

James E. Nichols Memorial Library
Board of Trustees Meeting

-Approved 11/23/2021-

October 25, 2021
Minutes

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 5:30pm. Present: Chairperson Annette Nichols, Bette Miller (until 7:01pm), Karen Ponton, Shannon Whalen, A. Xavier (Alternate); Karin Karagozian, Trustee Emeritus; Margaret Adams, Library Assistant; Members of the Public: *Residents:* Gayle E. Lacasse, JoAnn C. Wood, Harold Karagozian, George Gurney, Susan Gurney.

- I. **Order of Agenda & Additional Items:** Chairperson A. Nichols said *Public Input* appears as an item on the published Agenda for tonight's meeting. She asked the public to hold their comments until then, and will recognize anyone who wishes to speak at that time. She reordered the Agenda to move *Non-resident Trustee Update* earlier, added *Trustee/Alternate Nominations* under *New Business*, and said a non-public session would be needed.
- II. **Non-resident Update:** A. Nichols reported on her meeting with the Board of Selectmen at their meeting of October 20, 2021. Referring to the draft copy of those minutes, she said that Selectmen voted to vacate 2019 appointment the two (2) Library Trustees (S. Heath and B. Miller) who are not residents of Center Harbor, pending legal guidance. Until that guidance is received, their recommendation was that the Library Board not allow S. Heath and B. Miller to vote. A. Nichols said A. Xavier could not vote because alternates only fill in to vote when a Trustee is absent or the position is vacant.
- III. **Review/Approval of Minutes:** Subsequent to the Board's last meeting, A. Nichols reported that the Town Attorney would not review the draft minutes of October 8, 2021 as the Trustees had requested. Motion by K. Ponton, seconded by A. Nichols: To approve the minutes of October 8, 2021 as written. A. Nichols, seconded by K. Ponton: To amend the motion by deleting the first two (2) sentences under Item I in the October 8th minutes, and replacing with "Trustees A. Nichols and S. Heath submitted their resignations at this meeting. A. Nichols identified her frustration with being forced into damage control as opposed to moving forward with Library business with a deeply divided Board. S Heath identified that she has served as a trustee since 1995, but in her opinion there has been constant strife at each meeting over the past year making it impossible to serve. Both Trustees felt the Board would be better served if K. Ponton stepped down. K. Ponton declined to resign." Passed with 3 in favor and 2 abstentions (S. Heath and B. Miller). Motion by K. Ponton, seconded by A. Nichols: To approve the minutes of October 18, 2021 as written. Passed with 3 in favor and 2 abstentions (S. Heath and B. Miller).
- IV. **Ongoing Business**
- A. **Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer S. Heath gave her Reports for the months of August and September. Expenses for August were \$7,148.82; the \$219.00 under *Repairs/Maintenance* was to change the locks. The one (1) deposit into the MVSB checking account in August for \$15.00 was for a lost book. Expenses for September were \$7,180.85, with \$598.21 under *Repairs/Maintenance* for purchasing a supply of wooden slats to use when replacing broken slats in the benches on the Library grounds, and \$216.95 under *Miscellaneous* for advertising open positions in local newspapers. S. Heath was asked about expenses of \$2,514.75 under *Computer Maintenance Contract* being more than the budgeted amount of \$2,000.00, with monthly maintenance charges still to come for the rest of the year. She explained that some of this expense was for computer repairs which occurred earlier in the year and that it is allowable to move money from other line items to cover any overage. The one (1) deposit into the MVSB checking account in September included the ARPA subgrant of \$1,120.00 for the air purifier and \$8,351.70 from the Nichols Trust. S. Heath said the Nichols Trust is now issuing only a single disbursement each year. Motion by S. Whalen, seconded by K. Ponton: To accept the Treasurer's Reports. Passed with 3 in favor and 2 abstentions (S. Heath and B. Miller)

