

**Ilseley Library Board of Trustees
Special Meeting**

**10:00AM-4:00PM, Saturday, May 5, 2018
654 East Munger St. Middlebury, VT**

MINUTES APPROVED May 14, 2018

Present: Board Members: Catherine Nichols, Amy Mincher, Faith Gong, John Friedin, Alice Eckles. Library Director, Dana Hart. Recording Secretary, Joe McVeigh. Listening Tours Chair, Barbara Doyle-Wilch.

Barbara Doyle-Wilch facilitated a day of reflection and planning.

There were no comments from the public.

Meeting guidelines. Barbara shared a set of guidelines to enhance participation and discussion.

Inward or outward? Barbara shared a handout from the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation distinguishing between different types of work or efforts in the community. Inward-focused perspectives were essentially internal. Outward-focused perspectives were more action-focused and centered on the wider community. The group discussed the various perspectives across a variety of domains. See handout at: <https://theharwoodinstitute.org/news/2017/6/1/turn-outward-the-turn-quiz>

Outward-focused questions. Bearing in mind the outward-focusing perspective discussed earlier, the group piloted a series of questions suggested as possible options for the forthcoming Listening Tours. These questions focused on the Middlebury and Addison County communities, important attributes and essential components, hopeful shifts happening in the world today, and desired aspects of a thriving relationship between library and community a few years down the road.

Annual plan prioritizing. Choosing from a list of possible options generated earlier, the board chose to focus over the next twelve months on five central tasks: Developing an evaluation process for the director; conducting listening tours in the community; reviewing and revising the board's by-laws; evaluating existing policies and devising procedures for the development of new policies; and review of financial processes and procedures. If time permits during the next year, the bylaws group will also review the mission statement and the financial group will develop or clarify policies and procedures for dealing with gifts and donations. Left for future years were plans for better evaluation of board effectiveness; strategic planning; and fundraising.

Annual plan execution. Working through a series of questions, the board organized an action plan for the prioritized items including responsible parties, timelines, and proposed desired outcomes. The board agreed to initially establish five working groups or ad hoc committees. If such a group should become permanent, then one anticipated recommendation would be the establishment of a standing committee. Groups will submit reports to the board in advance of monthly board meetings as work is

accomplished and questions arise and will request time on board agendas for discussion of key questions.

LISTENING TOURS

Responsible parties: *Barbara and Catherine with input and help from board and staff.

Desired outcomes:

- Plans for a series of conversations to elicit thoughts from community members of their desires for the future of the town and ways in which the library might fit into those plans.
- Facilitation of listening sessions and recording of impressions.
- Plans for synthesizing the results and sharing of what was learned with the public and the select board.
- Possible development of a leadership team to move forward with fundraising possibilities or other future plans.

Key dates: November 30 – listening tours conclude and report submitted to board

DIRECTOR EVALUATION

Responsible parties: *Alice and Amy, with insight from Barbara and Dana.

Desired outcomes:

- Develop a written plan for evaluation of the director including
 - Process
 - Criteria
 - Timeline
- Communicate with key town staff to possibly coordinate library director evaluation with town evaluation of department heads
- If considered appropriate, develop charge for standing committee on director evaluation

Key dates: Early August: informal six-month evaluation to be conducted by Catherine and Alice. October: Written plan with recommendation for process, criteria, and timeline

FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

Responsible parties: *Amy with insights from John, Dana, Chris Watters

Desired outcomes:

- Develop a plan for how we are going to move forward and step-by-step actions.
- Clarify financial procedures for the board
- Clarify respective roles of the board, staff, the Friends of the Library, the town treasurer, and the select board as they relate to library and library board finances
- Organize an annual timeline for financial procedures of the board and the library including regular budget presentations to the board from the director
- Define the job description of the board treasurer
- If considered appropriate, develop a charge for a standing committee on financial matters

Key dates: November.

POLICY REVIEW

Responsible parties: *John, Joe, and Dana

Desired outcomes:

- Locate existing policies and collect them in a single place
- Review existing policies and recommend updates
- Define the distinction between policy and procedures
- Develop a process for identifying policy needs
- Develop a process for bringing policy recommendations to the board
- If considered appropriate, develop a charge for a standing committee on policy development and review

Key dates: Late September for October board meeting.

BYLAWS

Responsible parties: *Faith and Joe

Desired outcomes:

- Review existing bylaws for clarity and to see if they represent our current practice
- Identify potential articles for deletion or amendment
- Explore (with board input) the possibility of new articles as needed
- Develop a redline document with proposed language specifying additions and deletions
- Propose a timeline and process for regular review

Key dates: For December board meeting. Additional discussion in January.

Board record keeping. Library Director Dana Hart requested that the board take responsibility for keeping its own records, as board records over the years are lodged in a number of different locations. She offered to work with Chris Kirby and Faith Gong to establish a password-protected area on the library's web server for this purpose. Estimated date of establishment: August 2018.

Annual calendar. The board brainstormed recurring dates, annual events, and key activities to be organized into an annual calendar for the board and for the library. Dana Hart will organize the first draft of the calendar. Once the calendar is established, items from this year's action plan will be incorporated.

General discussion. There followed an extensive period of general discussion.

- Board members expressed thanks to Barbara for facilitating and to John for hosting the retreat.
- The board discussed who to invite to the September Walt Whitman presentation. Members of the Building Committee and past library board members were suggested along with regular library staff.
- A talk by Sue Halpern on her new book which deals with a library becoming a community hub was suggested.
- Dana noted that Tricia has been visiting schools in nearby towns.
- Dana reported that she has been visiting other libraries in Addison County.

- Barbara suggested that the library might sponsor a regular activity that is family-oriented at the same time each week, such as visiting musicians.
- It was also suggested that the library might consider sponsoring a recurring event in conjunction with the Sheldon Museum and the Folklife Center along the lines of the Artswalk project.
- Dana noted that the summer movie program in the new park will make use of the library's new Kanopy movie streaming service.
- Dana and Alice discussed the desire to offer coffee to patrons in a manner that is both environmentally sustainable and feasible for library staff. Barbara recommended as a model the coffee cart at the Counseling Service of Addison County at 109 Catamount Park.
- Alice shared an interesting bookmark she had obtained from another Vermont library that showed the benefits of the library to the town contrasted with the cost to taxpayers.
- Barbara stressed that everything that we plan to spend time on has to reinforce the idea of advocacy for the library. We need the full strength and energy of everyone who loves the library to make the renovation happen.
- John noted the need going forward to make it clear that the last design is not a *fait accompli*, rather a concept. It was noted that the Shelburne library presented the public with 3 distinctly different plans and made it clear that there wasn't one that had been decided on.
- Joe noted the need to think about the downtown area during construction. What can Ilsley do to contribute to bringing the downtown together? It was noted that many local businesses have closed or are for sale including The Diner, Curve Appeal, 51 Main, Otter Creek Bakery, and Ben Franklin. How can the library contribute to keeping our downtown vibrant?

Respectfully submitted,

Joe McVeigh
Recording Secretary