Library Trustees Board Meeting
November 27, 2017

Present: Bill Paton, Diane Kreis (via phone), Kristian Connolly, Sue Murray, Erik Volk, Luisa Lindsley, Mary Grant, Trisha Ingalls (Rural Edge), Diana Belau (Rural Edge)

Rural Edge Issue

- Meeting called to order at 7:07 PM
- September minutes were approved. October minutes still to be furnished by Kristian as Erik was not in attendance.
- Kristian confirmed with Rural Edge that the current plan should the Library continue its rental relationship with Rural Edge was that the rent would be $1500 per month starting January 1. Rural Edge confirmed that would be the plan although they would be open to negotiation and may be open to phasing in the increase.
- Diane K. reminded folks that one of the grants received for funding of the project was specifically for funding a library.
- Kristian asked if purchasing the Library was still something that would be possible. Diana B. and Trish said they would still honor that option but the process, if the Library wished to pursue it, would be very complicated due to the number of organizations involved and some of the shared elements of the property such as the parking lot, septic, etc. They also emphasized that they have zero interest in selling the building and want to continue a rental agreement with the Library.
- Kristian mentioned that the last purchase price that Rural Edge agreed to was $100,000. Rural Edge indicated they would still honor that price but it would leave Rural Edge with a lot of debt and, as noted, would be very complex.
- Mary reiterated that it would take years for us to get to the point of being able to purchase the building due to the complexity but we could certainly start the process even if we began with a revised rental agreement.
- Questions arose and discussion ensued as to whether Rural Edge would be taking in enough money with the revised Library rent and the tenant’s rent to cover expenses. Rural Edge reemphasized that under the current rental arrangement, they are not receiving enough income to cover expenses. It was reported that it takes about $18,000/year to operate the entire building. In addition, Rural Edge indicated that they have several buildings in addition to the Library building that are operating at a deficit and that not resolving these issues could put them (and almost has put them) out of business as well as creating a community housing crisis.
- Kristian and Bill questioned as to whether the amount the library would be paying was inordinately placing the burden for covering the expenses on the shoulders of the Library without the tenant’s rent being taken into account.
- Rural Edge emphasized that although the initial debt has been paid for the building, there is still a lot of debt to be paid out for the building. This is due to loans taken out to cover years of the rent not covering building expenses. In addition, Rural Edge needs to maintain an aging building, needs to maintain a reserve for the building for unexpected expenses and that expenses will only increase over time. Rural Edge emphasized that the housing market in Groton for an apartment the size of the one in the building does not really support going over $800/month.
- Kristian brought up the question as to whether Rural Edge could get a tax abatement, especially because it housed the Town Library. Mary indicated that this was indeed possible but that Rural Edge would need to initiate the request. Other non-profits have made such requests such as the Methodist Church.
• Rural Edge representatives departed the meeting around this time.
• Discussion ensued that if a lease agreement was signed, resolution for specific problem maintenance items such as the elevator, water pipes, etc. should be included and/or protective legal language that assured that maintenance items not addressed in a timely manner could be addressed in some fashion such as through a rent deduction need to be included in the lease agreement. Our experience with Rural Edge addressing maintenance issues has been very bad.
• Diane indicated that she thought $1500 was too much. Bill indicated that we should take a closer look at the actual expense data that was provided and make a revised proposal based on factual numbers. Revised number showing the actual expenses attributed to just the Library were requested. Rural Edge previously agreed to provide these as well as a copy of the standard Lease for the Board and legal counsel to review.
• Diane asked Mary if the Library would still be required to come up with 5 months of rent from their own money. Mary indicated that she believed that it should all go through the budget process and that the Library should not be forced into “nickel and diming” to cover the cost of the Library rent. The Library should only be required to focus their fundraising efforts to support new programs, initiatives, etc.
• Erik asked about whether it was too late to included a revised rental amount as part of their submitted budget for this year. Mary indicated that although the vote on the budge would not be until March, it was not too late and the Library could begin operating under the proposed budget assuming approval.
• Bill suggested that we continue operating under the $475/month agreement until a new lease is signed even if that brought us past January.
• Diane indicated that rather than a phased increase in our rent, it might be better to ask the Town once for an agreed upon increase instead of having to go back in the future to request additional increases.
• Kristian emphasized he still has interest in purchasing the building if the town was amenable to taking that on and that if we continued to rent we would have paid out $100,000 in five years or so and that certain expenses such as maintenance would be mitigated because they could be performed by town employees. Bill emphasized the “headache” factor related to being a landlord and maintaining the building and that we should seriously consider that as well as the actual financials involved.
• Mary stated that she would be happy to forward the lease to the Town Attorney, Gavin Reed for review and implementation of suggested changes to the lease language. She also indicated that the Library should include a line item in their budget for legal fees. Erik asked how much that should be. Mary indicated it would depend on current circumstances but that $100-$200 should suffice.
• A motion was made by Bill to forward the lease to the Town Attorney. Sue seconded the motion and the motion passed.
• Kristian will send the lease to Mary, once received from Rural Edge to be forwarded on to the attorney. He will also ask Rural Edge to send the revised expenses showing the library portion as requested.
• Discussion ensued as to how we should explain this to the town’s residents. Mary and others talked about how often budget numbers are not even questioned, especially when it is for a needed town service. Bill indicated that the explanation should be that we have basically been underpaying the rent, the lease is up and that this is what the landlord is requesting. Diane suggested that we also tell residents that due to the town attempting to buy the Cilley property that we didn’t feel we could ask the town to buy another property at this time. Erik suggested we have an explanation prepared and be ready to respond but not necessarily, provide a preemptive explanation unless specifically questioned.

