

**Shedd Porter Memorial Library Minutes
February 16, 2023 Meeting
Approved**

Present: Carol Reller, Alyson Montgomery, Susan Norlander, Kathy Torrey

Alternate: Joe Levesque

Guests: None present

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 PM. On a motion made by Susan and seconded by Carol, the minutes from the January 26th meeting were approved.

Librarian's Report –January Income

- Esther Luther Donation: \$30
- Hollie & Gordon Kemp: \$100 (\$38 book replacement, \$62 donation)
- Non-Resident Fees: \$60
- Miscellaneous Fees & Donations: \$11.65
- Other Library book purchase: \$10
- Bathroom Project Donations: \$400 (approximate – change not counted yet)

Children's Happenings at the Library

- We should hear shortly about the CLiF Revive Your Literacy Grant.
- Alyson has begun work on the CLiF Summer Readers Grant. This grant provides programming in our summer reading lineup as well as free books for attendees to keep.
- Team Read had a great meeting in early February and will meet again in March – the March meeting is listed in the Alstead Primary School newsletter. Excitement is already building through promotion at Storytime.
- Lindsey Elsesser is working with Jennifer Aiken at Vilas to identify some candidates that might form a Middle Grades Book Club. This would be a great addition to our Youth Programming.
- Storytime and Outreach to the schools continue.

Adult Happenings at the Library

- The Page Turners Facebook group is now a year old and over 70 members strong with an in-person Book Club! Lindsey and Alyson are thrilled! This group has far exceeded our expectations in terms of members and online activity – but it is also exceeding expectations on patron visits to the library, new cards, and checkouts.
- The Page Turners Book Group met and had a lively discussion. Each time the group meets, we meet new faces, and it has been fun. The next book is *Band of Sisters* and everyone, Page Turner or not, is welcome.

Administrative News

- The Strategic Planning Committee held its first Community Conversation. Alyson is working on developing the community survey with the help of Priscilla Sawa. More on this below from Kathy.
- Alyson continues to work on the State Report.

Circulation

Circulation was good in January – 1419 items! – a 14% increase from the 1236 items in January 2022. We are on the right track. The percentages are below.

- NHDB: 32%
- Adult Collection: 21% (38% of the total was Non-Fiction)
- Youth Collection: 29%
- DVDs: 4.5%
- Audio & Magazine: 1%

- ILL: (73 in; 86 out): 11%

Alyson Vacation and Sick Time

None Used. 18 days (3 hold-over) remain.

Treasurer's Report and Finances

January and February income and expense reports, reflecting December and January, were not yet available.

Building and Maintenance**Bathroom and Hallway:**

Susan has reached out to Barry and Ciaran but there is nothing new to report.

Front Door:

A full fix to recurring problems is still pending.

Windows:

Again, nothing new to report.

Gutters and Roof:

Nothing to report.

Other Buildings and Maintenance Items:

Alyson previously emailed Mary about the lightbulb that is out in the front lawn lanterns. No work has been done and the bulbs are still out, this has now been multiple months. Susan will reach out again to Mary about getting the bulbs replaced and to insure contacting her in the future is the appropriate way to request any repairs or needed work.

Old Business**Grants and Facilities**

Kathy is strategizing the best approach for grant applications for a condition assessment report. LCHIP requires a condition assessment report as part of an application for larger grants such as for the roof work, window repair etc. It has been suggested that we work with a restoration specialist along with an architect (Ciaran Lavery).

As part of a grant application for this condition assessment report, likely through the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance (NHPA), cost estimates must be included for the restoration specialist and an architect. The NHPA grants, on a rolling basis, a maximum of \$4500, which would require matching.

Once the condition assessment report was completed, we would then hope to apply for a grant through LCHIP for one or more major restoration projects.

Kathy did have copies of what the blank grant forms look like.

Other Old Business

- We are still seeking suggestions for an additional alternate. We discussed that the Selectboard actually appoints our alternates for one year. Susan suggested that we make sure this becomes a routine for each March. Joe kindly agreed to continue. Carol suggested Jeff Smull as a possibility. Susan will contact Jeff.
- Based on an amendment to the Town budget at the deliberative session, the Library line item was returned to \$47,500. Joe commented that the Town has billed the Library in the past for salary

and expenses that exceeded our budgeted (Town) line item. He wondered why we don't bill the Town for costs incurred such as maintenance that the Town is normally responsible for. Carol commented that perhaps we need to revisit the informal agreement we have with the Selectboard regarding operations and maintenance costs. Susan commented that looking at total costs to operate the library might be informative. We all concurred that, as a small town, we need to work together on expenses, particularly when they are major or unforeseen.

