

Library Exploratory Committee Minutes
17 May 2022
Cornish Town Office

Present: Laura Cousineau (library trustee), Kathi Patterson (library trustee), Heidi Jaarsma, Dillon Gallagher, Caroline Storrs, Susan Chandler

Absent: Larry Dingee

Members of the community: Richard Scheuer, Bill Caterino, Nancy Newbold, Ella Jaarsma, Keith Mullane, Stephanie McAndrew.

Zoom members: Colleen O'Neill, Joanna Scharff, Chris Surunis

1. Call to order: 6:31 pm
2. March 29 minutes unanimously approved.
Members were encouraged to send any amendments to the April 19 minutes to Laura. She will send out the amended minutes for approval at our next meeting.
3. Caroline reported that our request to the Tasker Fund for \$500 to pay for the forum mailings was approved. A letter and the check will be sent to the Selectboard. The Selectboard will write a thank you.
4. Subcommittee: Reports and Review
 - a. Stowell Building: Larry was not present to report. The subcommittee has not yet met.
 - b. Tom Ladd Report: No report has been received by Heidi. She has spoken to him about coming up with suggestions for questions for both the forum and survey. Laura, Caroline and Susan stressed getting the report from Tom Ladd for our next meeting.
 - c. Community Room/Center: Laura and her subcommittee members—Cindy Heath, Chris Surunis, Stephanie McAndrew—have met twice. Their plan is to visit other libraries in the area to see their community rooms seeking to find standard policies as to how the community rooms are used. Members of the Exploratory Committee are invited to join them in these visits. The visits are for benchmarking and data gathering and for asking questions about potential extra operating and/or insurance costs. The subcommittee will visit a maximum of four libraries, taking pictures and visiting the libraries' websites.

Community member Nancy Newbold expressed her confusion thinking that the store library was to be a community center rather than a community room. Heidi stated that the gift stipulation references a community center noting hours and times and potential uses. She questioned whether taking on a community center would change the library's mission. Laura stated that any restrictions on what we can't do in the current library doesn't mean it isn't part of the mission. Nancy stressed that she doesn't want to walk away from the old library but that calling it a community room does help her understanding. Caroline added that architects

always build in a community gathering space in libraries and that the architects consulted by the interior/exterior committee were thrilled that the store already had a kitchen.

Heidi felt that the Library Trustees should review, with an eye to revising, their mission statement. The committee concurred.

5. Discussion of final phase and subcommittees needed:

i. Open Forum format and procedure:

Susan handed out a sheet with suggestions for the format and procedures of the upcoming forum in July. The Committee accepted the format with the understanding that this was preliminary and should members have suggestions, they should certainly voice them. Susan was going to be contacting Gwyn to discuss the handout and the forum.

Bill Caterino voiced his opinion that we should be communicating with our townspeople every week via ConnectCornish. We should be letting people know what's going on, what's coming and what the committee is doing. All agreed. Laura offered to take charge of that.

ii. Design and content of the post card:
Laura will write the verbiage.

iii. Design an electronic and paper survey:
Tom Ladd will help write survey questions. A question came up as to whether it would be via Survey Monkey as the Planning Board uses it. Laura said that she had experience with survey monkey. Kathi asked whether a meeting needed to be warned should two Library Trustees meet to work on projects for this committee. Heidi reiterated that warning involved two pieces of paper posted at the town offices and the library so it should not be a limiting factor.

iv. Final Report:
The Committee will write the final report with input from subcommittee reports. It would need to be approved by the entire committee.

v. Other:
Caroline brought up the idea of a short informational film much like Meriden's library film. A discussion ensued as to whose responsibility it is to "sell" the recommendation of the Committee. Heidi felt that the role of this committee is to determine feasibility and when the final report is submitted, the committee's work is over. Selling the plan can be achieved by the Friends group which Committee members may work with once the report is completed and the committee is disbanded.

Caroline and Laura will work on a timeline for what needs to be accomplished by the committee before town meeting. They will start in March 2023 and work backward.

The conversation continued with Richard Scheuer stating that any change to the Stowell Library would significantly reduce the function of the library. Caroline stated that if the ADA expert, Tom Ladd, said that the Stowell is not going to work, why are we spending money on a new plan. Dilly wanted to make sure that softcosts and honest operating costs are laid out and stated.

6. Discussion: Inclusion of all library trustees on any meeting with MA+KE
Kathi and Laura can be together in a meeting with MA+KE; they just have to warn the meeting. Richard Scheuer does not need to be a member of that subcommittee, as previously suggested.
7. Discussion of Larry's proposed goals:
Larry was not present and it was felt that the goals should be a subcommittee discussion.
8. Laura read a letter from Laird Klinger
9. No other business.
10. Next meeting: May 31 at 6:30 in the Town Offices

Meeting adjourned at 8:14pm (Minutes by Susan Chandler))

Thoughts about the Foundational Forum (suggested by Susan)

1. The Information sheet/Invitation sent to the public should be approved by the entire committee.
2. The Forum will be both for the dissemination of information and the gathering of it. Gwyn will be asked to be a facilitator of a discussion that has ground rules—such as raising hands, listen completely before responding, no idea is a bad idea, etc. It will not be a debate.

We should display all the sheets from previous forums and a scribe should be creating new sheets for all the ideas presented at this Forum.

We should have color coded dots so that at some point in the forum, participants will be asked to rank the thoughts/ideas/issues presented on the sheets. Red for most important, green for second most, etc.

3. The first part of the Forum should be for the dissemination of information. We should divide the information, vary the presenters, and limit the time each has.
 - 4 minutes on Background: Why the idea for the store as a library came about; the deficits of the Stowell Library; the previous plans; the formation of the Exploratory Committee; the new idea for new Stowell plans. – LAURA
 - 4 minutes on Colleen's offer and the creation of the CCI – COLLEEN
 - 4 minutes on legal issues – HEIDI
 - 4 minutes on the Interior/Exterior Committee's work – CAROLINE
 - 4 minutes on the plans by Banwell and how the Stowell Library's deficits are addressed – SUSAN
 - 4 minutes on highlighting the information gathered by previous forums – KATHI
4. Then the audience will be asked to share its thoughts on some possible questions (a scribe will be posting these ideas on charts).
5. Possible questions:
 - What are your wants and needs for a Cornish Library?
 - Are there things you'd like to change about the library?
 - Are there things you'd never like to see change about the library?
 - Are there programs you'd like to see provided by the library?
 - Are there programs you'd like to see discontinued by the library?
 - What questions do you have for the Exploratory Committee?
 - Do you have comments or suggestions about the process that the Exploratory Committee is engaged in?
 - What information do you need to make a decision as to whether the Cornish Library remains at the Stowell Library building or moves to the store building?

- What do you believe is the best way to receive that information—by forum, by Connect Cornish, by the town website, the library website, by postcard or newsletter....
- Members of the audience will be asked to rank the issues raised by each of these questions by use of color coded dots.