

**ILSLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
REGULAR MEETING  
JUNE 13, 2022  
JESSICA SWIFT COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM  
and via Zoom**

Board decisions are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

Present

Board members: Joe McVeigh, President; Amy Mincher, Secretary; Andy Hooper, Treasurer; Steve Gross, Meg Baker

Library Director: Dana Hart

Public: Revell Allen (via Zoom)

Minutes taken by: Joe McVeigh

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

President Joe McVeigh called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

See Board Packet <Board Packet 6.13.2022.pdf> for agenda and accompanying documents.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the regular meeting of May 9, 2022 were accepted with no changes.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Revell Allen, President of the Friends of Ilsley Public Library, updated the Trustees on the most recent Friends' book sale. The Friends are working on increasing membership and communicating their mission more broadly and effectively. There is still a need for younger, stronger volunteers to help shift books for the book sales. An individual from Williston has been picking up the books that would otherwise be discarded for repurposing, so saving trips to the transfer station. The next meeting of the Friends' board will be Tuesday, June 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 at the home of Cynthia Watters. Ilsley Board Liaison Amy Mincher will attend.

Steve Gross, Ilsley Board Liaison, reported on the most recent MCTV meeting on May 11. Farhad Kahn is now serving as chair of the group. Kurt Broderson attended the annual meeting of the Vermont Access Network (VAN) in Montpelier where there were discussions, workshops and talk about technology. VAN is a consortium of 24 public access networks across Vermont. This group is doing some visioning for the future of state-wide public access TV. As public access television is largely funded by cable television company revenues, it is anticipated that as more and more people move to streaming, that revenue source will decrease. This has already happened in Burlington, but has not yet hit Middlebury. It is hoped that the state legislature will appropriate funds to assist. MCTV has been busy covering graduation season, will hold three summer camp programs in film-making, and is gearing up for filming the Festival on the Green, a marquee event that takes a lot of work.

Andy Hooper noted the key role of MCTV in providing coverage of local governance meetings such as the Selectboard. Dana Hart noted the role of MCTV in providing educational offerings held in the library. Ilsley board members noted that although the MCTV studio was revamped during the pandemic, the heyday of studio-based programming seems to be in the past as individuals who might otherwise have had a regular program can now go straight to YouTube using minimal equipment. This may have implications for future space needs as the library considers its overall plans for renovation and expansion.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Dana Hart noted that with three staff members out on medical leave the staff is a bit thin on the ground. It has not been possible to find a full-time custodian. We have signed a 3-month agreement with Mr. Mike's cleaning service as a short-term solution. It may be necessary to hire two part-time custodians. Meg Baker asked why the town does not find a single company to clean all of the town buildings.

Dana commented on the newly redesigned library newsletter that now goes out via MailChimp which permits us to see how many people actually read it! We recently sent newsletters to approximately 1,300 people on our email list. They were opened by 33% of those who received it, which is much higher than the 20% industry average. This would suggest that more than 400 people are at least opening the newsletter. The links to staff picks and to calendar and programming are the most popular.

Joe suggested that communications might be an area to consider in the upcoming strategic plan.

The new newsletter about the Ilsley 100 Project developed by Jim Gish has gone out twice. So far about 80 people have signed up to receive it regularly via email. Its availability was announced on Front Porch Forum. Steve Gross will send an email to the members of the Middlebury Classic Film Club with information about Jim's newsletter.

Steve Gross complimented the extensive list of upcoming library activities.

Dana described a new online feature for patrons: a subscription to 4000 magazines that can be accessed via Libby or Overdrive. Chris Kirby researched this option for the library. The annual cost is about \$3,000 per year. A major benefit is that there is no limit to the number of patrons who can be reading the same magazine at one time. The library is seeking an appropriate balance between physical magazines and digital subscriptions. The new digital magazine options will be announced via a sign near the magazine section in the lobby, on Instagram and Facebook, on Front Porch Forum, in a press release on the website, and may be featured in an upcoming newsletter.

Joe commented on having a chance to observe story time fun and the amazing work of Tricia Allen. He suggested story time as a possible topic for one of Dana's upcoming op-ed pieces in the *Addison Independent*. Meg volunteered her son, Toby, to write an op-ed on banned books. Dana noted that the next partnered piece will be by Claire Tebbs about using the library as a space for young people after school.

## **PROJECT TEAM UPDATE**

Amy Mincher, Dana Hart, and Joe McVeigh updated the Trustees on the work of the Ilsley 100 Project Team. The Team meets on the second and fourth Thursday of the month at 10:00 a.m. in the library's community meeting room. All meetings are warned, open to the public, and available via Zoom. Minutes of meetings and associated materials are posted on the library's website.