B. **September 27, 2021 Report from the Library & Adel-XT Quotation Discussion:** A. Nichols briefly summarized the Report (emailed September 22, 2021) as not everyone had a copy with them. The Board discussed a proposal from Adel-XT dated September 9, 2021 for a staff computer, wireless printer and updated monitors (Part 1), extended WiFi (Part 2), and an outside

1 camera and router (Part 3), for a total of \$5,772.50. A. Xavier recommended that the proposal be
2 sent out for bids. S. Whalen noted that the Library has used Adel-XT for a long time, and is familiar
3 with our computer equipment and software. Except for inside the Town Hall building, K. Ponton
4 shared that she was able to easily and quickly access the Library WiFi from Chase Circle near the
5 Brooks house, across Plymouth Street near Dewey's, from the Yikes parking lot and the bandstand
6 area, all the way to the parking lot at the post office. She wondered if extending the library WiFi is
7 really necessary. S. Whalen said she has trouble when trying to use the WiFi on Fridays, especially
8 during the summer. Weather can be a factor, as well. Consensus was to postpone further
9 discussion until the next Board meeting so that A. Nichols can gather additional information from
10 Steve Jussif at Adel-XT and M. Adams.

11 C. Committee Reports

12 1. **Building Committee** – Postponed.

13 2. **Policy Committee** – Postponed.

14 3. **Library Director Search Update** – A. Nichols offered her opinion that the search be postponed until
15 the Library governance is fixed. S. Whalen thought any decision is premature until that time. There was
16 no other discussion.

17 V. New Business

18 A. **Interim Director Resignation:** A. Nichols reported Interim Director Lois Brady resigned last week
19 and will not reconsider. A. Nichols obtained a legal opinion that because this resignation was submitted
20 in a signed letter, it could not legally be rescinded.

21 B. **Trustee/Alternate Nominations:** A. Nichols reported that two (2) members of the public approached
22 her with interest in serving on the Library Trustees: G. Lacasse and J. Wood. G. Gurney, who was in
23 attendance, expressed interest in being an alternate. Also, alternate A. Xavier, whose term expires
24 November 17, 2021 indicated she would like the opportunity to serve as a Trustee. Motion by K.
25 Ponton: To send forward to the Board of Selectmen the names of G. Lacasse, J. Wood and A. Xavier for
26 the position of Trustee and the name of G. Gurney for alternate. There was no second. Motion by S.
27 Whalen, seconded by A. Nichols: To send forward the names of G. Lacasse and J. Wood for the
28 position of Trustee and the name of G. Gurney for alternate. Both S. Whalen and A. Nichols were asked
29 why A. Xavier was excluded from their motion. The reason given was that A. Xavier has been involved
30 with the Library Board for nearly a year, and they wanted a “new” Board, a “fresh” start, and Trustees
31 who are “heavy users of the Library.” Motion passed with 2 in favor and 3 abstentions (S. Heath, B.
32 Miller and K. Ponton).

33 C. **Keys:** The Trustees briefly revisited the Library policy about to whom building keys should be
34 issued. The policy says Library staff, Library Trustees and maintenance personnel “will” have keys, A.
35 Nichols recommended S. Heath and B. Miller be excluded, given the circumstances. K. Ponton will be
36 given a key.

