

Friends of the Keene Public Library Executive Board Meeting January 13, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

Present: Jill Cielinski, Marilyn Gemmell, Michelle Fuller, Sally Rinehart, Paul Ledell, David Meader, Mike Chelstowski, Marti Fiske, Kathleen Kennedy Burke, Lou-Anne Beauregard, Gail Zachariah

Absent: Jen English, Kathleen Chertok, Jan Manwaring

Secretary's Report: The December 2020 minutes were emailed to all board members prior to this meeting for review and tonight there were no corrections. *David Meader made the motion to accept the minutes as presented. Sally Rinehart seconded the motion.*

Treasurer's Report: The December 2020 financial reports were emailed to all board members prior to this meeting for review. Marilyn picked up 17 donations from the mail at the Library today. She reminded us that we operate on a cash system, so donations mailed in December but received/processed in January will appear in the January 2021 report.

The bond invoice was also received today and the cost increased by \$50, to \$237 annually. Coverage had been increased during the campaign, but now that the campaign has ended, the coverage level could be reviewed before next year's renewal.

Renewal for postal permit was received in the mail today, at \$235 for the year. The newsletter may be moving online and the annual appeal has stamps applied to each envelope. Unsure if we use this enough to warrant the cost, so will renew for this year and then keep track this year how much it's used and what the cost savings actually are. Another consideration is the work entailed in obtaining a permit in the future, if needed, should the decision be to allow the permit to lapse.

Marilyn is beginning to compile the information for the 2020 annual 990 report and has contacted the accountant to be put in the queue.

100+ Women raised \$275 in personal donations from their members. FKPL was not selected as one of the chosen organizations in the November round.

Marilyn provided a museum pass summary with this month's financial reports, which had been compiled by Susan Hansmeier. Usage of passes started off strong for the calendar year, and then the pandemic occurred.

There were no questions regarding the December financial reports. *David Meader made the motion to accept the financial reports as presented. Mike Chelstowski seconded the motion. All approved.*

Heberton Annual Review:

The long-term account earned 9.94% for 2020, with a \$229,368 balance at the end of December 2020. The short-term account was up 4.16% for 2020, due to the account being mainly cash for most of the year. Since 2009, the long-term account has earned 8.7% and the short-term account has earned 7.71%. The recently approved changes to the investment of the short-term account have all been completed.

Paul was able to find out that our portion of the Heberton annuity is \$2 million.

Director's Report:

February is the month to compile the Library operating budget. Marti has not yet received guidance on timeline from city manager and the council is still working on capital budgets.

Over the past few weeks, they have been working quite heavily on policies. Some are new policies, but also as updating existing policies, ensuring they are up-to-date and align with current practices.

At the January 20 meeting of the city Trustees of Trust Funds, Marti will seek approval for a project to digitize historical *Keene Sentinel* newspapers. Marti's been working with the historical society and state library for this digitization. The historical society is contributing \$7,500 and the Library is looking to contribute \$6,000, with almost all of it coming from the city held trust funds, primarily an historic trust fund for genealogy and local research.

The Library is starting work on their strategic planning process with the first meeting of committee coming up soon. They will initially begin with a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) with the staff and coming up with some staff-based goals for this year and then doing the full strategic plan after the pandemic is done.

February 24 will be a staff in-service day. The day will include work on the SWOT analysis with staff, the first portion of a two-part training on implicit bias in customer service, a session for how to learn new skills while under stress, and time for individual projects and professional development.

Library will have tax forms available through curbside service, once they have been received. They were ordered recently. Another option is to download the forms from the IRS website and remote print the forms to the Library. Patrons can then pickup the printed forms through curbside service.

Mike asked about current usage of library curbside service. Mondays are generally busiest. Some usage is families seeking materials for homeschooling or remote learning.

An email was sent to board members on 12/23/2020 and again on 1/12/2021 with details about the current noise issue in Heberton Hall. This has been problematic for groups using the rooms, particularly musical events. Sound quality assessment has been completed and the decibel levels are significantly higher than should be for that type of performance space. The HVAC installer, who installed to the design specs, did install some lining to minimize noise, but that has not resulted in significant reduction of decibel level.

The next step would be a design assessment to determine redress of situation and what needs to be changed. The cost is \$2,500 and the proposal is to utilize Heberton cost center to cover the expense. Use of these funds requires approval by Trustees, Friends, and City. The main revenue into this fund is rental from Cheshire TV, at \$1,800 monthly.

David Meader moved that \$2,500 from the Heberton cost center for an assessment of the HVAC system design for sound and quality improvement. Paul Ledell seconded the motion. All approved.

David Meader moved that the City attorney seek recompense from the appropriate party/parties for the cost of the system design for sound and quality improvement. Paul Ledell seconded the motion. All approved.

Trustee's Report:

The Sally Miller retirement event went well. Donations in Sally's honor were being directed to the NH Charitable Fund, as Sally had been instrumental in establishing a fund for the Keene Public Library through NHCF.

The policy committee is working on updating its manual. Sometimes there are multiple versions - they can differ from online to paper. There is one policy that pertains to the Friends (11.000). Trustees would like to change "may" to "shall" regarding having a Trustee serve as a liaison on the board of the FKPL, but wanted to check with the Friends before making that change. Jill noted the new FKPL by-laws will need to be reviewed to ensure alignment in this wording.

Committee List: Jill noted she sent out a list of potential committees with this meeting's agenda. Hopefully we can review prior to next meeting and discuss then.

Casino/Gaming Opportunity: Paul had previously provided detail about this opportunity to receive funds from a local casino as a fundraiser. Kathleen Kennedy Burke noted there is a Trustee policy (8.005 in print version - Finances) that approval from the Trustees is needed from any organization that intends to raise funds on behalf of the Library. Kathleen noted Sally Miller had mentioned there is a letter of agreement between the Trustees and FKPL, but has been unable to locate that document. Kathleen will continue to research. There are potential concerns by the Trustees for this particular fundraiser, as gambling is an addiction.

Discussion ensued regarding of vagueness of the policy and if it is in fact a current policy and, if so, how it impacts the FKPL.

Mike Chelstowski moved that we not pursue the gaming opportunity until we clarify the Trustees policy. David Meader seconded the motion. The majority approved the motion, with one opposition.

Marilyn has a copy of the March 3, 1983 articles of agreement filed with State of NH, when the Friends formed as an organization. Article II discusses the purpose of the organization, which is to support the Library.

Marti will bring this issue to the Finance Committee and the City attorney for guidance. Marti suggested the Friends could contact the state library for any information or guidance for Friends groups related to this topic. Marti will provide Jill with contact information for the state library. There is also a national organization for friends of library groups, but the issue may be more of a state law issue.

Library Giving Day: In the past few weeks, Marti had emailed the board with information about this year's Library Giving Day, April 7, 2021, with links to information and sample campaign materials. When the annual appeal letter was sent last time, there had been discussion of doing a second appeal letter to attempt to replace some of the revenue lost from the cancellation of recent book sales. This giving day could be a good opportunity to send another appeal.

One item noted in the giving day materials was using a match challenge to encourage donations. The suggestion included soliciting a local business to provide the match. Michelle suggested that another option is to have the board members provide the match funds, should the amount that any board members were planning to donate total a reasonable match amount. Some donors prefer to give to organizations where board members contribute financially themselves; it can indicate engagement by the board. More discussion on this topic will be at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.