reading stories, being spooky, and cleaning up. It was lots of fun. In attendance: 45+ children and 25 adults.

4. Upcoming Programs:

I am working with Sarah Woodhead and Rob Hanson of the Pomfret School to select a book for a school/community book discussion to take place at the end of the winter.

5. Artistree seems to be in full swing with their programs. I reviewed Artistree's parking plan with J.J.. For large events, they will be staffing their parking lot to show people where to park and to minimize people parking along the road.

6. VT Dep't. of Libraries Annual Report will be due Nov. 24.

7. The end of the year calls for coordinating the annual purchase of audiobooks for the LUV Co-op.

Cory