

Weathersfield Proctor Library Trustee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 21, 2024 at 7:00 PM
5181 Route 5 Ascutney, VT 05030

Unapproved:

Trustees in Attendance: Chair Mavis Ellingwood, Vice-Chair John Waite, Alicia Jenks,
Rick Bates, Library Director Mark Richardson. Absent: Secretary Ann Parent

Call Trustee Meeting to Order: 7:03 pm

I. Consent Calendar: *The consent calendar consists of items that are considered to be routine in nature and will be enacted in the form of one motion. Any item can be removed from the consent calendar and heard in its regular order at the request of any Library Trustee or citizen.*

A. Review Minutes from Previous Meeting(s): Rick made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 17, 2024 meeting. Alicia seconded. All voted in favor.

B. Rick made a motion to approve WPL warrant dated November 21, 2024 subject to each Trustee's review and signature. Alicia seconded. All voted in favor.

II. Comments from Citizens on Topics not on the Agenda: none.

IIIa. New Business

A. Library Director's Report: LD Mark began by responding to a question by Alicia regarding a meeting of the Weathersfield Garden Club and whether to accept a donation of books and periodicals from the Club.

B. Mark also reported hosting a small group of librarians from the Vermont Library Association. The group discussed a range of issues that small town librarians sometimes have to field, including those relating to cultural and political questions.

IV. FY2026 Budget. At this point, the Library Director's Report paused in order to let Town Manager Brandon Gulnick speak about the proposed FY2026 town budget, now in preparation, including the WPL budget. Brandon clarified that the percentages in the current proposal were incorrect, due to a math error, but that they would be corrected in subsequent reports. He also clarified that some data was still pending, but that a final, completed report was expected before the date of the December 2024 Library Trustee meeting. Brandon spoke about efforts to hold the line on health care insurance costs for town employees, and he highlighted several items in the proposed budget that either

were new or that likely would see significant changes. Brandon completed his informal presentation, took some questions and left the meeting.

IIIb. Return to the Library Director's Report: Following the presentation on the proposed budget, LD Mark resumed his report.

C. The leftover seeds from the WPL seed catalog would be donated to a non-profit for use by farmers in Africa; a new batch of seeds for the WPL catalog is expected. Rick and Alicia tentatively are planning a trip to Connecticut to choose new seeds.

D. Mark and the Trustees desire to change the overhead lighting in the main reading room of the WPL. The plastic sheets covering the florescent lighting is expensive to replace and that type of lighting is not optimal in any case. Mark and Alicia will work together to find solutions for better lighting and contractors who can work with WPL for installation.

E. Mark, Mavis and Rick will work together to produce the WPL contribution to the 2025 Town Report.

F. Patti Arrison Shakespeare Reading Group. For the twelfth year running Patti will lead a group reading of a Shakespeare play at WPL. The next play to be read is *A Winter's Tale*. Mark and Trustees agree that Patti has contributed a great deal to the town, not only at the library, but also at the Weathersfield Historical Society and at many town functions. Mark suggested the Trustees should let Patti know we recognize and value her contributions.

V. Old Business

A. Expansion Grant Status: Rick spoke with Anthony Gerard, an agent for GPI Construction, regarding expenses for the proposed WPL expansion project, should grant money be made available. Initial cost estimates were made 18 months ago, and building construction costs have not declined in the interim. Mr. Gerard suggested price estimates could hold for the moment, but that increases likely would occur. He further suggested that allocating an additional 10 percent over the previously estimated cost should cover any increase, and that he would need to be paid for reworking any numbers. Rick recommended the Trustees consider a re-opening of bidding for the project, but only if and when the grant money is made available to move forward.

B. Hot Water Heater is out of warranty and in need of replacement. Mark reports the cost for a replacement is \$1400.00.

C. WPL annual report to the Vermont Department of Libraries. Mark will report to the Department of Libraries on patron traffic to the WPL, including offsite programming. He will also identify multiple clubs and groups that either use the library for meetings or whose activities are partly sponsored by WPL, such as the astronomical viewing activities in the community hosted by WPL Trustee Rick Bates.

D. LD Mark is in preliminary discussions with Springfield Area Public Access TV to arrange for technology and expertise for videotaping and archiving of WPL Trustee meetings, as per new Vermont state regulations. Mark will be meeting with SAPA Director Aimee Parnell in January to move toward this goal.

E. Astronomy Update: Rick met with Ray Stapleton of Weathersfield Parks and Recreation about obtaining permission to move the astronomy observatory from one end of the parking lot to the other at Hoisington field in Perkinsville. There is unanimous agreement that better siting is needed, but just how to move the observatory is yet to be decided. Rick also gave information on a new and relatively inexpensive digital telescope with electronic tracking and Bluetooth sharing.

F. John gave an update on the so-called “250 Celebration” efforts, including sharing a newly released 16 page report prepared by Patti Arrison which details personal information on possible characters for the proposed play. The character briefs are based on historical figures in Weathersfield who are known to have attended the 1775 meeting where most freemen in town endorsed the Articles of Association. John also reported ongoing progress involving costuming, stage design, siting, etc.

G. Upcoming Christmas program at WPL. The program will be held at WPL December 13 and will feature a children’s choral group and John Arrison as Santa.

Motion to adjourn made by Rick at 8:54 pm and seconded by Alicia. All voted in favor.

Submitted by John Waite
WPL Board of Trustees Vice-President
November 22, 2024