

Chester Library Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting, October 17, 2016
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1. Call to Order

The Chester Library Board of Trustees held its regular meeting on Monday, October 17, 2016, at the Chester Public Library, 21 West Main Street, Chester, Connecticut. In attendance were Trustees Terry Schreiber, Sandy Senior-Dauer, Deedee Prisloe, Peggy Carter-Ward, Denny Tovey and Karin Badger. Others present included Cary Hull (The Friends), Stephanie Romano (Library Director), Lauren Gister (First Selectwoman), Anna Sweeney (Trustee for the Gwen Orton-Jones Trust), Bob Gorman, Virginia Carmany and Rick Nygard from the Board of Finance. Chairman Schreiber called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

2. Secretary's Report

Motion by Senior-Dauer, second by Tovey, to approve September Minutes noting that the total of the Gloria Eustis Fund was \$4,755.00. Brief discussion followed. Chairman Schreiber asked if all the information regarding the Library Building Committee needed to be in the Meeting's Minutes. Denny Tovey, Chairman of the LBC, replied these items were brought up at the Library Board of Trustees September meeting. **Approved with Carter-Ward and Prisloe abstaining.**

Deedee Prisloe noted the Board does not make any corrections to these Minutes before they are submitted to the Town Clerk. Chairman Schreiber thanked Karin Badger for a thorough job in doing the Minutes. She also noted all corrections to Minutes are done at the next Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees.

3. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Prisloe distributed the Treasurer's Report for October 17, 2016. She reviewed starting balance, debits and credits noting the Gloria Eustis Memorial Donations totaled \$4,805 and the Spencer Family Memorial Request was \$2,500.

Motion by Carter-Ward, second by Schreiber, to approve Treasurer's Report as presented. Unanimously Approved.

Motion by Schreiber, second by Prisloe, to add item to Agenda after #4

“Audience of Citizens”. Anna Sweeney noted that with Inland Wetlands Agency this item is only for general discussion on how the Agency conducts its business and not for items on the Agenda. First Selectwoman Gister noted discussion under this item could be anything. Karin Badger noted Deb Calamari said anyone is free to come to meetings and listen, but can't talk if no Audience of Citizens. **Unanimously**

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Approved.

4. Discussion of Gwen Orton-Jones Trust w/Anna Sweeney

Chairman Schreiber noted there has been some concern with newer members of this Board with the Gwen Orton-Jones Trust that has been with the Library for many, many years. The Trust was originally done by Attorney Bob Klump. The new Trustee, Attorney Anna Sweeney, is present to explain exactly what this Trust is all about.

Attorney Sweeney distributed a page from the Will of Gwen Orton-Jones. She reiterated that she took this over from Bob Klump who was ill. The Probate Court accepted that indicating an inventory had to be filed. She compiled a list of assets and filed the inventory. A requirement of the Probate Court is that a copy of the inventory is sent to all parties affected by this. Copies were therefore sent to Linda Fox and the Library Board of Trustees. Attorney Sweeney noted spoke to Linda Fox in detail to get the history of how this had been distributed. It took her many weeks to sort out the papers. She collects the income from the property and pays over to the Chester Public Library all the income from said Estate that year. It was done previously twice a year. It also says the Trustee can pay out of principal as she likes. Basically what had been done when Atty. Sweeney took over was the bulk of the income was sent to the Librarians as a supplement to their income. Some was given to the Treasurer to cover needs not covered by the budget. Meantime there is a second paper which is that Robert Klump took the assets and made it into a 501C3. The selected stocks mutual funds are being managed at Essex Financial at a .85% management fee.

Attorney Sweeney noted at the end of September there is a balance of \$510,575.71 with an estimated \$23,730.76 annual income. It makes around 5%. The taxes are also being done.

Peggy Carter-Ward asked if this comes through the Trustees. Treasurer Prisloe noted the Trustees get about \$1000 a year and the Librarian decides how it is to be spent. Attorney Sweeney noted it doesn't say anything about being reported to the Board of Trustees. Karin Badger noted a lot of the confusion is that a lot of Board members don't know about it. Attorney Sweeney reiterated it is her discretion as to how this goes. There is a mix of growth and income. Bob Gorman noted it was his understanding it has varied up to \$45,000. Sweeney noted they are currently playing

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catch up due to the illness of the past Trustee. Treasurer Prisloe asked if the Board of Trustees could get a report once a year. It was her understanding that Gwen Orton-Jones wanted to help the Librarians and provide for books that weren't being paid for otherwise (that's the \$1000 to the Board). Sweeney noted there were some larger books purchased by the Fund.

Attorney Sweeney reiterated it is her discretion as to how the funds are distributed. She pointed out she had a long talk with Linda Fox about distribution.

Patty Petrus noted Gwen Orton-Jones was a Reference Librarian of Congress. She loved her library. The local librarians befriended her and were there for her in many different aspects. She would watch staff leave for higher paying jobs. This was an action of kindness that came back around. The local librarians blessed her life and she blessed the lives of the local librarians.

Karin Badger noted the only reason this came up was because Linda Fox brought it up noting this would add to the new librarian's salary. She then noted it was virtually impossible to find out how this money was being used.