Fundraising Appeal
• Erik will have mailing labels revised and printed on Thursday
• Sue & Bill will meet on Saturday to assist in preparing mailing and Kristian will bring some home to work on.

Groton Free Public Library Trustee Meeting (11-27-17)
• Erik indicated he will not be available Saturday but can perform any remaining work to finish the mailing on Sunday.

Librarian Report

• Luisa furnished a Librarian report of upcoming activities (attached). Specific topics addressed/discussed below
• Luisa indicated that the ILL system for the Library has changed and it has taken a while to get up to speed on the new system. Currently it is taking patrons longer to get their books. Luisa reported that some area Libraries have volunteers or employees who focus solely on ILL since it is such a time consuming but important endeavor.
• Luisa reported that technology continues to be a challenge and that we had a 2-3 day period where the internet was down. She had to have a technical person from Blue Mountain come down to assist but now she has documented steps on how to resolve the issue if it happens again.
• Luisa also emphasized that the internet speed continues to be a challenge for her and patrons and that the Library should really be a high-speed internet access point for the community. This encourages more people to come. Erik indicated that he believes the town is now on high-speed broadband internet through Charter and he can investigate what they are paying and/or the cost for the library to switch over. He indicated he and his neighbors have frequent issues with Fairpoint. Bill stated he believes it has something to do with how far you are away from their sub-station.
• Discussion about whether we can use Reserve funds to purchase computers was brought up. Diane indicated that she believed the only fund we could not touch was the Capital Reserve fund which was reserved for capital improvements. Luisa indicated she believed the cost would be about $2500 for five computers. The Board agreed to address this in the upcoming budget they would be preparing.
• Lisa asked Bill about whether we could consolidate expenses that fell under the 100 series of accounts and the 400 series of accounts. For example, postage expenses appear in both places. The Board felt this would be fine and gave him the go-ahead to do so.
• Bill also reported that there was a timesheet issue with Luisa’s timesheets related to entering worked time on a holiday. Luisa indicated that when there is a holiday week, she still needs to complete her work for that week and she was under the assumption that she received additional compensation for weeks that contained a holiday. The Board explained that the policy meant that she would get the day off on a holiday that the Library was closed even though she did not physically work that day. Luisa requested that we document that explanation more clearly as she did not understand that to be the case Several Board Members reported that they believed that Anne had always put down the standard amount of time each week on the timesheet and then kept a tally of “banked hours” that she would use as needed. The Board felt that this would be an appropriate way to continue and Luisa agreed.
• Bill also indicated that Luisa still has 10.5 hours of vacation time to be used before the end of the year or she will be paid out for the balance.
• A motion to adjourn was made by Bill and seconded by Sue. Meeting adjourned at 9:17 PM.

Action Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kristian</th>
<th>Send lease to Mary and remind Rural Edge about need for revised expense figures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Forward lease to attorney once received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erik</td>
<td>Check into the cost of high speed internet via Charter.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Welcome to the GFPL!

