**Dutton S. Peterson Memorial Library**

**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**

**May 23, 2024**

**President John Parker** called trustee meeting to order at 6:05 PM in person at the Dutton S. Peterson Library,

**Roll Call:** Present: John Parker, Mike Sculin, Gail Sgrecci, Jenn Stevenson, Deb Albro, Kevin Grueber, Karin Thomas, and Deborah Yeager. Absent: Sandi Boles

**Public to be heard:** No public to be heard.

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| **ITEM 1** | | |
| Adjustment - Carol Fagnan is the Town historian; Kathy Long is only her assistant. Motion to approve April 25th, 2024, meeting minutes with correction. | | |
| **MOTION MADE BY** | **SECONDED** | **APPROVED** |
| Mike | Deb A. | Unanimously |

**President’s Report Combined with New Business:**

John received paperwork back from Jerry for the first right of refusal. Jerry has the deed to the Village but did not include it in the paperwork he gave to John. John dropped it at Halpin’s and they’ve been playing phone tag as to who is going to do what. John said legal fees pro-bono from Attorney Halpin but we need to pay for the deed filing fees because they come right out of his pocket. John asked him to bill us for the filing fees with the County Clerk. Rob needs the Village EIN number and a copy of the deed. John thinks Rob may have called Jerry directly to get the information instead of continuing the “phone tag”.

**Library Aide’s Report: (Laura Rowley)**

* **Programs**: The library held a program with Mary Dewalt creating quilted placemats, cyanotype making, and weekly Story Times, each with good attendance. Annie Sumi, a musician from Erin, NY, performed music at this past Story Time. Laura and Karin collaborated on planning teen programming, with the first being resume writing, but no teens attended. We will keep promoting the next programs which include movie nights.
* **Community Garden**: Thank you to Karin’s dad who built a great raised bed for our garden and to Gail and Deb for contributing soil and compost. Laura will plant seedlings in Story Time next week.
* **Grants**: Laura and Karin were informed that the library will be awarded a Dollar General grant for $3,000 for Summer Learning.

**Director’s Report:**

Karin intended to catch up with Laura to see exactly what is included in that grant but stated that the $3,000 grant from Dollar General - $500-800 can be used for prizes/incentives.

Sandi said they already vouchered the retirement stuff. That should have gone into your retirement account. $1,500/year towards retirement but cannot give directly; has to be put into retirement and taxed.

Numbers up: April Circ Report

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Circulations** | | | | |
| Adult | Juv. | Unknown | YA | TOTAL |
| 253  +87 | 83  +4 | 43  +16 | 2  -2 | 381  +105 |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Holds** | |  |
| Provided | Received |  |
| 157  +31 | 103  +45 |  |

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| **Visitors** | **Reference Questions** | **New Cards** |
| 351  +46 | 72  +10 | A 1/J 0 |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Program Attendance** | | | |
| Adult | General Interest | Children | Teen |
| 6/44 | 2/13 | 6/27 | 0/01 |
| Libby: | Books: 84/+0 | Mags: 6/+0 |  |

COMING UP: Soap making with Winterbury Homestead (at the Fire Department) is Tuesday @ 5:30. $6.00/person – they have a grant to cover 30 participants – only 5 have signed up. That was included in the Newsletter that we mailed out 1,400 copies of.

Corning Pride – We are “tabling” with Montour Falls/Watkins Glen libraries. It’s our second year doing this. Our theme is Libraries Are “Fun-damental”. No checking books in or out but doing bubbles and friendship bracelets and glitter tatoos. Kelly’s bringing a big selection of LGTBQ books just to show what we have available.

We are going to roll that over for August 17 – Community Day in Odessa (12:00-7:00). We are providing most of the child entertainment and everything for youth (Karin committed us from noon until 4:00). Community Day is from Noon until 7:00 as they’re having a band and beer and food. 12-4 is kid friendly. They’re paying for a balloon making guy. We wrote another grant (haven’t received it yet). The Grant is to have Caleb Harrington to design a unique piece of art which then Laura’s company is going to screen print on T-shirts. Participants can screen print. Once shirts are dry, they can use fabric markers or permanent markes to color in design… only thing is, everyone has to bring their own t-shirt. Screen printing set up for two (2) hours. We are providing (Jennifer Thomas, Karin’s sister) professional face painting (12:00-4:00). She has volunteered to face paint for free the last couple of years so Karin wrote her into the grant hoping to be able to pay her something because she really does a great job. We plan to make buttons and friendship bracelets, maybe a sprinkler (cooling station). We’re playing with the idea of making a giant checkerboard out in the street. The Community Day this year is on a Saturday. The last two years it was on a Monday. This year Watkins Glen Promotions has taken over the event this year and they’re kind of doing a “trial run”. Trying to make it bigger. Something they could do annually and that can support itself. Before, the Bucket was paying out a lot of money just to pay the bands, etc. So now WG Promotions is doing it and it is on the same day as the Village-wide Rummage sale (roads blocked off from Main street all the way up to the Methodist Church. (Karin is going to the meetings on the event so she will keep us updated.)