37 VI. **Public Input:** K. Karagozian asked why the status of S. Heath and B. Miller as Trustees is uncertain. A.
38 Nichols answered that the Selectmen are awaiting legal review by the Town Attorney. She plans to ask
39 the Selectmen to be included in the non-public session of their meeting when this is discussed with the
40 Attorney. S. Heath said she would like to continue as Treasurer until her position is vacated and at least
41 until year end when there is much to do and many reports to be prepared. She also described the role
42 of the Treasurer in some detail. G. Gurney suggested a knoxbox be installed outside the Library, so
43 emergency personnel can have access without needing contact a Trustee to open the building. K.
44 Karagozian asked B. Miller about her work on the Building Committee. B. Miller said A. Nichols and K.
45 Ponton are also on the Committee and they have copies of the information that she has obtained. S.
46 Heath said the plan for building repairs is in the *Building Conditions Assessment Report* that was done in
47 2019. She added that there will be a large amount of money coming to the Library which may pay for
48 these repairs, which is why this Committee Report has been tabled. G. Lacasse said she wants
49 coverage for the existing hours that the Library is open, and asked how to add additional members to the
50 Library Board. A. Nichols said any number of members could be added as long as there is an odd
51 number of Trustees and by changing the bylaws. A. Nichols asked Assistant Librarian M. Adams for her
52 thoughts. M. Adams said she is committed to working at least two (2) weeks with the schedule as it is to
53 give the Board time decide what it wants to do, and asked for everyone's patience. Going forward, she
54 said she does not want to work every weekend, but someone has to be there on Fridays for the inter-
55 library loan van and Saturdays are popular with kids and patrons who work during the week. B. Miller
56 asked if Katie Wonder, who was recently hired on a temporary basis, can give her any help. M. Adams

1 said she has not met K. Wonder, but understands she is not interested in interfacing with the public and
2 works on Thursdays when the Library is closed. She added K. Wonders is nearly finished working on a
3 project the former interim director assigned her. A. Nichols asked M. Adams if she has met the individual
4 who was interviewed for a 20-hour/week position; she has not and did not participate in that interview
5 There was some discussion during *Public Input* about what to do if the Selectmen do not vacate the two
6 (2) non-resident Trustee positions and appoint new Trustees. S. Heath spoke strongly for getting
7 alternates appointed. Motion by A. Nichols, seconded by S. Whalen: To recommend G. Lacasse and J.
8 Wood as alternates if the Board of Selectmen does not vacate two (2) Trustee positions at their meeting
9 on Wednesday, October 27, 2021. Passed with 3 in favor and 2 abstentions (S. Heath and B. Miller).

10 VII. **Non-public Session:** At 7:00pm, motion by K. Ponton, seconded by A. Nichols. To go into a non-public
11 session per RSA 91-A:3, II (a) to discuss a personnel matter. Passed. Roll Call: S. Heath-abstain, B.
12 Miller-abstain, A. Nichols-yes, K. Ponton-yes, S. Whalen-yes. A. Xavier was present for the non-public
13 session. The Board discussed options for staffing the Library for the time being. M. Adams employment
14 agreement states she is to work 10-30 hours/week; A. Nichols was asked to see how many hours per
15 week M. Adams would prefer to work within this parameter. Motion by A. Nichols, seconded by S.
16 Whalen: To increase M. Adams wages to \$20/hour, retroactive to October 18, 2021. Passed with 3 in
17 favor and 1 abstentions (S. Heath). K. Ponton was asked to contact area libraries, i.e. Moultonborough
18 to see if they might "loan" us a librarian to work some hours on a temporary basis. Motion by K. Ponton,
19 seconded by A. Nichols. To end the non-public session. Passed with 3 in favor and 1 abstentions (S.
20 Heath). Non-public session ended at 7:34pm.

21 A. Nichols reconvened the meeting at 7:34pm.

22 VIII. Other Business

23 A. **Requirements for Minutes:** A. Xavier briefly shared information about the *Right to Know*
24 requirements for minutes. She said minutes do not need to be a transcript of what was said during the
25 meeting; the minutes document that there was discussion and all decisions.

26 B. **Next Meeting:** Before moving to a non-public session, consensus was to meet on Monday,
27 November 1, 2021 at 5:30pm. Place TBA. The only item of business would be to prepare the proposed
28 budget for 2022.

29 C. **Keys:** S. Heath signed her building key (#7) over to A. Nichols, who issued the key to K. Ponton.
30 B. Miller had not been issued a key when the building's locks were changed.

31 **Adjournment:** Motion by K. Ponton, seconded by A. Nichols to adjourn at 7:36pm. Passed with 3 in
32 favor and 1 abstentions (S. Heath).

33
34 Respectfully submitted,
35 Karen Ponton, Secretary