

**Hingham Public Library**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees**  
**January 19, 2011**

The meeting was called to order in the Trustees Conference room at 8:00 p.m.

Present: Trustees Abbott, Barclay, Boylan, Garrity, Goldstein, Mehegan, Mitchell, Murdy, S. Rabuffo, Director D. Corcoran, Selectman B. Rabuffo, Library Business Administrator J. Allen, Secretarial Assistant L. Welch.

**Minutes of prior meeting, scheduling of next meeting**

C. Abbott welcomed the trustees to the first meeting of 2011 and noted that the next meeting would be held March 16, and in the President's absence would be chaired by Vice President Goldstein. On motion made and seconded, the minutes of the November 17 meeting, as corrected, were APPROVED unanimously. It was pointed out that the schedule for 2012 currently has the November meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup>, which is Thanksgiving eve, and it was agreed that closer to the date, the meeting should be rescheduled.

**Development Committee**

C. Abbott called on J. Allen to report on the New Century Fund appeal. Ms. Allen reported that the response to the letter had been gratifying and remarkably even with last year. The total so far is just short of \$41,000 and the goal is \$44,000. There have been 100 new donors so far, contributing \$4,000. H. Goldstein asked if there would be a second letter, and J. Allen said there would be, and that last year \$8,000 had been raised with the second letter. About a 20 percent response is expected.

C. Abbott reported that the Hingham Newcomers Club had sponsored a passport event for a holiday stroll at the Derby Street Shoppes at Christmastime, with proceeds to the Library. The \$1,825 raised would be allocated to the summer reading program. He thanked Children's Librarian Anna Byrne for her work on this program and said a thank-you letter had been sent to the Newcomers Club. We hope they will think of us again, Mr. Abbott said.

Speaking for the Development Committee, S. Murdy said that the Scituate Library Foundation had held its annual black-tie gala, its 10<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup>, which has

raised \$200,000 over the last 10 years. He posed the question of whether the Hingham Library should hold a similar event. In his view, the results of the auction had not met our hopes; there were few registered bidders from Hingham. Does the New Century Fund make people think they have “done their bit”? he asked. If we had a black-tie event, would it draw broad support? C. Abbott said he had attended the Scituate event one year, that tickets were \$150. H. Goldstein noted that the South Shore Conservatory had long held its “Chase Away the Blues” event, at \$75 a ticket, and it had always done well. E. Boylan said he thought the auction had had decent success that perhaps it would do better if we could enlist more local participation, perhaps promote it more heavily. J. Mitchell noted that the auction netted \$10,000, aside from the sale of the Frederick Douglass letter.

A. Garrity said that antique appraiser Leigh Keno had agreed to give a talk to benefit the Library, possibly at the end of April. Details remain to be worked out, but when he had headlined a similar event for the Historical Society, it had sold out. There was further discussion of event ideas.

D. Mehegan noted that there are many “friends of” organizations in Hingham: friends of Wompatuck State Park, Friends of Bare Cove Park, the Hingham Sports Foundation, and the Hingham Education Foundation. Would it not be possible to encourage the formation of a Friends of the Library, similar to Scituate’s, that would be independent of the Library but could be dedicated to raising funds for its benefit? Hingham is a larger and more affluent community than Scituate, with a much more extensive business presence, and it ought to be possible to apply that model. D. Corcoran recalled that the Scituate library had consulted Hingham on its fund drive for the remodeling of our Library. It was pointed out that there had been a Friends of the Hingham Library, but that it had not been active in recent years. S. Murdy said the Development Committee would be holding a meeting, and he hoped to meet with a member of the Scituate group to learn more about it, and would report back to the Board.

D. Corcoran reported that the bookstore volunteers were holding a bag-sale event — that is, a bag of books for \$5 — partly to clear out slow-moving inventory. J. Allen added that 50 bags had been sold already.

### **Treasurer’s Report, FY 2012 operating budget update**

In E. Siegfried’s absence, J. Allen gave the Treasurer’s report. The Library endowment had had a very strong year in 2010, with a total of \$1,195,000 as of December 31, a 15.8 percent increase over the previous year, a total of \$1,030,000. Since its low of \$749,000 in February 2009, near the bottom of the recession, the endowment had increased by \$446,000, or 60 percent. The 15.8 percent increase

matches that of the S&P 500 index. Currently, the endowment is producing interest and dividends of \$16,000 per year, or 1.3 percent.

The New Century Fund donations through December 31 totaled \$31,535 and, as noted, at present are just short of \$41,000.

Other revenue and expense items are running near the budget, except for fines, which were \$5,600 (about 20 percent) below budget as of December 31. Fine revenue was \$60,000 in FY 2010, and it may prove difficult to reach the budgeted \$62,000 this year. It is not clear why fine income has been lower.

The Trustee budget for FY 2011 calls for an operating cash deficit of \$18,000. The principal reason is the loss of \$17,000 in net lending revenue from the regional library system.

Speaking to the operating budget, D. Corcoran said he had met with the town administrator, and there was a proposal for a level services budget, which would be about a \$6,000 increase, or about one-half of 1 percent. The proposal would now go to the Advisory Committee in the next couple of weeks. It is important to note that a new budget request for funding for 29 Sundays would not be part of the level funding budget. The cost of 29 Sundays would be \$46,000. The Town Administrator and the Selectmen had reviewed and recommended \$20,000 for Sunday openings. Much will depend on the collective bargaining process.