- From the December meeting, *Karn brought up the topic of Alyson's pay versus her performance review. Discussion and comments included seeing how the Director's pay has changed over time, especially since Alyson was originally an hourly employee and is now salaried, and that we should also compare Director pay versus similar size NH Libraries. Susan suggested this be a nonpublic part of our next meeting. Karn and Alyson will gather statistics. Kathy supplied a list of ~ 20 towns with town budget and library salary info likely circa 2021. Kathy pointed out that these libraries may not operate for the same number of hours per week as ours. Carol commented that we should table this until more Trustees are present and until a time when we can hold a nonpublic session when the library is not open to the public. Again, this session must be posted prior to the meeting. All concurred.*

Strategic Plan:

Community Input:

Alyson and Kathy reported that the first meeting of nine community members was energetic and informing. Alyson reported that all stated that they learned something new about the library. Both were very encouraged by the outcome. The next outreach to the community will be via Zoom on March 2. This has been offered via the Page Turners Facebook Group and will also be placed on the Library Facebook page and the webpage.

Kathy previously reported via email the following from their "SOAR" analysis at this community gathering held February 2:

For our first Community conversation our goal was to conduct a SOAR discussion and engage some patrons of the library in helping us conduct a Strategic Plan. We had 9 participants and a lively and productive discussion. Some of the key points of discussion are as follows:

Strengths of the library

- Professional and knowledgeable staff
- Diverse book selection
- Architectural strength and beauty of the building
- Comfort and warmth of the library- both physical and social
- Inter library loan
- Place to play- train table and toys- strong children's programs
- Summer Reading Program
- History of building
- The fact that it is a bus stop and families can meet there
- Community/town support
- Gathering place for programs and community discussions (cinnamon buns and civil conversations as well as various creative groups)

Opportunities

- Utilize space differently- use children's room for movies or meetings
- Use outdoor space more
- Storytelling
- Improve access to the building
- Kitchen area
- Infrastructure- bathroom, etc.

- Technology needs
- ADA Compliance-aging population was noted
- Private meeting room
- Fundraising program with skilled leadership

Aspirations

- Increased collection with storage
- Study carrels
- ADA compliance-elevator dreams
- Preserve the character of the library while allowing more people to use it
- Connection to the outside
- Maker space potential

Results

- Happy, strong community
- No institutional feel
- Ease of access- the whole community can come
- More people coming
- Eye to the future while maintaining current programs and welcoming feel

New Business

We discussed the potential officer slate for the upcoming year. We are hopeful that Karn will continue as Treasurer, once reelected, and that Carol will continue as the Secretary. We also discussed the chair position.

Joe mentioned that there was some discussion regarding library funding and representation with Langdon Selectmen at a joint meeting with our Selectboard. Carol commented that she thought it more appropriate that Langdon should approach the Trustees, not the Selectboard, in this regard. Susan felt that our charter would need legal review as there has never been representation from Langdon and no one really knew why. Alyson pointed out that Langdon does kindly send a contribution annually although this is not equivalent to the amount per capita that Alstead pays. Susan pointed out that perhaps this should be part of our strategic planning. Kathy and Alyson mentioned that some Langdon patrons have been invited but did not attend the first planning session. Joe suggested that we should discuss our operations budget with Langdon such that they understand the true costs of operating the Library. He also commented that Langdon pays for 35% of the transfer station operations as their population is approximately 35% of ours. Carol proposed that we discuss the appropriate methods to obtain legal review for our charter at the next meeting; all concurred.

The idea of having a library tote bag was suggested after Susan and Carol saw one Gaale had from another library. Alyson and Carol will pursue this.

Potential Action/Agenda items for the next meeting, Thursday, March 16, 2023 at 5:00 PM

1. Minutes reviewed and approved.
2. Librarian's report and budget discussion.
3. Treasurer's report.
4. Maintenance/committee updates.
5. Any grant updates.
6. An additional alternate.
7. Director compensation.
8. Strategic planning.
9. Officer elections for 2023.

10. Our charter
11. Tote bag
12. Other old business.
13. Any new business.

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 PM on a motion made by Susan and seconded by Kathy; the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Carol Reller