

**ABBOTT MEMORIAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEE MINUTES
DECEMBER 15, 2014 MEETING**

The meeting took place at Anne Bower's home on Cloudland Road in Pomfret and began at approximately 6:15 PM. Present: Anne Bower, Carole Brown, Betsy Rhodes, Jenny Satterfield, Betsy Siebeck, Cory Smith, Librarian, and JoAnn Webb (Assistant Librarian, joined us at 7 PM). Absent: Emily Harrington.

The agenda was adopted and the minutes from the November 24th regular meeting were unanimously accepted.

REPORTS

Librarian: Cory started with an update on the winter speaker series. All potential speakers had been contacted, except for Ben Watson to discuss cider production; she was still trying to track him down and would continue to do so. In the meantime, Alan Graham was scheduled to discuss ticks and mosquitoes in the region on February 26, 2015; Mark Binder had agreed to host a Winter Moth in March; and Betsy R. would work with members of the Pomfret Invasive Plant Committee to coordinate a program for April. Cory went on to report that her work with the Pomfret School to coordinate a book discussion was in progress. She read *Salt* by Helen Frost and agreed with Sarah Woodhead that it should be one of the books discussed. However, it may not be appropriate for all ages, so they were working to come up with additional titles and to solidify the program. Outside these special programs, day to day activities were moving along and everything was generally going well. When asked about the status of the mother/daughter book group, Cory said that it was on hold, because Finnie Trimpj, who she had been coordinating with at Artistree, was incredibly busy helping to get the organization established in its new location next door to the Library. Cory thought that she would pursue it when things settled down a bit. Speaking of Artistree, it was noted that the parking situation had improved dramatically. People to assist with parking were present at the last major opening and it went very well. Those present agreed that Artistree was on the right track and working hard to be a good neighbor.

Buildings & Grounds: Outside of the cresting tiles to be discussed under Old Business, Anne had nothing else to report, except that the temporary front walkway had been somewhat gouged when plowed during the first snow storm. The damage was not severe, and the Board agreed that it was not in need of repair. The pallet had been placed at the end of the walkway closest to the road to fill in the dip and the damage basically covered.

Treasurer: Betsy S. reported that she was able to work with Eric Werner at Morgan Stanley to invest in the Power Shares Global Water Portfolio per the Board's decision during its last meeting. Although the change had been made, the investment remained under the Reserve Fund instead of being moved to the Abbott Memorial Library Fund. Discussion followed and those present agreed that it should be moved out of the Reserve Fund and into the Library Fund, as long as it would continue to be tracked as a separate sub-investment. She agreed to confirm this with Eric, who she was delighted to continue to work with as long as possible. She reported that he seemed able to help until the Library investments are handled exclusively by the new Municipal Division of Morgan Stanley; no timeline had yet been established, so she happily continued to outreach to him as the local financial advisor. Per the Board's inquiry during its last meeting, she also learned from Eric that the Reserve Fund was an interest bearing investment, although minimal. Next she shared that she continued to be pleased with her work with the Town Treasurer, Ellen DesMeules, on the Abbott books. Everything else that she planned to report would fall under "Finalize budget" under New Business.

Community Liaison: Carole shared that she was working on the winter speaker series with Cory but had nothing further to report that had not been discussed during the Librarian's update.

Development & Chair: Jenny was pleased to report that people had started to respond to the annual appeal letter and to mail contribution checks to the Library. Discussion followed and Betsy S. did a year-end comparison for the previous year and confirmed that roughly the same amount had been received at this point last year, so the appeal appeared to be on track. Jenny intended to distribute thank you note information soon, so the rest of the Board could begin to send replies. She went on to report that Emily had let her know that she wished she could be doing more but was finding Board participation difficult with the new baby. Discussion followed and everyone present agreed that things were being covered and Emily should take her time to return to the Board if she thought that she would be able to do so, but she should feel no pressure to participate. Jenny agreed to keep in touch with her and update the Board.

Anne asked about the status of the electronic cataloging project. Cory reported that she needed to follow-up with someone from the State of Vermont. Jenny said that there were two people with the State who would be able to give advice once one of two software programs had been chosen by the Library. Discussion followed, including a debate

about the merits of each of the software programs, the cost and the Library's needs. At this time, there were many unknown factors as the State continued to consider a statewide approach and computer software was constantly changing, but Cory agreed to make contact with the State and to attempt to get additional information, so the Board can try to determine how to move forward and when.

OLD BUSINESS

Cresting tiles: Anne reported that the Library should hear about both the national registry status and the historic preservation grant soon, by the end of December or in early January. In the meantime, fundraising for this project was still underway. There had been some response to her first "Rolling Raffle" item that was currently on display at the Library. She intended to step up its promotion and continue fundraising efforts. She hoped that good news about the national registry status and/or the historic preservation grant would act as a catalyst and reinvigorate fundraising.

Investments: Betsy S. had nothing further to add to her earlier report.

Speaker series: There was nothing further to report or discuss that had not already been addressed during the Librarian and the Community Liaison reports.

NEW BUSINESS

Finalize budget: Betsy S. distributed copies of the draft budget along with a one page summary of issues to consider when budgeting with a July 1 fiscal year that she had compiled, many of which were factors because a budget must be prepared and presented at Town Meeting in March, which was now in the middle of the Library's fiscal year. A philosophical discussion followed. Ultimately, it was agreed that keeping track of overages and shortfalls and providing the electorate with clear explanations for a potentially fluctuating budget would be essential. The Board understood the potential pitfalls and agreed to help with explanations as needed.

Betsy S. then ran through the budget line by line, presenting the various scenarios that she had compiled based on the Board's preliminary budget discussion during its last meeting. Everyone present thanked her for all of her hard work and for her excellent presentation. A lengthy discussion of the various options followed, after which Betsy S. moved to accept the budget, including a \$1,000 reserve expense and a 1.7% cost of living increase for staff. Jenny called for the vote and all were in favor. Betsy S. agreed to present the final budget to the Selectboard and to give it to the Town Auditors to include in the Town Report.

Betsy R. asked if the Library Assets chart in the Town Report would be generated by the Town Treasurer from NEMRC (the Town's accounting software) or whether the Library would be responsible for compiling it. Betsy S. agreed to speak with the Town Treasurer to see if the Library investments had been entered into NEMRC yet. If so, the Town Treasurer could generate the assets chart. If not, we would compile it. Betsy S. agreed to let Betsy R. know if the template that she had from last year would be needed to compile the report.

Review annual report: Jenny distributed a draft copy of the annual report for review. At a glance, everyone thought that it looked good and agreed to provide statistics, make suggestions and share comments via email as soon as possible so she could submit it to the Town Auditors.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 PM and was followed by a wonderful potluck dinner.

Next Board of Trustee Meeting will take place at the Library at 7 PM on Monday, January 19, 2015.

December 15th Minutes respectfully submitted by Betsy Rhodes on December 19, 2014.