The team is preparing to compare the viability of a number of possible scenarios so that no potential option is overlooked. Possibilities include remaining in the current space and repairing needed infrastructure; staying in the current space and renovating; staying in the current space, renovating and expanding; or building a new building in the downtown area. No decisions have been made at this time. The team is working on creating a decision matrix with which to consider the various options.

In the event that the best option were to build a new library, it would be necessary to find an "adaptive re-use" for the current building. At the May 26<sup>th</sup> team meeting, architect Steve Smith from Smith, Alvarez, & Sienkiewicz explained how the adaptive re-use process worked at the former Blodgett Furnace factory on the waterfront in Burlington.

Dana noted that an examination of our current facility showed that nearly 40% of our space is "overhead"—that is, not usable for programming. In other words, corridors, stairways, elevators, closets, etc. take up far more space than is the norm.

Dana, Barbara Doyle-Wilch, and Judith Harris have been working on the building "program." This is a depiction of the ideal number of square feet that should be devoted to various purposes such as meeting spaces, shelving, offices, etc. The building program does not make any assumptions about the actual location of these items and is intended to be used initially in the abstract. Later, the project team will consider in what form the program can be best implemented. The program will be presented to the project team at their meeting on June 16. Dana is confident that having done this groundwork carefully will make it possible to explain and defend decisions taken down the road.

Amy, Joe, and Dana described field trips to the new libraries in South Burlington and Shelburne.

Meg Baker encouraged the project team to engage with the public early in the process. She suggested that the team should solicit opinions and begin conversations early. Steve Gross noted that it was necessary to be patient and bring people along gradually. Joe noted that the team was feeling somewhat cautious about sharing ideas that were only under very preliminary consideration for fear of possible misunderstandings. It was noted that Jim Gish has been very thoughtful and deliberative in his approach. Meg noted the importance of getting people invested and involved. It is possible that some decisions down the road could be potentially polarizing.

#### **BOARD DISCUSSION: MISSION STATEMENT**

The Trustees continued their work on the draft vision and mission statements that was begun in April and further refined at the May board meeting and at the board retreat held on June 12<sup>th</sup>. See the Appendix to these minutes for the result of the discussion.

There was considerable discussion on the best ways to engage with library users about the vision and mission statements.

The following actions were decided:

- Amy Mincher will share the drafts with the Friends of the Library at their June 14<sup>th</sup> meeting and solicit feedback.
- Dana Hart will share the drafts with library staff at their June 14<sup>th</sup> meeting and solicit feedback.
- Steve Gross will solicit feedback from the MCTV board via email.
- Dana Hart will invite interested patrons to share their views via a link in next month's library newsletter.

The Trustees will consider the feedback and hope to finalize the vision and mission statements at the next regular meeting. Subsequently we will move on to strategic planning.

#### **ADJOURN**

President Joe McVeigh adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will take place on Monday, July 11th, at 5 p.m. in the Jessica Swift Community Meeting Room and via Zoom.

**Ilsley Public Library  
Vision/Mission Statement Development Project  
Draft 6/13/22**

These *draft* vision and mission statements were composed by the Ilsley Public Library Board of Trustees over a period from April to June 2022. They are still draft statements at this point. Your comments and responses to the questions below are welcome. You are welcome to share your ideas with any member of the Board of Trustees or with library Director, Dana Hart: [dana.hart@ilsleypubliclibrary.org](mailto:dana.hart@ilsleypubliclibrary.org)

**VISION**

We imagine a welcoming and vibrant community that inspires individuals to pursue their passions, discover new ideas, connect with others, and engage with civic life.

**MISSION**

The Ilsley Public Library System\* enriches lives and builds community connections by providing engaging and accessible programs, services, resources, and spaces that meet evolving community needs. Library staff invite everyone in to learn, create, and collaborate in a safe and friendly environment.

**Questions to consider**

1. If someone were new to the community, would these statements entice them to come to the library?
2. Do the statements capture the essential nature of the library and its role? Are they unique to Ilsley ?
3. Do these statements resonate with your own experience of the library?
4. Are these statements likely to garner support , for example community support for a renovation/expansion project or for grant or other funding?
5. Do these statements describe what we want to do?
6. Do they work for all populations? Who or what are left out?
7. Will they work over time or will they need to be regularly revised?
8. What is the perspective of the staff about what the future might look like? Do these statements work within that framework?

**Questions for the Board of Trustees to consider**

1. Are the statements sufficiently succinct? Could we remove anything?
2. Do the statements read well? Do they sound good? Are there any bits that are potentially ambiguous?
3. Is there any language that appears cliched or trite?
4. Can these statements be used as catalysts for future planning?
5. Could these statements be used as a foundation for the renovation/expansion project?
6. Will it be possible to align programming with the mission?

\* A library system is a library with more than one branch such as the Ilsley Public Library in downtown Middlebury and its branch, the Sarah Partridge Library in East Middlebury.