

**ABBOTT MEMORIAL LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEE MINUTES  
OCTOBER 20, 2014 MEETING**

The meeting began at 7:05 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 September 15<sup>th</sup> regular meeting, September 29<sup>th</sup> special meeting and October 5<sup>th</sup> special 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 the Artistree program to be held at the Library was postponed, so that they could hold it at their new building next door once the space was finished. All the recent programs held at the Library went well, especially the informational meeting about ECFiber high speed internet coming to Pomfret and the storytelling by longtime friends Chuck Gundersen and Robin Hirsch entitled “Country Mouse/City Mouse: Two Writers Reading.” Cory also reported that Carole helped lead a story walk during the “Peak to Peak” event in Woodstock. Upcoming events that are in the works include the annual Halloween party on October 28<sup>th</sup> from 5 to 6:30 PM; a sign-up sheet was passed around and Board members volunteered to provide refreshments and/or work at the party. The last topic highlighted by Cory was the Vermont Department of Libraries Annual Report that will be due on November 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Buildings & Grounds:** Anne’s leading news was that the historic preservation grant for the crestring tile project was filed. She went on to report that fundraising for the project continued slowly. Discussion followed on various ways by which to publicize the project and to raise additional funds. It was agreed that pursuing another article in the newspaper would be a good idea and holding some sort of silent auction, perhaps at Artistree, might be worth doing in the spring, so as not to compete with the Library’s year-end annual appeal. As far as the building maintenance goes, Peter Gebhardt will be installing storm windows when needed, and Anne will do the routine check of the radon filters as scheduled.

**Community Liaison:** Carole reported that she did not have more to add to Cory’s earlier update. Anne inquired about the Library’s participation in the Vermont Humanities Council’s 2015 Vermont Reads program. The book selected is *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* by Salman Rushdie. Discussion followed and Anne agreed to read the book and share it with others to do the same. If those who read the book like it and believe that the Library should apply to participate in the program to promote reading and discussing it, Carole will complete the online application, which includes a description of what programs the Library intends to hold. Regardless of whether the Library participates in the Vermont Reads program, Sarah Woodhead (the 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at the Pomfret School) would like to come up with a reading program for the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. If it is not the Salman Rushdie book, everyone agreed that another book should be selected and a program pursued with the School. Anne also shared her desire to partner with the Library’s new neighbor, Artistree, and others agreed that joint programs and projects definitely should be explored.

**Treasurer:** Betsy S. was pleased to report that she has been working with the Town Treasurer, Ellen DesMeules, on the Abbott books and, based on the latest financial report shared by Ellen, there are no great discrepancies between Betsy’s parallel bookkeeping system and the Town’s official financial accounting system. At this time, there is only one small difference that will be adjusted with a journal entry made by Ellen. Although Betsy intends to continue to keep the shadow system, so she has immediate access to the Library financial records at any given time, the need for one is becoming less imperative; she is really happy with the state of the financial record keeping. For everyone’s review, she then distributed a budget versus actual income and expense report to date. Discussion followed and everyone agreed that the Library finances appeared to be on track.

**Development:** Jenny reported that any development discussion would take place during the discussion of the annual appeal under new business.

**Chair:** Jenny reported that she had nothing else to share that was not being covered in another part of the meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Crestring tiles:** Anne had nothing further to report. Everything pertaining to the crestring tiles had already had been brought up and discussed during her buildings and grounds update.

