

Minutes

Trustees of the M.N. Spear Memorial Library

April 12, 2021

Attendance: Director: Mary Anne Antonellis, Co-Chairs: Michele Regan-Ladd & Kate Cell, Michele Cunningham, Brad Foster, Savanna Ouellette Absent: Melanie DeSilva Guest: Tim Logan.

Tim Logan is running for open Trustee position. Kate Cell, whose term is up, will be running again for the position.

Meeting convened at 7:37. Mary Anne shared the Covid-19 disclaimer.

March Minutes approved unanimously with edits.

April Director Report Approved with edits.

Update on Job Description - The town Personnel committee is in the process of reviewing salaries and proposals for job descriptions. These proposals will be voted on at Town meeting in 2022. We hope to hear from the Personnel Committee by our June Trustee Meeting, and if not, the trustees will request a meeting with the Personnel Committee to discuss our proposal for the Library Director Position. Mary Anne has worked on the job description and has one final task to match up the document with town categories and make sure all are covered.

Begin Discussion for Town Meeting, June 12, 2021. At that meeting we will introduce the town to our plan to apply for the MBLC Pilot Grant Project. Following that meeting we plan to conduct 3 focus groups followed by a survey during the summer. We will be working on the Long-Range Plan which is due October 1, 2021. Mary Anne has already investigated this and spoke with two potential people who conduct focus groups - Barbara Friedman former director of Irving Library, and Abby Strauss who owns a long-range planning business called Maverick and Boutique. Mary Anne has already received a proposal from Abby for \$688.00 to conduct 2 focus groups. This money will come from the State Grant and the Friends and there will likely be enough to do a third meeting with Abby, as well. The purpose of the focus groups is to gather information for Long-Range plan and subsequent Special Town Meeting which will be required for the initial approval if Shutesbury is chosen for the pilot. The subsequent 2022 Town Meeting will be for the approval of the town's contribution which will be 25% of the approximately \$3,000,000 grant. Only 1 town will be selected. The timeline is quite fast with the application due this spring and selection in July.

We feel we are in an excellent position to be chosen for this pilot. We not only have town land available but will have raised nearly \$500,000 which includes the money we have been receiving from the town each year (\$25,000 per year), precisely for the building of a new library.

Mary Anne will send us the previous survey so that we can discuss the finer points of the new survey at our May meeting.

The Trustees are very excited about this project, have a solid understanding of the work that needs to be done, and agree that we should go wholeheartedly toward the pilot. This process is quite streamlined and we are well prepared. Mary Anne will do the bulk of the work and we are here to assist. This Pilot Grant is more accessible to towns who have not been able to participate in the larger grants, and is focuses on need, new construction and small libraries only. This is a process of discovery for the MBLC. They are eager for a willing participant that already has some pieces in place and are willing to provide lots of support.

Our approach this time will be different than before and focused on what we have been hearing from the people of the town regarding services in general and during the pandemic. We have one of the highest rates of circulation in the state! Finance Committee and Capital Planning are ready to approve this year's contribution at town meeting and we will bring this proposal and plans regarding the process to the town then. Kate will bring ideas for strategies and categories for messaging to our May meeting and we will bring ideas for testimonials from town meeting members and library enthusiasts. The Letter of Intent will already have been submitted and Town Meeting is our chance to bring this exciting opportunity to our town.

Next Meeting – Monday, May 10th 2021, 7:30 – 9:00.

Agenda:

- Approvals
- Preparation for Town meeting
- Long Range Plan

April Director Report

M.N. Spear Memorial Library
10 Cooleyville Road
Shutesbury, MA 01072
Mary Anne Antonellis, Director
April 10, 2021

Long-range plan

Our current long-range plan expires at the end of September. Here is a link to the Strategic Planning resource page on the MLS website, <https://guides.masslibsystem.org/strategicplanning>.

These are the parts of a plan as defined by the MBLC. I participated in an MLS workshop about strategic planning on April 6th and my notes from that event are slightly different so I have asked for clarification.

