

1. Call to Order

The Chester Library Board of Trustees held a Special Meeting on Monday, April 29, 2019, at the Chester Public Library, 21 West Main Street, Chester, Connecticut. In attendance were Denny Tovey, Sandy Senior-Dauer, Peggy Carter-Ward, Terry Schreiber, Karin Badger and Abbi Rice. Chairman Tovey called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

2. Discussion of State Grant Application

Chairman Tovey noted this special meeting was to discuss the State Library Grant application.

Sandy Senior-Dauer noted she liked the idea of getting some money to do something with the existing building. She asked if this would be a one time grant and if it would be available next year. Chairman Tovey noted this is a yearly grant. Chester is a non-distressed community. He also noted he would like to see the town behind this Board with some money. Is it worth going after? Senior-Dauer noted she really liked John Schroeder's idea from years ago. It was a modest plan. She would like to see some improvements made to this building (handicap access, new restrooms, etc.).

Karin Badger noted she agreed with Senior-Dauer adding Schroeder's plan was great and would add a lot of improvements. The Board should get an estimate of cost before approving plans. She also noted she didn't think the Town would be very supportive right now because of other projects.

Chairman Tovey noted the Town would be applying for the grant. This Board would be recommending to the Town. The Notice of Intent needs to be submitted by June 30th. Tovey also noted the Town does not own the plans. The Town would have to pay Schroeder for the plans and hire him to do this. A municipality has to put things out to bid. Senior-Dauer noted the Historical Society hired a professional fund raiser who has raised a lot of money.

Peggy Carter-Ward noted she liked the Schroeder plans too but we don't have any costs associated with it. We need to understand there would be less book space because of making it accessible. There are two types of grants. One is to improve existing space and making it accessible, code compliant, energy conservation, etc. She suggested starting smaller with a targeted project. She also noted if we do anything significant it might be difficult to get it through and might hamper any larger ideas possible in the future.

Karin Badger noted they give preference to handicap accessibility. She also noted ADA requirements are much more flexible with historic buildings.

Terry Schreiber noted if we put any money into this building, we might as well say goodbye to future money. She didn't think the time was right for the Town.

There was discussion regarding having an elevator.

Sandy Senior-Dauer suggested inviting John Schroeder to a meeting and getting an idea of cost.

Chairman Tovey noted he would have to ask First Selectwoman Gister how to proceed and if the Town wants to proceed. Would the Selectmen be behind doing something with this existing building? Peggy Carter-Ward noted the Town would have to pay up front and then get reimbursed. Tovey noted if we decide to do something with this building, the Library would have to close down for a period of time. Carter-Ward noted the geographic size would increase (making it more accessible) but the collection would decrease. Badger noted maybe a more up to date smaller collection would be fine. New improved layout, new bathroom, new kitchenette would be nice. Terry Schreiber noted there isn't much to work with because of the land.

Peggy Carter-Ward asked if we know what the code issues are in the existing building. The stairwell is the major one. She asked if there was someone in Town Hall who could do an assessment.

Terry Schreiber asked if the 10 year Plan would have to be done over in order to submit. She noted the other alternative would be to "chill" for a couple of years until things settle down and then do something.

Sandy Senior-Dauer suggested doing the Notice of Intent. Chairman Tovey noted the Town would have to submit the Notice of Intent. (Note-Sandy left the meeting at this time.)

Peggy Carter-Ward suggested doing something small maybe using \$30,000 from the Trust and \$30,000 from the Grant for a new bathroom and more accessibility. Chairman Tovey noted more accessibility would mean having an elevator. Carter-Ward noted the Board would only propose a project that wouldn't require a cost to the Town. Some funds could be allocated from the Gwen Orton Jones Trust. The Town would have to cover the cost until it is reimbursed from the grant.

Chairman Tovey reiterated he will talk to First Selectwoman Gister and the State Building Inspector.

Karin Badger noted this would not solve all the problems but would improve the space. (Note-Karin left the meeting at this time.)

Peggy Carter-Ward asked is the priority to improve the space to be a destination for people to read and work on a computer or to have more book collection.

Abbie Rice noted if we do a lot of ADA stuff, then people probably would not want to do a new project.

3. Future Meetings

It was noted the next Library Board meeting is in 3 weeks on May 20th. Chairman Tovey noted he will not be in attendance at the June meeting.

4. Audience of Citizens – no citizens were present.

5. Adjournment

Motion by Carter-Ward, second by Schreiber, to adjourn at 6:50 PM. Unanimously Approved.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Judith R. Brown, Recording Secretary