

**Moultonborough Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
September 19, 2024**

Present: John Buckley, Chair; Sally Bartlett, Vice Chair; Sherry Wakefield, Treasurer; Nancy Cole, Jane Harrington, Peter Olsen, Jack Weekes; Bob LaFlamme, Alternate; Kim LeFebvre, Alternate; Brittany Durgin, Library Director; Cristina Ashjian, Chair of the Heritage Commission.

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 am and the Pledge of Allegiance recited.

Review and approval of minutes: Motion to accept the August 15, 2024 meeting minutes made by Sherry, seconded by Peter, unanimously approved.

Treasurer's report: Peter identified a number that was mis-totaled and will be corrected. Sally then motioned for acceptance of the corrected Treasurer's report, Nancy seconded, unanimously approved.

Sherry noted that several CDs will expire in November. She will share reinvestment options for consideration at the Trustees' October 17th meeting.

Three unrestricted donations were received in the past month for \$35, \$46 and \$100. Jane motioned for acceptance, Sally seconded, unanimously approved.

Library Director's report: Brittany proposed switching from the Library's current oil vender to 603 Oil & Propane Co., who provided a \$2.89/gallon quote for the upcoming heating season. This could save \$1,300 annually and represent an improvement in customer service. Bob noted that oil prices could continue to drop, potentially below \$2.89/gallon, and that we should explore the possibility of downside price protection. Bob and Brittany will follow up with 603 to request such price protection and finalize our fuel plans.

Brittany and Trustees agreed to host a staff appreciation gathering on October 17, immediately following the Trustees meeting.

Brittany led a discussion about the need to improve lighting in the Library's basement on the north side, where there are numerous storage shelves. Lakeshore Electric has agreed to perform the work by mid-November. John motioned that up to \$1,300, sourced from Trustee funds, be authorized for this lighting upgrade; Jane seconded, unanimously approved.

FY26 budget review: Brittany and Sherry shared a proposed FY25/26 Library budget for discussion and approval. The proposed FY25/26 Operating Budget represents a +7.5% increase versus the approved FY24/25 Operating Budget. Key discussion points included the rationale for the +7.3% salaries and wages increase; and whether the programs budget was adequate. Sherry motioned for approval of the proposed FY25/26 budget, Jane seconded, unanimously approved.

Sherry noted the Library's capital reserve fund total of \$41,000. The group discussed the increasingly imminent need to replace the Library's roof, which could cost upwards of \$90,000 if done this year, or \$100,000+ next year or beyond.

Next steps: Brittany to submit proposed Operating Budget and Capital Improvement appropriation to the Town Office, and with Sherry and John, prepare for sessions with ABC and CIPC.

Strategic planning: Brittany mentioned that community survey findings were shared with the Strategic Planning Committee just prior to the Trustees meeting. A quick skim of the findings reveals insightful information. The Strategic Planning Committee will fully review findings with our research partner Sean, then discuss findings and implications with the full Trustee group at the October 17 meeting.

Brittany and Bob attended a recent “neighbors helping neighbors” meeting with community leaders at the Methodist Church. This forum will reconvene every two weeks. The connections made and information shared will be useful in developing the Library’s strategic plan. As further input to the strategic plan, Brittany and Peter will soon facilitate several input sessions with community representatives

Committee reports:

Personnel: [No topics needing discussion]

Technology: Piper Webs, the company that hosts and supports our website content management system, is going out of business. A replacement will need to be identified for the Library by October 2025.

Consolidated Communications will provide a quote for an upgrade to the Library’s phone system to allow call forwarding to another line so callers won’t get busy signals.

Grounds maintenance: Nancy observed that the Library grounds need much work. Fewer volunteers this past spring/summer resulted in much growth that needs to be cut back. Nancy is awaiting a quote from M&L Landscaping to do this work. John motioned that up to \$2,000 of Trustee funds pay for this landscaping work; Jack seconded; unanimously approved. Nancy also noted that Miracle Farms will soon be removing vestiges of annual plantings. Peter has a source that can provide three Christmas wreaths for the holidays for \$150, total. Trustees were supportive.

Art: Nancy has scheduled art exhibitors for the program room for the next year.

Capital improvements: The building committee (Brittany, John, Peter, Bob) will meet soon to discuss capital needs and next steps.

Friends: Jane encouraged the Trustees to help create awareness of the October 16th Author’s Luncheon, featuring historical fiction novelist William Martin, to be held at Chase House in Meredith. This is a key Friends fundraiser and strong attendance is desired. Information is available on the Library’s website.

New business: Brittany provided an overview of MPL’s Library of Things. Usage of the items is low, suggesting an opportunity to create greater awareness among patrons. There are no plans to expand the collection’s inventory of “things”, though recent community survey findings could suggest opportunities.

Old business:

Library sign: John recapped several recent milestones on the electronic sign project, including the initial sharing meeting with the Planning Board, the Planning Board’s suggestion to create a co-signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and a planned September 25 Planning Board meeting where the Library’s electronic sign will be the first agenda item. At the Sept. 25 public meeting, John will briefly outline the project and the public will have an opportunity to comment.

Rather than an MOU, Trustees felt a letter from the Library would better serve the purpose of documenting our intent with the new sign. It was felt the Planning Board won't be insistent on an MOU at this point.

Cristina Ashjian, Chair of the Heritage Commission, then addressed the Trustees and Director, and stated that the Heritage Commission is "gravely disappointed" with the plan to put up an electronic sign, believing electronic signs don't fit the town's aesthetics, that the sign seems like an "unnecessary expenditure", its location would be "inappropriate", and is overall "an affront to the community". She was thanked for her input.

Jack raised the possibility of pausing work with the sign vendor until after the September 25 Planning Board public hearing, to manage expenses in case there is a change in direction based on community input. The Trustees expressed strong commitment to proceeding without pause.

Furniture: Brittany reported that the new yellow chairs in the Periodicals Room have been well received. Eight matching chairs are on order for the adult computer room, and the puzzle table may be moved back from the fireplace. Consideration is being given to changing the blinds/shades in the Periodicals Room.

The meeting adjourned at 10:52 am on a motion by Sally, seconded by Jane, and approved by all.

The next Trustee meeting will be on Thursday, October 17, 2024 at 9:00 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Weekes