The following must be in your plan to meet the MBLC's requirements:

- a vision and mission statement
- an assessment of user needs
- multi-year goals and objectives
- a brief description of the planning methodology used
- approval of the governing board
- annually, by December 1st of each year, an update of the action plan for the following state fiscal year (July to June). For example, a plan submitted by December 1st, 2016 will cover activities from July 2017 to June 2018.

New Small Library - Pilot Project Discussion

April 9, 2021

Shutesbury representatives in attendance

Library Director, Mary Anne Antonellis, Library Trustees Michele Regan-Ladd, Michele Cunningham, Savanna Ouellette and Brad Foster, Friends of the Library executive committee members Penny Jaques and Susie Mosher -Susie Mosher is also a member of the Finance Committee - Finance Committee member Jim Hemenway, and Candidate for Selectboard, Eris Stocker.

Seven towns were represented: Shutesbury, Oakham, Otis, Peru, Richmond, Blandford, and one other I didn't write down.

The meeting was hosted by Lauren Stara and Andrea Bunker, library building specialists at the MBLC.

Small towns with populations under 2,000 and in central and western Massachusetts are under-represented in MBLC library construction projects.

The MBLC has identified two problem areas hindering small towns from accessing the program. Capacity – the ability to manage a major capital project and resources – the financial ability to fund a project.

They are in the process of creating a more streamlined application process for future grant rounds.

Instead of a planning grant and construction grant, the two will be combined into one grant. A letter of intent accepts a town into the process instead of a building program.

For the Small Library Pilot, the MBLC takes a more hands-on approach, bringing the selected project through design and construction as long as the town approves the matching funds.

The Pilot will cover 75% of eligible costs, including planning costs.

The town's 25% percent doesn't have to be all cash. The value of the land can count toward the town's match. There are 2 potential parcels in town for locating the library. We will spend time next meeting pulling our thoughts together for our Town Meeting next month.

The Pilot is for new construction only.

The goal of the project is to be as economical as possible.

They anticipate announcing the project this spring and selecting a project by July.

They have \$3,000,000 set aside for the project.

They anticipate a fast application process of only weeks and six-month design process.

The MPLCP covers fixed costs. Landscaping and paving, equipment and furniture are not covered.

The town will have to vote to pursue the project and to fund it.

The next full grant round is not anticipated until 2026.

Library Giving Day

As of Saturday afternoon, these are the LGD results.

107 online donations -\$9,962.46 (this is after fees)

27 checks and cash donations - \$3,970

3 challenge donors - \$6,000

Total - \$19,942.

This is nearly \$5,000 higher than our last Library Giving Day.

Cultural Council Grants Awarded for 2021

Diverse Peoples Storywalk® \$800

Introduction to Gentle Yoga \$640

Jewelry Making with Jeannette \$400

Ukulele Musical Play Along \$900

Introduction to Needle Felting \$450

Simple Soap Making \$500

Take-Home Kits

March – Robots

Adults volunteers created ten cardboard robots. The robots were adopted by children in the community. The children have promised to read to their robots!

April - Poetry Appreciation Kits

During April we are making poetry appreciation kits for adults and children.

The kits include a treat and a poem. We distributed 50 kits during the first week and have prepared 60 kits for week two.

A local girl scout who is working on her Silver Award is helping to assemble the kits.

Padlets

Thanks for the same girl scout, and volunteer, Aidan Thomas-Paquin, our collection of Padlets has grown.

<https://sites.google.com/site/mnspearmemoriallibrary/padlets>

Spear Trust

There is \$70,664.94 in the non-expendable trust.

Ryan, the Town Treasurer says the following.

The trust is in Bartholomew which earned around 2 percent. The commonwealth of Mass allows investments in state approved vehicles. The banks paid on average .10% so the trust money is already invested in the best that it can earn. The low earnings are symptoms of our current economic climate which was fueled greatly by the pandemic. Per Mass General Law you are not allowed to invest in the market, hedge funds etc.

Staff vaccine status and allowing in-person visits.

I will be fully vaccinated May 11th. I think we can start with two days a week of in-person visits and see how it goes shortly after that. I have a long weekend planned for the weekend of May 14th and it seems best to not begin in-person visits with substitute staff, so I will plan to begin in-person visits during the week of May 17th.