

**Ashland Town Library
Minutes of Library Trustees Meeting
Notes from Public Bond Hearing
January 20, 2014**

Trustees Present: Alice Staples, David Ruell, Lynn Davis, Mardean Badger (alternate)

Others Present: Sara Weinberg, Library Director

Members of the Public

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm at the Elementary School Library by the Chairperson.

Approval of Minutes

- The approval of minutes was waived.

Director's Report

- The Director's Report was waived.

Treasurer's Report

- We have received the first town appropriation payment of \$4,000.
- Paid so far this year -- utilities, books, a few magazine subscriptions, Downloadable Books fee for year.
- We received \$500 from the Meredith Village Savings Bank for our Books of the Month Program (third year of program).
- We received the final bill (email) for the appraisal of the TCCAP building. The first payment (\$1000) was made from the checking account. As previously discussed, the final payment (\$1000) will be made from the Donations account. We have received the final version of the appraisal report.

Old Business – Warrant Article and New Library

- We previewed the PowerPoint presentation to be given at the bond issue public hearing following this meeting. We reviewed possible questions that may come up at the bond hearing regarding the use of the Scribner building and the plans for the new library.
- We have had questions/comments about the new library and bond issue on our Facebook page. One person suggested we should explain the bond process.
- If the warrant article is approved by the voters, the bond process will include a sealed bid process. The BOS will authorize the TA to solicit bids for the bond.

New Business – Public Relations for the Warrant/New Library

- Leigh Sharps will be writing a newspaper article regarding the library's plans.
- Bobbi Hoerter, moderator
- We discussed the idea of doing a direct mailing brochure after the deliberative session and before the March 11 vote – possibly the week of February 17.
 - Check printing costs for a brochure with Jae Demers (968-7995)
 - Check availability of mailing list of voters from the town office or feasibility of using "Boxholder" through the post office.
- We discussed the possibility of holding open house(s) at the TCCAP building before the March vote.
 - Possible dates are March 8 (Saturday) and March 5 or 6 (evening).
 - David will check with TCCAP regarding dates and accessibility.
- We will explore newspaper coverage (Laconia Daily Sun, Record Enterprise).

Other Business

- The Trustees agreed that the staff could close the library at about 12:45 on February 1 in order to attend the deliberative session.

Next Meeting

- Our next meeting will be February 5, at 6:00 pm, to discuss the layout of a draft mailing.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 and followed by the Bond Issue Public Hearing held by the Board of Selectmen.

Minutes submitted by Mardean Badger

Notes from the Public Hearing (Board of Selectmen)

The warrant article was read by the chairman of the BOS. Then the Library Trustees presented a PowerPoint to explain the background and information relative to the warrant article, followed by a question/answer period for the public.

Key Questions/Comments

- *How much was building sold for? -- \$1*
- *How much is the current library costing us? Is there enough money to continue maintaining that building? – A Scribner Trustee explained that their funds could continue maintaining the building for the library as it is now. Improvements to and maintenance (such as new siding) of the building comes from the Scribner fund. The town has very little expense involved in the building maintenance and could continue for the foreseeable future.*
- *What is the parking situation? -- Our parking space will increase from the current on-street parking. We might be able to use school parking lot during the evening.*
- *Will school allow that? – We could discuss it with the school.*
- *Phil Preston: Looks like a wide angle lens was used to take those pictures of the current library, which makes the rooms look larger than they really are. -- Aisles between shelving are not wide enough for wheel chair access. People coming in the door are right by the circulation desk; people at the circulation desk are right in front of those sitting in the comfortable chairs. Children's programs are limited to 12 children, and all furniture must be moved out.*
- *Parking, response from school? -- School board has been kept informed, there will be dialogue*
- *Can the financing bond be longer than 10 years? – One bank said they would consider that, but they did not provide a quote for that. We used the best quote for our example; the APR is 2.5%. If the article is approved, the BOS & town administrator will check with various banks to get the best rate.*

- *Great project, but can the residents afford it? It means more upkeep and the retaining wall is falling apart. (Jeanette Stewart)*
- *Doesn't the town have the responsibility for the retaining wall? – No; it is TCCAP responsibility.*
- *There has been some talk by TCCAP about doing something different for the wall area, such as grading the hill and putting in riprap. Plowing the parking lot is difficult. Will the fences remain?(current property maintenance person) – We might be able to re-negotiate the agreement between the school and the library regarding fence, etc.*
- *Can answers for these questions be available before the March vote? Any additional information would be helpful for the voters.*
- *What if the town does not buy the building? – We explained some of the restrictions in the deed that limit who can buy it and what the building is used for.*
- *Tax value? Assessment? – over \$600,000. We hired an independent appraiser, who determined value at \$850,000 (similar office space; replace a similar building). No residential or commercial uses are allowed, so could not use income value method.*
- *Was the market value adjusted with consideration to the deed restrictions? Seems high considering the restrictions.*
- *Does TCCAP pay taxes? – [Paul said yes, but didn't know how much]*
- *Didn't the taxpayers pay to renovate the building? – No, TCCAP borrowed the money. Several buildings are currently under mortgage with TD Bank. TCCAP has substantial debt. Their renovation cost does not include their financing costs.*
- *Can the price be negotiated any further? -- We have made an offer. According to the realtor, the bank does not seem willing to go much lower than that.*
- *Is there a best estimate of what we will get for grants? – We are just beginning to explore that, especially for furnishing and renovation.*
- *When TCCAP started the process of buying the building, the citizens did not want to give it up; it was right in the middle of our school system. We now have the opportunity to get the building back, right next to our school system.*
- *Any repairs needed? – No; just renovations to make it into a library*
- *Does the elevator work? – It is a new elevator.*
- *What happens to the present library building? – It would be the decision of the Scribner trustees. It would go back to a community center, as stated in the will. The building is owned by the town, but managed by the Scribner trustees. The town would not be any worse off if the library moves out; the building would still be maintained.*