

**Thayer Memorial Library Trustees meeting**  
**June 14, 2023**  
**Meeting held via Zoom videoconference**



Roll Call:

Present were:

Emily Rose, Chair

David Spanagel, Vice Chair

Ann Frantz, acting as secretary, in the absence of Secretary Frank Streeter

Karen Silverthorn

Adam Zand

Joe Mulé, Director, Ex Officio

Melissa Carlson, president of the Friends of Thayer Memorial Library.

The meeting was called to order at 6:38 p.m. Chair Rose called the roll of attendees and opened the meeting.

Past minutes:

After reviewing the minutes from the May 10 meeting, the Trustees voted to accept the minutes as amended in a 5-0 vote.

Next meeting:

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be at 6:30 P.M., Wednesday, July 12.

Chair's Report:

Chair Rose summarized a visit to the Beaverton City Library in Oregon she made, commenting on their YA space and other features. The board will discuss proposed Young Adult space later in the meeting.

Building:

Trustee Adam Zand, described a trip by several board members to visit two other libraries, specifying some attention to YA facilities in each. Chair Rose, Vice Chair Spanagel and Trustee Silverthorn, were also at the May 31 trip along with Amy Jamieson of the Spencer Preservation Group. They received detailed tours at Leicester Public Library and Oxford Free Public Library. Vice Chair Spanagel has distributed an email recap of the day. Chair Rose stated the group's interest in seeing how the libraries use their spaces, pointing out the Leicester Library's dedicated YA space, and charging stations placed around the library. The group discussed challenges of small libraries with Director Suzanne Hall of the Leicester Public Library.

Trustee Silverthorn mentioned challenges the three libraries share, especially in the area of attracting a teen audience. In one visit, even with school located near the library, there is difficulty getting kids there, a trend that puzzles all librarians, she said.

Chair Rose also said she realized that Thayer Memorial Library is lucky to have the Friends and a sizable staff to work with. Some of the smaller libraries lack that, she said.

Board Chair Rose requested that Library Director Mulé talk about ideas for a Young Adult (YA) section in the library. Director Mulé has sent Trustees a memo re considerations for this topic. In it, he submitted several drafts of designs where such a section might be located, and the board discussed pros and cons of each location, and a fourth.

Director Mulé suggested the board take a non-binding vote on prioritizing a space for YA use. While the Trustees won't immediately seek funding for the space, in light of the larger call for building needs, systems, carpeting, etc., a location decision would move the Library closer to completing its feasibility study requirements.

The Trustees should prioritize a plan that would require funding for small construction, etc., and would basically mean moving around stacks on the main floor. Chair Rose stated that plans could be reenvisioned down the road. She stated that she wants to prioritize a "safe" space for teens in the Library: a place to hang out, see friends, have a little fun.

Vice Chair Spanagel moved to approve a dedicated YA space and the board voted in unison to support it. Spanagel further moved to recommend a spot on the first floor, seconded by Trustee Silverthorn. A 5-0 vote resulted.

(A document titled Floor.pdf illustrates where this spot might go.)

#### School Re-use Committee:

Trustee Frantz reported that the committee is pleased that voters at Town Meeting approved funding. The group is awaiting confirmation from the town that the building will be used for recreational, not residential, purposes. Once that is clear, the group will move to an engineering study phase.

#### Fund-Raising Committee:

Vice Chair Spanagel shared information regarding fundraised and Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds approved at Town Meeting as it relates to completing the windows project. While focused on the children's room, it might be extended to all windows in need of replacement throughout the building. Fundraising had paused pending outcome of ATM.

#### Director's Report:

Director Mulé and Chair Rose led a discussion regarding use of meeting rooms and how it's to be set up, as online reservations take place. There was some discussion of room use priorities, responsibility of users' conduct, police patrol, etc., before the group decided to revisit meeting use policy and submit a revised policy at a future meeting, as the issue does not require an immediate vote.

Library Director Mulé reported on an all-day visit to Wachusett Regional High School showing Civil War arms, tools, and artifacts to more than 150 students and adults. The Civil War collection, he said, was a hit with students.

To assist the board, Director Mulé submitted a copy of last year's performance review as a guide for his 2023 evaluation, due to be filed. Each board member will review the checklist of performance criteria

and submit their opinion and any commentary to Chair Rose, who will summarize for next meeting.

Director Mulé updated the Library's status as regards American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. With \$250,000 in ARPA funds the Library now has \$300,000 including what has been fundraised or appropriated at Annual Town Meeting. Director Mule discussed with Town Administrator Kate Hodges the possibility of using a portion of ARPA funds on its windows replacement project, to supplement what has already been raised. ARPA funds must be spent by the end of the year.

The town has insufficient information about the schools' building project including its cost at present, and the Library has to consider what impact that may have on advancing a capital request on behalf of the Library's building needs.

A joint meeting between the Trustees, Select Board, and Finance Committee will discuss the scope, cost and the need of a debt exclusion of the Library building project to present Library building projects to the public. No date for this meeting has been established, yet.

Vice Chair David Spanagel suggested going ahead with windows project with available funds, to illustrate what Library intends to do to bring the Library up to contemporary use and climate productivity standards. He suggested isolating the windows project from future funding project requests. ARPA money may be used on windows, he said. Priority is the children's area. Director Mulé suggested that the Trustees not mix up windows with other, separate projects in use of ARPA funds. He suggested getting a bid out now to complete the project with ARPA funds.

#### Friends Report:

Melissa Carlson reports that Friends is still seeking a treasurer, with several good potential candidates. Member Judy Elwell will step into the role for about four months, seeing the group through the annual book sales. She was voted acting treasurer as of July 1.

Friends is considering a new membership drive, she said. Also, she will remain chair for another year.

The group partnered with Children's Librarian Maren Caulfield on the Summer Reading Program, she said, and is sponsoring Summer Concerns on the Greene, beginning in June.

#### Adjournment:

Karen Silverthorn moved to adjourn, at 8:23 P.M., with David Spanagel seconding.