First Selectwoman Gister noted she has read both Wills and this Will is the controlling Will. This Will says to provide for professional staff over which the budget would provide for. She noted she knew nothing about this when she came into office. She added she was thrilled that Gwen Orton-Jones was so attached to the library, but felt this was problematic in a number of different areas. She is trying to figure out what is legally required. This was never intended to be part of the budget. If she had left specific bequests to specific employees that is one thing. There was a couple of years where the library had the highest paid employees of the Town. To provide \$1000 to the library and \$25,000 to supplement employee salaries is dicey. She noted she found this to be very vague in the way it was laid out. It talks about all income being paid out for the benefit of the Chester Public Library. Gister noted she is consulting with Town Attorney, John Bennet and the town auditors to be sure this is being handled properly and there is no tax fraud and the library isn't going to be accused of misusing funds. One thing it speaks to is the Chester Endowment Fund. Does money being paid to municipal employees that nobody knows about become part of their salary or a gift? That is a question for Attorney Bennet. Gister also noted no library budget will be slashed because of this.

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Virignia Carmany noted she received a letter from the Town Auditors indicating that income going to salaries or benefits of employees has to go thorough finances of the Town. It cannot be hidden. The letter also indicated the additional benefits paid to school employees passes through the financies of the Town. This money will now pass through Town finances coming in as revenue and going out as expenses.

Attorney Sweeney noted she is concerned if it has to go through a restricted fund. The restrictions need to be appropriate for what this was intended to do.

Chairman Schreiber noted Board of Trustee members felt it should not have any input into the distribution of this, but perhaps the library should get a little bit more.

First Selectwoman Gister noted she is trying to find out how the Town is financially libel for this because these are Town employees. What are the legalities of Town employees taking money that is not part of the budget.

Sandy Senior-Dauer noted she knew salaries were supplemented, but it has never been reported to the Board.

Attorney Sweeney reiterated she has discretion as to how this goes and was concerned about the restrictions. This lady wanted to benefit the librarians. The library budget should not be diminished. The lady was good enough to give this money to the librarians.

Peggy Carter-Ward asked why a 501C3 was created. Sweeney replied she didn't know.

First Selectwoman Gister noted she is waiting answers from Attorney Bennet as to what the Town needs to do to let Attorney Sweeney do her job and honor the terms of the Trust and fulfill responsibilities of the Town so its open, above board and legal. She will come back with answers and also discuss further with Attorney Sweeney.

4a. Audience of Citizens – nothing further at this time.

5. Building Committee Update

Denny Tovey, LBC Chairman, noted the Library Building Committee is on a hiatus. There is not much they can do any more. The last meeting was in September where

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they passed a motion to recommend to the Boards of Finance and Selectmen the budget for a new library at North Quarter Park at \$7.4 million (\$5.5 million for construction related activities and \$1.9 million for soft costs and non-construction items). This includes not only library but redevelopment of entire park as well. Tovey noted he met with First Selectwoman Gister on October 7th to discuss next steps. The elected officials now have to decide what they are going to do with this. Gister recommended Tovey talk to Liz Netsch regarding tax matters. It was noted the legal cost to bond is not included in the \$7.4 million. Waiting for response from Board of Finance. Both Tovey and Gister noted the Town is trying to get a handle on all upcoming projects. Maybe the Town should bond for other projects as well. Until the Town leadership figures out how they want to handle this, the LBC is on hold.

6. Fund Raising

Cary Hull noted Pat Holloway had a meeting with John Williams, Liz Netsch and Aaron Page regarding the document prepared by Mrs. Holloway "A Gateway to Nature, Learning, and Fun: Chester Library in North Quarter Park." Liz Netsch stated she did not want another building under her responsibility. Pat Holloway then met separately with John Williams who agreed to talk to Liz Netsch. He was going to participate in writing the document relating to Park & Rec. Part of the discussions with Park & Rec was there was money in the Town Budget Capital Fund that could be used for a playscape, but it would have to be in a different spot. Mrs. Holloway also talked to First Selectwoman Gister about getting pledges from people and mentioned the Department of Agriculture Grant. Surveys are being prepared to go out to townspeople. Sandy Senior-Dauer suggested Park & Rec look into whatever grants and monies might be available similar to what the Library Board of Trustees did.

7. Discussion of Presentation to BOF and Selectmen

No discussion.

8. Other

Chairman Schreiber noted each year the Association of CT Library Boards holds an all day workshop. It is free because the Board pays \$100 to join the Association. The date is November 5th.

9. Librarian's Report

Stephanie Romano reported on the following -

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- Monthly Statistical Report for September 2016 was distributed and reviewed.
- Special Events included Adult Book Chat, Children's Dried Apples Program, CCAR is down to only 2 deliveries a week, no word yet from First Selectwoman Gister if the library will go on the town's Comcast account or go with CEN.
- They were going to do a book chat this month, but changed it to an Alfred Hitchcock movie "Rear Window" at Town Hall on October 24th at 6:00 PM.
- Had first Cupcake Wars, had 14 children, they created Willy Woonka and the Chocolate Factory.
- The Library will be decorated for Halloween in the next couple of weeks. There will be Halloween Night in the Haunted Maze downstairs.
- Comic Club this Thursday.

Chairman Schreiber asked Director Romano to do an email blast for movie night.

Rick Nygard submitted a list of questions to Director Romano to which she will reply directly to Mr. Nygard.

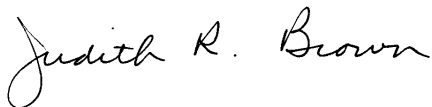
10. The Friends Report

Cary Hull noted their Raffle this year was not as successful in past years, but was very nice. Prizes were great. They made just over \$1000 profit. The Holiday Book Sale is coming up beginning of December.

11. Adjournment

Motion by Senior-Dauer, second by Carter-Ward, to adjourn at 9:10 PM.
Unanimously Approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Judith R. Brown, Recording Secretary