Karin reached out to Carol Fagnan and asked her what she would like us to contribute to this history thing. Carol and a student did some research on some local history. They are presenting this at the Odessa American Legion on 6/4 at 7:00 pm. Student will present everything he’s learned. It sounds fascinating. They will follow that up by a 2nd presentation via zoom on July 4th at 7:00 pm at the American Legion – Karin will not be present for it. Carol was fine with that. We created flyers and brochures for her. Advertising on flyers and facebook page. Historical Society is also promoting. Carol has paperwork about the government of Catharine in the 1700s! The student will not have his book. Carol is having books published. What would be the best way to distribute the book to the public? Carol decided that she’s going to take the orders and distribute the books herself. Pre-orders. Conflict of taking orders for the library. We cannot collect taxes. We could give out and have a donation basket with suggestion of $20 donation. Deb says we may want to do that because the last time she talked with Carol, Carol was going to donate the money back to the library. Karin confirmed that Carol plans to do that but she is going to handle the distribution of the books. She is going to donate the proceeds from the book to the library. John wants to talk with her again; maybe we could have some books at the library as well?. John is very pleased that Carol is engaged in the library again. Thanks to Karin for picking up slack while John was out of town. It made Carol happy and John was very thankful to Karin for getting things rolling. Carol wanted flyers put up around town. She wanted us to make 100 copies but Karin said our printer is not able to do that many at a time … maybe 30 at a time. People can print there own. It is on facebook, etc.

**Financial Report: Sandi (threw her back out)**

**Regarding the vote on the school budget. 49 – no and 125 – yes**

* Kevin commented that he has heard from some people that because Odessa Library is tied to Montour Falls Library and they have such a dramatic increase usually (3% of $140,000). Kevin feels it’s justified but that is what he has heard. People want to support Odessa.
* Financial Reports read through by Board members individually prior to meeting so …

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| Motion made to pass Sandi’s financial reports as printed. | | |
| MOTION MADE BY | SECONDED | APPROVED |
| Mike | Kevin | Unanimously |

**ZOOM WITH BRIAN HILDRETH FROM STLS**

John introduced all present to Brian.

Construction Aid Project: Purpose of this zoom meeting is to discuss different perspectives, possibilities, and prioritize. What is our main goal? Once we decide; how do we go about getting it done?

Brian’s perspective: Fact: We have limited resources. It sounds to Brian that we are not looking to build a brand new building; that the property down the street is looking more like “green space”. Whether building a new building or adding on to the existing one; it will be expensive. Brian feels under that circumstance, we should prioritize putting an addition on the building because of our limited resources. One option is an addition 15’ x 30’ by book shed. The cost would likely be a half-million dollar project. Compare that to what it would cost to develop a plan, buy the lot, and execute a new building … $350-500K. Brian is not telling us what to do, he is just stating an opinion/pushback so we have checks and balances and consider every option thoroughly. If we were looking to demo and build a brand new building that exceeds the space we currently have, he would support that but as our talks sound more like green space; we’re better off focusing on an addition. Develop current space instead. They did rough measurements last time he was out. 15x30 is a sizeable space. Compare that cost to purchasing property plus demo and excavation that would be 350-500K. Costs aren’t exactly the same but they’re comparable.

Brian emphasized that he is there to help us with whatever decisions we make. He would help us develop a Construction Grant to move library to a new building or get what we need for an addition. He supports whatever decision we make. He is there to help get whatever money we need on the table to complete the project.

Brian pointed out that it is municipal responsibility to create green space VS library responsibility. Maybe the Village itself should do the green space if that is what the Village wants. It has to be a library space to get construction aid grants. The Village likewise could get grants or government aid to build/develop. How do you leverage state/local/federal tax paying money? That is the detail Brian is trying to point out. Brian likes both ideas but wants to focus on “library” space. He wants to know how to support us.

Construction Aid can be used for green space but the Village could get the same aid for that recreation area/green space. It would be better to use construction aid for actual library space. If our purpose for that space is green; let the Village pay for it. You could leverage all dollars to accomplish both things Jerry and the library want to do. It sounds to Brian like the Village is potentially trying to make the library responsible for something that the Village should be. They have the equipment to do a lot of the work themselves VS us hiring all to do the same thing. Unless we’re looking to do a full-time library system over there that we can use 365 days/year VS summertime only, we should try to come up with a combined vision for that space.

Comments:

What about gas tanks, etc. (remediation) of the property. That would need to be clarified and figured out before any plans made.

Deb A. said: Tom Morgan has offered to excavate for us. At the end of May, a lot of money is coming into the Village. She says Jerry is just waiting to decide what to do with that money, but he has talked about giving it to the library. He won’t say until the money comes in. Thought is that we may have more money to work with. Brian says it is possible to use construction aid to purchase property. NYS Public Library Construction Aid – 75% of $40,000. If you get NYS construction aid, you’re required to use it for library purposes.