26 Sunday Nov 2017

Posted by grotonlibrary in Upcoming Events & Library Info

≈ 2 Comments

UPCOMING EVENTS

For the youngsters
Saturday, Dec. 9
at 10:30am.

Make an Origami Christmas Ornament

Join us for a holiday origami session with Deborah Orelup! Make your own Christmas ornaments to hang in your windows or Christmas tree. Bring a friend and enjoy the good company.

Light refreshments — free for all families.

Generously sponsored by the Crafts & Conversation and Friends of the Library groups.
Speakers Bureau
The Vermont Humanities Council Speakers Bureau offers nonprofit organizations an easy, inexpensive way to host informative and thought-provoking presentations in their communities.

Speakers Bureau talks present scholarship and discussion on diverse humanities topics, while History Alive! programs bring historical characters to life through well-researched and well-acted portrayals.

The Genealogy of Happiness: From Aristotle to Positive Psychology
December 9
4:00 pm

Groton Free Public Library
What is happiness? Can it be measured? And what is the relationship between happiness and virtue, money, pleasure, relationships, mindfulness, and satisfaction? This program with William Edelglass will begin with an overview of different conceptions of happiness in Western philosophy, religion, and political theory. We will then turn to the numerous claims about what makes us happy based on the results of “the new science of happiness.” We will conclude by reflecting on the findings of positive psychology in the context of the history of the idea of happiness.

Vermont vs. Hollywood: 100 Years of Vermont in Film
December 14
6:00 pm

Groton Free Public Library

Vermont has been a featured location in Hollywood movies for nearly a century. It has represented many different ideals during that time, and its portrayal reflects both Vermont’s own history as well as American history. Examining those films provides interesting and fun
insights into the hold Vermont has had on imagination in the media age. Amanda Kay Gustin of the Vermont Historical Society will provide background and share clips ranging chronologically from 1919’s *Way Down East* to 2005’s *Thank You for Smoking*.

Groton Free Public Library, Groton

**The Genealogy of Happiness: From Aristotle to Positive Psychology**

**Vermont vs. Hollywood: 100 Years of Vermont in Film**

**What’s happening at the library**
**Crafts and Conversation Group**
Crafts & Conversation Group meets every Wednesday from 1-3pm. Stop in or stay a while during this friendly DIY craft and conversation time. All levels of crafty folks welcome to share tips, ideas & good cheer!

Updates

Audio-books for our youngest patrons! We are pleased to offer the beginning of our picture book collection with matching audio CDs, thanks to funds raised by our Friends of the Library group. We now have audio-books available on CD and for download for all ages.

Wifi – Our library offers free public access Wi-Fi, 24 hours a day even when the library is closed you can access high speed internet on your laptop or device from our parking lot.

Free Downloadable E-Books & Audio Books are available to all patrons through our library's membership to www.listenupvermont.org. Call or stop by the library for more information, or check out our “Online Services” tab here on our website.

Free Online Courses in Finance, DIY Projects, Cooking, Foreign Languages & More: Available to all patrons through our library’s membership to “Universal Class.” Call or stop by the library for more information.

Attraction Passes Available for Loan – We now offer numerous passes for free & reduced admission: Billings Farm & Museum, Birds of VT Museum, Echo Center, Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium, Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, Shelburne Farms, VT State Parks, & VT Historic Sites. Many thanks to our Friends of the Library group & the sponsoring institutions for these opportunities!

Online catalog: grotonlibrary.kohavt.org.

Did you know that all Groton Library cardholders can log in to see their accounts online from any computer? See what items you have checked out, renew those that you’d like to keep longer, or place a “hold” on the most popular new-release titles. Go to grotonlibrary.kohavt.org. Your “login” is your full barcode, starting with “2vtk+” Your password is your last name, starting with a capital letter. (You can change your password if you like after logging in.)

Interested in helping to check in & out books at the library? We are looking for folks who can come help out at the front desk during our open hours twice a month.
All of our programs are free and open to residents of all towns.

Questions: Contact Luisa at grotonlibraryvt@gmail.com / 802.584.3358

Find us on Facebook (Groton Free Public Library)

Open Hours: Mon 2:30-7pm, Wed 10am-4pm, Fri 2:30-7pm, Sat 10am-12pm.

Create a free website or blog at WordPress.com.