

**Town of Chester Public Library Board of Trustees  
Meeting Minutes  
September 16, 2020**

**1. ROLL CALL**

**Trustees:** Lynn Thomas, Bob Walp, Judy Patterson, Tom Sliva, Sandy Deak, Noelle McCrum, Vanessa Hutton (excused)

**Library Staff:** Alma Alvarez, Library Director

**Friends of the Library Liaison:** Linda Taverni, President

**Guest:** Sara Dallas, SALS Director

**Town Board Liaison:** Karen DuRose

President Lynn Thomas called the meeting to order at approximately 1:11 pm.

**2. COMMENTS FROM SARA**

Sara described the opening plans at other libraries around us. First, she thanked the Trustees for staying in place during the pandemic. It is playing havoc with the finances. Bulk of the money comes from the State. The SALS 2021 budget will have a 22.6% drop in State aid. Chester Library will still have support. Our JA fees (for automation) will not be increased in 2021.

We will have another year to complete the Minimum Standards report. It was due in January 2021 but we will have another year before we need to provide that report. SALS staff is available to answer any questions we may have.

The overview of reopening is for Lynn to work with Alma on the following factors:

- staffing (Executive Order allows only one-half of the normal staff members)
- infection rates in the community
- Warren County information on infection rates
- guidelines for public opening

Our foremost concern is the safety of staff and facility.  
Sara departed from the meeting at 1:45 pm.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Noelle made a motion to approve the August 19, 2020 minutes. Sandy seconded the motion. Passed.

Judy made a motion to approve the September 9, 2020 Special Meeting minutes. Bob seconded the motion. Passed

#### **4. APPROVAL OF ANNUAL BUDGET**

Alma stated that the budget is a “flat” budget, roughly the same as last year. Tom made a motion to approve the 2020 Budget, and Noelle seconded the motion. Passed.

There was one budget adjustment. For 2020, \$1,000 was moved from the programs line and placed in the Office Supplies line. Tom made a motion to approve the adjustment, and Sandy seconded the motion. Passed.

#### **5. DISCUSSION OF ROB SIMON'S UPDATE**

Rob send a detailed report to Lynn. Rob just picked up the keys and will be replacing the current locks. Before authorizing acquisition of the property, the trustees scheduled a walk thru for 2:00 pm on Tuesday, September 22. An inspection of the property will be scheduled as well. Bob stated that there is approximately \$2,000 in the Library checking account which should be sufficient to cover the locks and inspections.

In respect to which EIN to use, Bob Jeffords recommends using “new” Library EIN which was opened last October. No tax forms to be filed because of our association with the Town. If it becomes municipal property, is it taxable?

Rob will follow up with Carpenter concerning the insurance policy.

#### **6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Prior to Alma's report, Lynn asked that all the Trustees and Linda share their thoughts about what they would like to see regarding the level of service in the library's next phase of reopening. The most common theme was that the trustees would like to see some form of limited browsing available, done safely.

In terms of opening hours, Alma says the only limitation is that the Library is to be open 25 hours a week. In the past, evening hours in the summer and summer to winter (6:00-8:00 pm) had very few customers (5-6 people in those 2 hours). Saturday AM hours are good but there are no staff available. There are no Town staff in the Municipal Building on Friday so the Library staff would be alone.

Alma and the staff have concerns about service to the public. Volunteers have been asked to come in to help, but they are not willing to work and have concerns about safety.

Alma expressed a willingness to provide limited browsing in the next phase of reopening. She feels that service needs to be provided to all patrons, children as well as adults.

Alma thought the area in the middle of the Library can be used for a display for browsing and include shelves of new arrivals for adults as well as access to some children's books. The Library staff is also planning to start putting exhibits up in the long "gallery" hallway leading to the circulation desk.

Lynn asked Alma if she would be willing to rewrite her Phase 3 proposal to include limited browsing, and Alma said she would. The biggest concern is safety first. She will have her draft to the Board by Monday, September 21. The Trustees and Alma will convene at a Special Meeting to be held on Wednesday, September 23 at 1 pm. to approve the revised plan.

Lynn reminded everyone that on Friday Trudy will email a questionnaire regarding the Tech Training so be sure to look for it.

The agenda for the meeting on Wednesday, September 23 (ZOOM) will start with a report from the Friends and Town (which we didn't get to at this meeting). We will then review Alma's revised Phase 3 plan for approval.

Another (separate) special meeting will be scheduled to focus on the draft Long Range Plan, the New Minimum Standards and new Committees.

The next regular Trustees' meeting will be Wednesday, October 21 at 1 pm.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Noelle made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:57 pm. Tom seconded.  
Passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy Deak, Secretary  
Library Board of Trustees  
Town of Chester Public Library