

**George H. Stowell Free Library Trustee Meeting**  
**August 24, 2023 6:00 p.m. at the George H. Stowell Free Library**

**PRESENT: Trustees** Kathi Patterson, Laura Cousineau, Marie De Rusha, **Librarian** Stephanie McAndrew, **Town Treasurer** Heidi Jaarsma, **Citizens** Karen Gillock and Susan Chandler

1. Call to order was at 6:01 by Laura.

2. Minutes of the June 19<sup>th</sup> meeting were moved by Laura, seconded by Marie voted and approved.

3. Librarian's Report:

Stephanie was away and said things ran smoothly while she was gone. Summer reading just finished up with story time every week. They had 55 children signed up for the summer reading program this year compared to 40 from last year. She is working on dates for fall programs.

4. Treasurer's Report:

- a. Checkbook balance on 8/21/23 was \$11,095.09
- b. Tasker Grant balance on 8/21/23 was \$275.03
- c. Donation Account balance on 8/21/23 was \$1,311.33
- d. Palmer Fund Account on 8/21/23 was \$1,006.76. This account was set up 30 years ago specifically for science and history interests.
- e. Unanticipated Funds (Non-lapsing) Account on 8/21/23 was \$2,892.90. Includes Tasker Grant monies.
- f. Building Funds Account on 8/21/23 was \$14,725.20
- g. Email from the Cornish Town Treasurer was discussed regarding the draft document of the auditor's Library Financial Report (see email). Discussion revolved around a discrepancy between the total monies spent in the audit compared to the total monies spent in the Town Report. According to the draft audit by Rowley & Associates for the year 2022 the total disbursements totaled \$75,027.90 (See Town of Cornish, New Hampshire report of the George H. Stowell Free Library year ended December 31, 2022 Draft Audit.) According to the Town Report for 2022 the total disbursements came to \$44,064.90. This makes a difference of \$30,963.00 the Town was not made aware of. According to the audit all funds are accounted for. Kathi stated unanticipated income is not included in the operating budget. Heidi Jaarsma suggested including disbursements of special funds in the annual report in a separate table as well as other funds including beginning and end year balance, income, and disbursements for an accurate account to present to the Town as per NH RSA 202-A which requires the disclosure of all receipts and expenditures. Heidi thought the Library could use the same model as the school, keeping all funds in a separate column to not only allow transparency but to avoid further confusion or misunderstanding. Heidi explained about the NH Public Deposit Investment Pool, which has a 5.4% interest rate and offered to help look into it for the Trustees. Laura would like to meet with the auditor to discuss category reporting. Heidi pointed out he is only in the area once a year. Laura made a motion that the special funds be included in a table for the town report which passed with unanimous vote. A motion was made for all three Trustees to

sign checks in case the other signer is indisposed. There are still only two signatures required. This vote passed in the affirmative, moved by Laura, seconded by Kathi.

#### 5. Old Business:

a. It was decided that Stephanie as Librarian would be the main contact for any media request, consulting the Trustees if need be. Any media interaction should be deferred to Stephanie by employees or volunteers. Kathi asked if opinion would be included in a response. Laura answered it wouldn't be opinion based, it would be based on policy, history and facts. Kathi stated how important yet difficult it is to not give your opinion on something. Laura responded it was from the perspective of the Library, as in what would the Library gain from the move.

b. Laura presented the idea for her Strategic Planning which constitutes developing a committee to sit during the interim phase between the transitioning of the Library to the Cornish General Store. The Trustees plan to review the Mission Statement and Vision statement, identify goals, stakeholders and set up subcommittees for goals along with developing a schedule. Laura stated this Strategic Planning Committee could last anywhere from two to five years. Laura stated the Strategic Plan was preparing for the move rather than focusing plans for the future of the George H. Stowell Free Library five years ahead. She would like to limit the plan to identify the issues to getting from where we are now to opening the Library at the Cornish General Store as the new Library in the first six months of operation and covering what needs to be done between now and getting started with the new program. She asked for consensus. Marie stated it's contingent upon the CCI raising the funds etc. and felt they were getting ahead of themselves and should hold off until funds for remodeling are met. Kathi said she "sort of agreed" but felt reviewing the Mission Statement and Vision Statement would be something to work toward as they are out of date and would help formulate a plan. Laura believes we had to start now because one always has to plan for the future and it would be irresponsible not to do so. Laura would like to form a committee made up of people who love the Stowell building and would like to see it maintained to think about the best way to proceed. Laura requested a vote to confirm the name 'A Library for All: Transitioning to Future Spaces for the new Cornish Library and Community Center' be accepted. Vote was in the affirmative, Laura moved, Kathi seconded. The Strategic Plan was also voted for in the affirmative, moved by Laura, seconded by Kathi.

c. The CCI update will be put on Connect Cornish per Laura. Marie stated she does not receive Connect Cornish. Laura said she would email her the update. The information can also be found on the CCI webpage.

#### 6. New Business:

- a. There were no new donations.
- b. Marie reported that much was to be learned through listening to other new Trustees' questions at the NHLTA New Trustee Conference. The manual was fully covered focusing mostly on the importance of keeping up with policies and reviewing policies throughout the year modifying where relative. The Right To Know Law (91A) was also a big topic.
- c. Marie brought in a few policy suggestions which included food and beverages, children in the Library, parking, other groups using the Library and solicitation.

d. As Laura was prepared to discuss food policy in the Library it was decided to table the discussion until the next meeting allowing everyone to read Marie's policy suggestions. It was decided at the next meeting we would discuss the food and parking suggestions Marie presented.

7. Other Business:

a. The paintings in the Library were appraised by Primex. The framed portrait of Jacob Foss in 1998 was valued at \$7,500, in 2023 the value is \$4,500. The unframed portrait of Jacob Foss was valued in 1998 at \$3,500, in 2023 the value is \$7,500. The portrait of Samuel Chase was valued at \$30,000 in 1998 and in 2023 is valued at \$15,000. All three paintings are insured for a total of \$27,000.

8. Correspondence:

a. The email request from the Town Treasurer regarding the signatory change was addressed in the Treasurer's report under section g.

b. The BOS sent notification of a list of Town buildings to be submitted to the New Hampshire State Registry of Historic Buildings. The George H. Stowell Free Library was included on the list along with the Cornish Town Hall, Cornish Town Office and the Old Selectmen's Office. Laura questioned Heidi as to why the Trustees weren't contacted directly when the decision was being considered. Heidi responded she was acting at the request of the BOS and the applications are submitted by the owner of the property. Kathi received the letter from the BOS regarding the historical building list and had forwarded it to Laura and Marie.

Stephanie was appointed as liason to the Friends of the Library.

9. Citizen Comments:

There were no citizen comments.

10. Next meeting date is Tuesday, September 19, 2023 at 6:00 in the George H. Stowell Free Library.

11. Adjournment was at 7:34 p.m. called by Laura

Respectfully submitted,  
Marie De Rusha  
Secretary