### **Report on Sunday Library hours**

C. Abbott, speaking for the Operations Committee, reviewed the situation with respect to Sunday Library openings. In November, the Rhode Island Foundation had offered to provide funding for Sunday openings for the rest of the fiscal year, provided that that the Town cover half the cost. The Town agreed to provide \$10,000 for Sunday openings, which would cover 17 Sundays — but only at a pay rate of time and a half, not double time as had been paid in the past. After the Finance Committee met with the Library union to explain the situation, the union had voted not to accept time and a half. Then, however, D. Corcoran went back to the Rhode Island Foundation, and it agreed to cover the extra \$16,000 necessary to pay double time. As a result, the Advisory Committee approved the Town's \$10,000 share and the Library will open beginning January 23, continuing through May 27.

Mr. Abbott said the townspeople will be very happy with this result, since there is tremendous support for Sunday openings. Sustainability will be the issue in the future.

## **FY12 capital outlay update**

D. Corcoran briefed the Board on capital outlay. He had met with the Capital Outlay Committee, and thought it was a good meeting. His first priority is replacement of the boilers, which were installed in 1965 and had an upgrade in 2000. They're living on borrowed time, he said. Since there are two boilers, complete failure is not likely. But one of the boilers could fail at an inconvenient time. Two new boilers would cost about \$120,000, including demolition and engineering costs. We have done our best to make the case that we could save money, as much as \$7,000-8,000 a year on the natural gas savings of new boilers. Selectman Rabuffo said that the Capital Outlay Committee's proposal is likely to be in the \$1.2-1.4 million range and that would include schools. In addition to the boilers, Mr. Corcoran cited needs to replace the flooring in the lobby and café areas, and to replace the Library roof.

## **Energy study overview**

D. Corcoran then presented the results of the energy study prepared by consultant Source One, for several public buildings in town. The study was funded by the Light Plant, to study the idea of combined power systems. The study concluded that the Town facilities are not a good candidate for the technology because there was no way to use the waste heat in the spring, summer, and fall. Some facilities, such as pharmaceutical factories, can use such energy, but it would not be efficient for the Town. It would take 49 years for the cost to be paid back in savings for the schools alone. The consultant had other simpler suggestions for energy savings at the Library, such as replacing single-pane glass and installing ceiling paddle-fans. The clerestory windows are single-pane and the heat loss is enormous. The consultants also suggested insulation for the roof. However, their main recommendation was replacement of the boilers. Mr. Corcoran noted that the Library has favorable siting for solar energy, but the technology is expensive. It could be a helpful solution if grants were available.

H. Goldstein asked if heat pump technology had been explored, and Mr. Corcoran said that it had not been by this study, but that past inquiries had shown that it is a costly technology and might require licensed personnel to operate. B. Rabuffo mentioned that the Metropolitan Area Planning Council might have grants available for some of the improvements mentioned. C. Abbott said it would be a good idea to follow up with the Capital Outlay Committee, to make sure all the members are aware of the energy recommendations.

## **Director's report**

Turning to the Director's Report, D. Corcoran informed the Board that Library Technician Donna DelRosso had recovered from her surgery and was back to work. He and the staff were delighted to have her back. However, Library Technician Janice O'Hearn had had to take sick leave, but it is hoped that she can return to work soon.

In another personnel matter, Ellen McElroy, Library technician, is leaving the Library to take a position with the Hingham Light Plant. She will be missed, and her 16-hours-per-week position has been posted. There were many fine candidates for the last part-time library technician vacancy, and similar interest is expected this time. Mr. Corcoran said he expects that the Library will gain a 20-hours-per-week person through Coastline Elderly Services Inc. to carry out support tasks, with a small stipend paid by the Senior Community Service Employment Program.

Mr. Corcoran was invited to the Osher Life-Long Learning program held January 11 at the Neighborhood Club of Quincy. Osher and the Library have been working together on life-long learning programs for several years, and several events have been held at the Library.

## **Buildings and Grounds**

D. Corcoran noted that custodians Jim Bellenis and Rob Barretto did fine work in getting the Library open after the January 12 storm. The DPW did a good job plowing the parking lot, and the Library custodians have been hard at work following up to keep the walks and ways clear for the patrons. The recently repaired lobby windows seem to have held up well in the storms, and Mr. Corcoran said he is optimistic that we might soon be able to declare the job a success and go ahead with drywall and painting. Finally, the Library's report for the Annual Town Report is in progress. If Trustees have anything to add, they're asked to let the director know, since the report is due February 18.

## **Library state aid update**

On the Municipal Appropriation Requirement waiver application, D. Corcoran reported that the Board of Library Commissioners is due to make a decision February 3. Other towns are in the same situation as Hingham, and it is not expected that there will be any objection to the waiver.

### **Old and New business**

C. Abbott informed the board that a historic wooden chair, known as the Lincoln Chair and believed to date to the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century, had been for many years displayed in the Old Ship Church. The chair has been lent to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, where it is on display. Before it was transferred, the Historical Commission had a replica made, which it proposes to put on display at the Library, near the Wilder clock. It would be a functional chair, to be used by Library visitors. C. Abbott and D. Corcoran are interested in receiving the chair, but want to have a good agreement, which is currently being drafted.

On motion made and seconded, at 10:02 p.m. it was voted to ADJOURN.

Respectfully submitted,

David Mehegan  
Secretary