

Thayer Memorial Library Trustees Meeting
March 8, 2023
Meeting held via Zoom videoconference



Roll Call

Present were:

Emily Rose, Chair
David Spanagel, Vice Chair
Frank Streeter, Secretary (absent)
Ann Frantz
Karen Silverthorn
Adam Zand
Joe Mulé, Director, Ex Officio

Melissa Carlson, President of the Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library (FTML)

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm. Chair Rose called the roll of attendees and opened the meeting.

Past Minutes

postponed

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held Wednesday, May 10, 2023 at 6:30 PM. The Board's meetings will continue to be held over Zoom until further notice.

Chair's Report:

Chair Rose mentioned minor mistakes in the Town's budget report and her concerns that it mistakenly re-classified all library positions as full time, which is not the case. She noted that Trustees have been taking the required state ethics training online and considers the new training a better version. Vice-Chair Spanagel concurred.

Chair Rose brought up the subject of acknowledging deaths among significant donors or volunteers, and noted that a letter was going out to the family of Stephen Quill. Melissa Carlson of FTML said sometimes messages are returned because a Friend, etc., has died, so she will inform the Trustees so they, or FTML, may acknowledge a death. Vice-Chair Spanagel reminded the Board that at Annual Town Meetings a list is read of those who served the Town and have died, but he agreed that having the Library send messages to survivors is a good idea. He suggested that a brief note could be posted somewhere to acknowledge the shared loss, for example by a posting inside the Library or including a mention in the Library's annual report.

Chair Rose reported that Candidates' Night had been well attended by candidates and interested persons. There are contested races in areas where there previously had been none. The candidates were thoughtful and considerate, she said, adding that she

encouraged everyone to visit the Library in April. She related how one visit sometimes has led to regular visitor status.

Building:

Director Mulé asked Trustee Zand to talk about the previous day's feasibility study group meeting with the Spencer Preservation Group. (SPG) He said Lynne Spencer and her team did a great job setting the agenda and bringing materials that would inform Library staff. Trustee Zand reported that there have been meetings with various engineers for evaluating the building as built, how well it was constructed, etc., and to study the engineering that went into Memorial Hall. They have discussed current systems, including HVAC, in terms of how well they're holding up and what might need replacement. Vice-Chair Spanagel mentioned the design is one of several versions and that plans are still in a state of flux.

Chair Rose said after an hour's discussion it was agreed that SPG will bring engineers along to their next meeting, slated for April 26, to discuss various design concepts, with the goal of narrowing them down to what's most needed and most feasible. These designs will be reviewed at future meetings. The Library's primary goal is to make sure the building envelope is still secure.

The feasibility study group includes Chair Rose, Vice-Chair Spanagel, Trustee Zand, Director Mulé, Town Planner Jasmine Farinacci and/or Town Administrator Kate Hodges. Director Mulé stated, "It's a tough process—thinking, repairing, replacing what needs replacing. The engineer's schematic seeks to define the library plans for handling problems and potential." He noted that the Library and its consultants will talk much more about this and will discuss some of the ideas with staff members for their input. Director Mulé said the engineers' and architects' reports have been very interesting and show that Library has a good structure, but some important matters have been identified and will need to be considered. Topics to be discussed with staff include a surveillance system, the location of the circulation desk, and the museum. "Down the road, we will emerge with plans for building systems to be efficient and up to date," said Chair Rose.

Director Mulé said the Library has an application for a \$50,000 matching grant ready to go, but needs to get it re-voted. "Otherwise, we can't fulfill what was voted on."

Vice-Chair Spanagel reported that windows project is in hiatus for the moment.

Memorial School Reuse Committee (MSRC):

Trustee Frantz had no update as the Chair of the MSRC had postponed their meeting until after the upcoming Annual Town Meeting.

Advocacy and Fundraising:

Vice-Chair Spanagel reported that the Fundraising Subcommittee met on March 28 with eight in attendance. He asked the fund-raising committee to assist with set-up for an April 1 event at library. Attendees were very interested in the speaker, Pastor Weems, and the group will consider potential future speakers.

Vice-Chair Spanagel reported that FTML has purchased a new software library that allows interface with various of the Library's systems, including the event calendar, meetings, use of study rooms, museum passes, modules, and statistics on library use. The system allows users to go in and reserve museum assets and rooms directly, which frees up staff time.

Policy:

A vote on the revised Meeting Room Policy was postponed until next meeting. The Board discussed policies with regard to behavior and unattended children.

Community Preservation Act (CPA):

Trustee Silverthorn said she would not have an update until after the votes on the CPA's articles at the Annual Town Meeting

Director's Report:

Assistant Library Director Rachel Rosengard has reorganized the reference room, weeding and consolidating its contents, which has opened up space in the room. Library staff will relocate the stacks, which are now stowed in the Trustees meeting room.

Assistant Library Director Rosengard set up hourly bathroom checks to safeguard against future anti-semitic graffiti, as was found recently on a poster.

Director Mulé is organizing the budget to be on Library's webpage before Town Meeting. As it seems many residents don't yet know about the Town's planned override vote, the Board discussed ways to get the word out. Director Mulé is working with Town department heads to put together a pamphlet for distribution, explaining all.

Director Mulé reported on the Library's budget. The Library received a gift of \$3,200 from Assabet and an additional \$3,000 from FTML. The Library has a balance of \$2,180 left from its appropriated funds. He reported that the Library doesn't have enough money left in the budget to last until July 1, so that probably means the Library won't have much appropriated funds left for supplies and services and may need to request more money from FTML to support the book budget. If an override doesn't pass, the Library could lose its ability to attract grants like the Rosemary Davis grant, which brings in \$7-8000 for programs each year.

FTML President Melissa Carlson and Vice-Chair Spanagel are working with a group of about eight people who seek to get people to know there is an override and promote all the reasons why it's important. Since there's no longer a widespread e-mail blast to townspeople, the group discussed ways to get out message regarding the override, and upcoming town meeting through schools, Facebook pages, town cable television, etc.

New Business:

Chair Rose said she'd like to coordinate a staff appreciation event, and asked the Board to consider where and when. Director Mulé is to pick a date.

Trustee Zand reported talking about the Library with the World Farmers group near the Post Office. They are willing to meet with the Library about creating a seed library. Director Mulé is in favor, as is the Board (informally) but need further details. Trustee Zand will research this further and will report back.

Trustee Zand also mentioned that it might be interesting to organize a couple of field trips to other local libraries to see about new ideas for our Library. For instance Leicester Public Library has nice organizational layout and Oxford Public Library has a diorama museum.

Adjournment:

There being no further business for the Board to consider,

Vice-Chair Spanagel moved to adjourn; Trustee Silverthorn seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 4-0 vote.

The Board adjourned and the Zoom meeting ended at 8:32 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann Frantz, Secretary pro tem

List of Documents:

Agenda

Chair's Report

Director's Report

TML Fundraising and Advocacy Report