“Intent to apply” for this cycle is coming up Karin says. In order to apply for any grant money, she would need to know the details of the project in order to apply. If we wanted to use Construction Aid money to buy property, we would need a purchase agreement and something that states our purpose for that property.

We would need a grace period if moving/buying. A discounted rate or over time or give for free…. Can use public library construction aid for 75% of purchase of property but would be nicer if they’d give it to us. If we go that route; we HAVE to use that for library purposes. We still could have green space on it but it has to be some functional base for the library.

Bathroom project money for ADA bathroom is good until 2029 to use. Karin asked the question about when her grant money needs to be used by and does the money she got need to be used for a new bathroom in this building or can it be put toward a new building. We need to hold for that purpose; then reach out to the State and do a project revision. Brian says don’t worry about it now, he will keep track of it.

Brian isn’t criticizing but says it wouldn’t be wise to put forward construction application until we have a set plan to move forward with. A firm direction is needed. It has to be phased over years because it takes a lot of money once it gets going. We don’t want to put anything forward until we’re sure what we’re doing. Be patient. Figure out where we want to go and what the Village is willing to do and what their interest is.

COMMENT: Basement in/if we build a new building? Typically, no one wants to carry books up and down stairs. That would mean we need an elevator (costly). John thinks if we need to dig up gas tanks; maybe easiest to not fill the hole back in but make a basement. Jenn says “fill” is cheaper than leaving a hole and constructing a basement. Brian suggests we could negotiate the remediation cost with the Village to save money.

Mike asked what flexibility there is with grant if plans change? That’s why we need to know exactly what we want/need. $450-500k and potential. Brian will help with application and development of plan once we decide what to do. The idea is to do it in a broad and general way, and to organize and do in phases. For example: 1) Excavation/Demolition and pouring slab, 2) building the exterior structure, 3) Interior drywall, etc., 4) All the rest of what wasn’t done in phases 1-3. The State doesn’t really care if during the building process you realize you need a little more space this way or that. They just care about us getting things done in phase 3. Specifics of these grants; STLS will hold our hand through the process. They want us to have success. They mainly want to make sure the project gets started and completed.

**COMMENT**: Can we donate or trade the current library space for a Historical Society. The Village could pay something for this building and sell Village property to us for $1. We could use the money from the sale towards the construction of a new building.

Grant Application is manageable. Same paperwork for $20k as for $500k.

Good idea to get shared services with Village to maximize project money. It benefits both. Need inertia to get going.

**COMMENT**: Jerry’s term ends March 2025. Deb and John trust Jerry. He does what he says. That doesn’t necessarily mean he’ll be successful getting something passed through the Village but if he says he’ll try, he will. Community partnership is a good idea. Has the Village ever had that ground tested across the street? It is important to get an assignment done/agreement in place before Jerry is no longer mayor. Out time sensitive/most critical current issue is to get the property deeded in our name before March. If we cannot use it, we can give it back to the Village.

**COMMENT**: At a past meeting, John suggested to Jerry raising the street level to eliminate the need for a ramp into the existing library building. Jerry was willing to consider that as an option as well.

Kevin – feels that if we can get that property, it should be used for a new library for a couple of reasons:

* school is nearby and already has a playground. The village has a green space. The Baptist church also has a playground that is underutilized. Green space would be great for programs but wouldn’t actually do anything additional for the community.
* We have limited space here so staying here is not a great alternative. If we build a new building, Karl States and Tom Cook are possible people to help with excavation to save money.

**IN SUMMARY**: We need to decide what to do and in what order.

Option 1) New building --- contingent on the land and all that that entails. Costs being so high with either option (addition or new); why not do a new building. It is costly to add on to existing buildings. If cannot build new or cannot build on that property at all for some reason – what’s second option?

Option 2) Do we even want to consider green space if we cannot build? No. Concentrate on the current building and expand. In that case, use additional land for parking and the book barn. We could still build a pavilion. Add onto existing building and leave some space for handicapper. (Deb A. says NYS donates pavement if they have “left-overs” from their projects but you need to ask for it. That could save a lot of money.)

2 options with road also: One-way with parking or totally blocked.

If we can find people willing to donate services , we can offer “naming” some part -- or the entire building after them.

**QUESTIONS TO GET ANSWERS TO:**

JERRY:

* Does that building need remediation?
* What is his timeframe?
* What are his ideas – give or sell the property?
* What is his plan with his own Village issues?

Mayor Chairs the Board but the Board itself matters. Talk to Pam Chiccone, etc., members. Lot of legal issues in everything.

* Deb A. will contact Village and get information for us for our next meeting. No meeting in July.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:10 PM. Next meeting: 6:00 on June 20th at the Library.

Respectfully submitted, Gail Sgrecci, DSPML Board Secretary