

## **2021 George H. Stowell Free Library Trustee Report**

2021 was a busy year for the library trustees. Complete meeting minutes are available on the library's page on the Town of Cornish, NH website at:

<<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1yg0sqWvDkKwJ4NxAl6-TArc5Zn47XRRQ>>

Highlights for the year included:

- In January, the library trustees approved the 2021 operating budget;
- In February, a neighbor's parking complaint reduced the already limited parking spaces;
- In April, the Planning Board approved the annexation of a piece of the Newton property for location of a well and septic system for the library;
- In June, the warrant article to raise and appropriate funds for the library's operating budget was approved by a town vote;
- In June, Coleen's O'Neil's official donation letter of the former Cornish General Store building to the Town for use as a new library and community center was read at Town Meeting;
- In July, the selectmen placed the purchase of the Newton property on hold. The \$6,500 purchase price is greater than \$5,000 and needs to be approved by a town vote;
- In July, the Callahan family donated \$10,000 toward the Building Fund and the Patterson Family Trust donated \$6,500 toward the purchase price of the Newton property;
- In July, the selectmen established a seven-member Library Exploratory Committee charged with conducting a feasibility study of relocating the Cornish Library (G. H. Stowell Free Library) to the Cornish General Store building,
- In August, the library trustees reviewed the recommendations from the Implementation Subcommittee of the Library Exploratory Committee (to have a conveyance document, to engage town counsel for legal answers to the questions that have been raised, and to hire a structural engineer to assess the structural needs for the building as a library). The trustees approved funding from the Library Building Fund for these expenditures;
- In September, the library trustees and members of the Library Exploratory Committee attended presentations from 3 architectural firms outlining their qualifications;
- In October, the library trustees hired Banwell Architects to complete preliminary drawings to present at a public forum before March 2022 Town Meeting. They also reviewed legal counsel's advice and discussed the disposition of the current building;
- In December, the library trustees learned that Collen O'Neil had decided to complete the renovations of her building through donations to a nonprofit and then donate the completely renovated building to the Town. The Town would need to agree to accept the renovated building through a warrant article before renovations would be started;
- In December, the trustees met to develop the 2022 operating budget that included increasing the operating hours to 15 hours/week, increasing the librarian's and library aides' pay rates, and increasing allocations for electricity and fuel oil to reflect the increased hours from 9 hours/week to 15 hours/week.

Respectfully submitted by the Library Trustees,  
Laura Cousineau, Kathi Patterson, Richard Scheuer