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Library Trustees Minutes 10-21-2003

Robbins Library Board of Trustees
Minutes of the Meeting
of the
November 12th, 2003

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 PM. Attending were trustees David Castiglioni, Patricia Deal, Katharine Fennelly, Barbara Muldoon, Frank Murphy, Joyce Radochia and Susan Ruderman. Also attending were library director Maryellen Loud and assistant director Cynthia Diminture.

Approval of Minutes

The corrected September 9th minutes and the October 8th meeting minutes were approved on a motion by Ms. Ruderman; seconded by Ms. Radochia.

FY05 Budget

Mr. Murphy reported briefly on the Selectmen's Informational budget meeting that took place during the prior week. The question of charging for meeting room usage was brought up for discussion. Feedback is being sought from a town-appointed committee charged with exploring all town meeting room space. There is not yet consensus on the town's projected budget deficit for FY05. Department heads have been told that level funding is probably the most that can be expected. Additional budget cuts may be required. Each department has been told to set priorities that will govern budget decisions. In relation to the budget process, Ms. Loud distributed a set of questions posed by the Arlington Coalition, a citizen group studying the efficiency of various town services. Ms. Loud suggested that the board discuss the questions about library priorities that were posed to the Selectmen, namely the number of hours open versus the library materials budget, the number of hours open versus the quality of library service and the Fox Branch Library. There was discussion of these issues, but consensus was not reached. Mr. Murphy recommended "before and after" charts to illustrate the effect of last fiscal year's budget reductions. He also asked Ms. Loud to quantify how much it costs, in personnel terms, for each hour of library service.

Petition for State Aid Waiver

Ms. Loud distributed to the trustees a sheet detailing the process of applying to the state for a waiver from the FY04 municipal appropriation requirement for library state aid eligibility. The number of waivers allowed by the state has been increased from a limit of ten to an unlimited number. The waiver hearing will take place at the office of the Board of Library Commissioners in January and a decision will be made in February so Ms. Loud will not know the outcome prior to her deadline for submitting an FY05 budget. She will prepare two budgets, one which includes the \$50,000 state aid award and one which does not.

Fundraising

Ms. Ruderman discussed near-term and more long-range planning. She has prepared a letter for the annual solicitation to individuals. An amended version of the letter was accepted on a motion by Ms. Deal; seconded by Ms. Fennelly. Ms. Ruderman presented two ideas to explore for the future. One is to formulate a long-range fundraising

plan, including possibly revenue-producing projects. The second is to identify and contact new potential donors. The trustees felt that these suggestions were strong ones and Mr. Murphy recommended that Ms. Ruderman bring a list of action items to an upcoming meeting. Ms. Ruderman will also contact Town Counsel about the status of the library's application for a 501C3 status.

Timeline for Trustee Projects

This topic was tabled until the next meeting to give Board members more preparation time.

Anniversary Committee

Ms. Fennelly and Ms. Radochia have been brainstorming ideas for festivities to celebrate the upcoming tenth anniversary of the library expansion/renovation. Ms. Ruderman suggested that one event be a fundraiser. The committee will entertain more ideas from trustees and staff.

Standing Committees

Mr. Murphy passed out a chart showing each trustee's primary and secondary committee assignments. The committee system will be enacted on a trial basis and if successful, will be included in a revision of the by-laws of the Board of Trustees.

Other

Ms. Loud mentioned that she, Ms. Fennelly and Mr. Murphy had attended the MA Board of Library Commissioners' workshop on making the case for libraries in difficult economic times, held at the Weston Public Library, where Mr. Murphy served as a speaker. Ms. Loud also reported on the successful fundraising event held by the Friends of Fox Library at town hall the previous week. Most food and auction items were donated.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM on a motion by Ms. Deal; seconded by Mr. Castiglioni. The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, November 12th at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Diminture