

**Tracy Memorial Library  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Retreat – October 17, 2013**

**Present:** Dave Harris, Charlene Baxter, Bruce Parsons, Casey Biuso, Shelby Blunt, Kristina Regan, Fiona Mills, and Sandra Licks.

Meeting called to order at 2:00 PM.

**1. Facility Tour (Bruce, Dave, Sandra)**

- Debrief
- Capital Improvement Plan

**2. Budget (Shelby & Kristina)**

**3. Future of Libraries (Charlene, Casey, Sandra)**

Casey and Charlene shared information from the New Hampshire Library Trustees Association conference that they both attended this past May.

Casey shared resources and information from the “Every Library” presentation that she attended that focused on the findings of an independent consultant regarding politicking for libraries. His suggestions included becoming more flexible in the community, becoming a community center, as well as offering some creative approaches to being a library in contemporary times.

Casey also shared resources and information regarding creative fundraising from a presentation entitled “Beyond the Bake Sale.” Suggestions included how to brand your library based on geography and reputation as well as possible partnership opportunities for fundraising (car dealerships, to theaters, a bank, etc.). The presenter also discussed diversification regarding what a library does including specific reading groups, “library weeks,” flexibility in how you use the space (renting the space? – maybe the garden?) as well as the praising of volunteers and managing volunteers well.

Charlene shared her experiences at the conference as well and recalled how many conference participants shared positive remarks about TML, noting that TML has a very far-reaching reputation. Both Casey and Charlene got a sense of how well run TML is and how much funding we receive and how well managed TML is. Charlene shared suggestions regarding policies around money for libraries from a presentation entitled “Where the Buck Stops?” An important issue raised was the importance of legally protecting the library and library staff as well as considering the legal implications of each decision before they are made. Charlene noted that library revenue is given under specific legal conditions and asked us to consider whether or not letters of agreement should be updated between library and town officials annually.

Charlene also shared her findings from another presentation entitled “Need Money?” She shared the following suggestions: be deliberate in recruiting for your Board; be prepared with numbers before asking for money. In accordance, Shelby wondered how much of the town budget is dedicated to the library budget.

The discussion turned towards the PEW Research report on libraries. Charlene wondered what percentage of New London residents utilize the library both online and in person. She also noted the ever-shifting nature of modern libraries.

Sandra noted that so many of TML patrons like the traditional nature/services of library and the challenge of trying to balance old and new technologies in regards to budget money and staffing availability. People, overall, are into books and browsing shelves and seek assistance from the librarians. Sandra also noted that people at TML are looking for spaces to sit and interact. This raises the issue of how to best utilize space. Sandra noted that they are running out of space to shelve materials – especially in the computer/reference room. Sandra noted the complex utilization of the second floor regarding how to keep staff space private and yet let the public utilize the common spaces. Bruce suggested that we could add keypads to staff spaces/offices.

Sandra noted that she feels TML is doing a good job meeting the PEW findings about what patrons are looking for in libraries.

There was a collective suggestion about possibly utilizing the 1941 school building for some programming in the future.

Charlene raised the question of whether we should consider conducting a survey or a focus group with the community about what patrons desire. Sandra noted the complexity of developing sound surveys and the logistics of collecting and interpreting the data.

#### **4. Future of Tracy Memorial Library**

- **Staffing, Services, Materials, Technology, Programs (Sandra) – see detailed handout**

Sandra noted that in the future, when hiring new librarians, she will look for persons who are well-versed in technology. Sandra noted that Jo-Ann is incredibly tech-savvy and works with individuals with tech questions.

There was a collective discussion on future needs regarding hiring a new or an additional professional librarian. Would it make more sense to hire another full-time professional librarian in lieu of two part-time staff? Shelby mentioned the possibility of recruiting a volunteer dedicated to technology (partner with COA)?

Sandra noted how time-consuming interlibrary loan is as well as the huge demand for it by TML patrons.

Bruce offered to provide input to Sandra regarding how to better utilize rooms to incorporate more seating or generally better utilize the space.

- **Review Board Responsibilities (Casey & Fiona)**

Casey compared our trustee operations to the NH library guidelines for trustees.

Casey asked if a listing of library staff and responsibilities could be made available to trustees. Sandra had given such a list to the two newest trustees.

She also noted the need for us to review/consider/create/evaluate goals for TML on an annual basis. Project long-term goals for TML.

Shelby wondered if we might have interaction/meeting between staff and trustees.

Fiona reviewed committee staffing and terms of each trustee.

- **Charting the Course (All!)**

Charlene suggested that we use part of the November meeting to review and consider some of the issues that came up during our retreat.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

- Thursday, November 21 at 3:30 PM

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Fiona Mills  
Secretary