

1. Call to Order

The Chester Library Board of Trustees held its regular meeting on Monday, January 13, 2014, at the Chester Public Library, 21 West Main Street, Chester, Connecticut. In attendance were Terry Schreiber, Sandy Senior-Dauer, Denny Tovey, Bob Gorman and Peggy Carter-Ward (by Skype). Linda Fox (Library Director), Cary Hull (The Friends) and Karen Bradley were also present. Chairman Schreiber called the meeting to order at 7:39 PM.

2. Secretary's Report

Motion by Senior-Dauer, second by Tovey, to approve December 16, 2013 Minutes as written. Voting in favor – Senior-Dauer, Tovey, Gorman, Carter-Ward, Schreiber. Opposed – none. Motion Carried.

3. Treasurer's Report

No Treasurer's Report as the Treasurer is out of town.

4. Old Business

Chairman Schreiber noted Poetry evening is scheduled for April 7th provided the Meeting House is available. They are in the process of lining up poets. The "Tea with Eliane" scheduled for March 20th at the United Church of Chester was reviewed. This is a conversation with Elaine Koeves and the authors of her bio-conversation, tea and scones.

(a) Discussion Re Public Informational Meeting Held January 11, 2014

Chairman Schreiber asked for thoughts and comments regarding the January 11th public meeting. In general it was felt attendance was good and there was overall support and positiveness.

Peggy Carter-Ward felt one thing they must do a better job of is to document what is being gained and the objectives. There needs to be a better job of reiterating the goals and objectives. The primary objective is accessibility but also improving services. Perhaps a couple of sheets can be prepared, one with objectives and goals and a second with a chart showing what there is now and what there will be. It should be noted this has been a multi-year undertaking and is not being taken lightly. A lot of work has gone into this.

Denny Tovey asked what the next steps were in this process.

Bob Gorman noted he had some concerns. He was struck with the fact in all 3 meetings the conversations were about keeping the building and nothing much about the new library and what would be the benefits to the people. He felt this should go back to square one to see if there are other options in town. He additionally felt this process would take another two years to get to referendum and fund raising. He was not optimistic about this passing. Gorman indicated the

property owner that lives down the hill has some very valid concerns about digging up the library property.

There was discussion about getting the community's support as well as various town officials, boards and commissions. Mr. Gorman noted Chester has a very high tax base and the mode of most voters is to say no.

Various library trustees and Linda Fox reviewed their conversations with First Selectman Meehan. There was brief discussion regarding possible other locations for the library – the school, the Kirkland property and maybe North Quarter Park. First Selectman Meehan had indicated during these conversations that the Library Trustees need to decide where they are going with this project and then hold a community meeting (said meeting having been held on Saturday, January 11th). Once the community meeting is held then the Library Trustees should go back to the Selectmen and request to do the borings. The Selectmen will then go to the Board of Finance to request funds for the borings.

Chairman Schreiber noted the Church hasn't formally voted to do the borings but they have all agreed. They didn't want to vote formally until they saw what the community wanted. Now that the community meeting was held, the Church can now take a formal vote.

Linda Fox noted First Selectman Meehan urged the Library Board to develop a relationship with the Church Trustees as this is a multi step process. He also had suggested the Board ask Ken Best what the cost would be to finish the materials needed for the Grant process which is to be submitted by end of August, early September. Those funds could be put into the operational budget of 2014-2015.

Denny Tovey reminded everyone if a Grant application is submitted this year for this site and the Grant is awarded, then this site is locked in. Another site can't be considered. Linda Fox noted First Selectman Meehan urged the Board to make its decision and get the Grant application in. There was further discussion regarding applying for the Grant.

Linda Fox pointed out this project is predicated on the desire to be able to provide better library service. It didn't start from someone saying let's preserve the building. Gorman noted maybe it didn't start that way, but that's been the conversation for the last year and half. Everyone agreed that needs to be changed.

Discussion ensued as to whether or not someone should be hired to study various other sites in town. What size Library does the Town really need. Mr. Gorman noted the appearance of the building is not as important as what's inside the building. He indicated the mindset of this town is go with the less expensive way.

Karen Bradley noted she agreed with a lot of what Linda Fox said. From listening and seeing how the people react, they want to see something for their dollar, not a ramp to the parking lot. She was totally for improving the Library and its access to the facility. She didn't think people would vote for an underground building with an elevator tower. Karen Bradley felt the underground project is a hidden investment.

There was discussion regarding what other libraries have and how this can be sold to the townspeople. Mr. Gorman noted he felt a combined community center and library would be a good thing.

Denny Tovey noted the main entrance would be the existing front door. A lot of people thought the new handicap entrance would be the main entrance.

Bob Gorman felt a one story concept was the way to go. He noted additional staff would be needed.

Chairman Schreiber noted some people have voiced their opinion for regionalization. Perhaps that should be researched. Schreiber noted she talked to individuals in Deep River last year and they were not enthusiastic about regionalization.

Cary Hull noted some people have concerns about what happens during the time of construction and where the staging will be located. She indicated it was mentioned at the community meeting there is space at the elementary school, but in today's world that probably would not occur. Hull noted there are people in town that want the Library to stay in town.

The size of the proposed Library was once again discussed. Should it be 6000 to 8000 square feet or less? There was further discussion regarding having a community center/library. It was noted perhaps the Chester Library isn't utilized enough because it doesn't have sufficient handicap accessibility. It was noted most other libraries have many computers for public usage. Chester doesn't have sufficient room for a lot of computers. Square footage cost was again reviewed.

There was discussion as to what the next steps would be and should the Library Board move forward with this, pursue other options or do nothing.

It was suggested the Library Board should go to the Board of Selectmen indicating they are at an impasse and wanted to know what the Selectmen think. Chairman Schreiber noted she would contact Ed Meehan to set up a meeting between the Boards of Selectmen and Finance to get some kind of direction.

Linda Fox noted the Library Board needs to build a relationship with the Church Trustees and learn some of their concerns.

It was noted the Board of Finance decides if there would be a referendum.

(b) Report from The Friends – no report.

5. New Business – none.

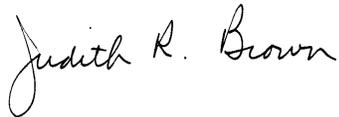
6. Librarian's Report
Linda Fox distributed Statistical Reports.

She noted the upcoming fiscal year budgets are due February 7th. She will put something together and email it to everyone as there hasn't been time for budget discussion. Design costs should be included in the budget.

A Special Meeting was scheduled for January 27th to discuss the budget.

7. Adjournment
There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judith R. Brown".

Judith R. Brown, Recording Secretary