**Investments:** Betsy S. reported that she had recently heard from the Library's financial advisor at Morgan Stanley, Eric Werner, and learned that he will no longer be able to officially work with us under Morgan Stanley's reorganization of municipal accounts. She is still trying to determine whether he can continue to work with us in any capacity and if he will be able to set up the Library's new investment strategy before the internal transition takes place at Morgan Stanley. Betsy was disappointed and regretted losing the local contact that she had worked so hard to obtain. Discussion followed and everyone agreed that she should pursue changing the Library investments with Eric since we had accomplished so much with him, and we would consider next steps (e.g. finding a new local financial advisor if need be) once everything is in place. During this conversation, the socially responsible component of the Library's investment strategy was considered. When asked, Betsy reported that she had not yet received options from Eric for ways in which to invest the small sum decided upon during the September 15<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. It was agreed that if it would slow down the process at all, Betsy should ask Eric to transfer all of the existing investments as previously discussed into the new index funds, including the amount to be invested in a socially responsible initiative; if need be, that sum would be transferred at a later date when there was time to thoroughly vet and select a socially responsible initiative in which to invest. For now, it is most important to satisfy our fiduciary responsibility by transferring the funds as soon as possible, preferably before we lose Eric's assistance and we have to work with someone else under a different division of Morgan Stanley located in Boston.

## NEW BUSINESS

**Telephone contract:** Betsy S. reported that she had contacted FairPoint Communications about the recent changes made to the Library's telephone service and learned that Selectboard Chair, Mark Warner, had erroneously lumped the Library in with all the other Town telephones and set-up a single new municipal contract for all of them, without recognizing the Library's autonomy by state statute. No changes to the contract can be made without paying a \$200 penalty. Betsy shared that she had gone to the last Selectboard meeting and told the Selectboard that the Library Board likely would have approved the changes, since they included a reduced monthly fee for service, had we been asked, but we never were. In the future, we need to be asked; the Library is autonomous. Although a relatively small issue, those present at this Library Board meeting agreed that it is an important principle and worth clarification; they thanked Betsy for pursuing it and for sorting out the changes to the telephone system. She will continue to look into it and be sure that the services provided, such as internet speed, were not reduced along with the monthly fee. If changes need to be made, she will bring up the issue again during a Library Board meeting for further discussion and action.

**Annual appeal:** Jenny distributed a draft annual appeal letter for consideration. Those present agreed to review it and share suggestions with her as soon as possible. It was agreed that the "signing party," at which time the letters are signed by Board members, assembled, posted and mailed, would take place on Saturday, November 15<sup>th</sup> at 9 AM at the Library.

**Three-year capital budget:** Anne distributed a draft three-year capital budget for review. Members considered the draft and agreed on the projections, which included estimated costs of the Cresting Tile Library Restoration Project, slate roof maintenance, front walkway replacement, window repair and improvement of back door drainage.

**Speaker series:** A brief initial brainstorming session took place to consider what topics might be covered and who might be able to give presentations for the upcoming winter speaker series at the Library. Some ideas considered were: a talk about the importance of historic preservation, tying into the Library's cresting tile project; a presentation by Ben Watson about sweet and hard cider production; and a question and answer session on ticks and mosquitoes in Vermont with Alan Graham, Pomfret resident and state entomologist. Everyone agreed to give the series further consideration and come to the next Board meeting with additional ideas and concrete suggestions for speakers.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 PM.

Next Board of Trustee Meeting will take place at the Library at 7 PM on Monday, November 17, 2014.

October 20<sup>th</sup> Minutes respectfully submitted by Betsy Rhodes on October 25, 2014.

To: Trustees of the Abbott Memorial Library, Librarian's Report [October 20, 2014]

1. Circulation Statistics in September: 307 (last year: 230; in 2012: 334).

2. Patron Tally in September: 205 (last year: 165; in 2012: 216).

# new patrons in September: 2.

Computer use in September: 8 users/ 5.75 hours (last year: 8 users/ 6.5 hours).

WiFi use recorded in September: 1 user/ 1.5 hours.

Volunteer hours for September: 11 hours (desk coverage, library tasks).

3. Programs in September/October:

EC Fiber meeting held in September. 14 people attended. Alan Graham oversaw this meeting.

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.

4. Upcoming Programs:

Halloween Party is scheduled for Tuesday October 28 at 5 pm.

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

Cory