

PRESENT: Rosemarie Hartnett, Martha Breen, Sally Gilman, Eleanor Strang, Jean Williams
Mrs. Breen called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

MINUTES

On a motion by Mrs. Gilman, seconded by Mrs. Hartnett, the trustees voted unanimously to accept as printed the minutes of the meeting of August 14, 2007.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The director reported that the balances in the trustees' accounts were as follows: \$15,856.74 in the checking account; \$4,876.33 in the Marois account; and \$11,560.11 in the Certificate of Deposit, for a total of \$32,293.18. She indicated that she had no invoices for payment from trustee funds at this point, but was expecting in the very near future an invoice for \$10,080.00 from Embree Elevator. This would be the second payment in accordance with the contract and is payable on delivery of the equipment, which has arrived. On a motion by Mrs. Hartnett, seconded by Mrs. Gilman, the trustees unanimously voted to pay this bill from trustee funds when it arrives.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS

The first item of New Business was the Library Operating Budget for 2008. The director distributed her recommendations for the budget and back-up explanations, and went through the budget explaining each line item. With regard to the Pay line items, she indicated that her proposal contains one significant change from the past. The job of Proctor, which has been in the Temporary Pay account, became vacant in April, and was performed for the rest of that school year by the two custodians during their respective shifts, since the task of monitoring patron behavior is already in their job descriptions. The Night Custodian has indicated a willingness to do the job on a permanent basis. This entails adding 9 hours per week during the school year to his usual 31 hours. The trustees noted that this arrangement will benefit the library since it has been difficult to attract and retain Proctors due to the fact that the job entails limited hours and is for only nine months per year. The position of Proctor has therefore been deleted from the Temporary Pay account, and the additional hours for the Night Custodian are in the Regular Pay account for 2008.

With regard to the Fringe Benefit line items, there is an increase in Annual Sick Leave Buy-Back, since library employees, like employees of the Town's SEA union, will now be paid for 50% instead of 33% of unused sick leave remaining over the maximum at the end of the year. The director pointed out that three of the most significant fringe benefits (Health Insurance, Dental Insurance, and Workers' Compensation) are the Finance Department's estimates at this point, since the new rates won't be known until later this year. Once the new rates are known, these figures will be adjusted, as they will for the other Town departments as well.

Regarding the rest of the budget, the largest line item is Materials of Trade. The director indicated that, because of its size, this is one of the line items which is being spent very cautiously at this time in order to be sure that there is enough money in this year's Operating Budget to do the additional unexpected projects that have to be done to get the elevator back into safe operation as soon as possible. With regard to the amount to be requested in the 2008 budget, Mrs. Hartnett proposed a 3% increase for the MOT line item, and the other trustees agreed. With regard to the Office Furniture and Equipment line item, the director explained the items she proposes acquiring in 2008. The largest component is 7 new computers and monitors to replace the oldest ones now in use. Since the library has a total of 41 staff and public computers, the acquisition of 7 each year would enable it to be on a 6-year replacement cycle.

With regard to the contracts portion of the Building Maintenance line item, the director explained that there are two new contracts for 2008, in addition to the HVAC and Fire System contracts. The new ones are: the contract for the monitoring of the burglar alarm and panic buttons; and the elevator maintenance contract. The director explained that the figure for the General Repair and Maintenance component of the Building Maintenance line item has been increased, based on the actual average of what was spent in 2005 and 2006.

Regarding the Building Improvements line item, the director explained the list of projects, which include installing handicapped openers at the lower lobby entrance and Children's Room entrance, replacing the inner door at the Children's Room entrance, electrical improvements in the Reference Department and the Beshara meeting room, and installing gutters and downspouts. It was decided that vertical blinds for the north side of the building would also be added to this list, since that project is unlikely to be done this year as intended, due to the elevator problems.

After discussion, the trustees unanimously voted, on a motion by Mrs. Hartnett, seconded by Mrs. Gilman, to adopt the budget with a bottom line of \$1,451,537 as their proposed Operating Budget for 2008. This represents a 3.77% increase over the 2007 Operating Budget. The director will give all the necessary figures and back-up explanations to the Town Finance Department for inclusion in the Budget Book which is being prepared for the Municipal Budget Committee.

The second item of New Business was a request for use of the Beshara meeting room by a Salem resident who plans to have a representative of one of the major Presidential candidates explain his candidate's positions. The director indicated that the question is whether this would be a permissible use of the room under the current meeting room policy, and whether that policy itself is valid. On a motion by Mrs. Hartnett, seconded by Mrs. Gilman, the trustees unanimously voted that the director obtain a legal opinion regarding the current meeting room policy from the Local Government Center and/or Town Counsel.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The director reported that the elevator construction work, which started ahead of schedule on August 29, was going well, and that the demolition phase was finished. She reported that the library's role in Salemfest on September 15 would be to run a large Used Book Sale in the Beshara Room, and to host a number of community organizations at the library and on the library grounds. She reported that registration for the fall semester of pre-school story times, including the new Baby Story Times, would take place during the week of September 10.

TRUSTEE MATTERS

There were no Trustee Matters.

DATE AND HOUR OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, October 11, 2007 at 4:30 PM at the library. On a motion by Mrs. Gilman, seconded by Mrs. Hartnett, the trustees unanimously voted to adjourn at 6:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Eleanor Strang, Director