

Board of Library Trustees

Provincetown, Massachusetts

Minutes of Special Meeting

Monday, March 1, 1999 in the Town Hall Caucus Room.

Note: Because of snow, this meeting was rescheduled from February 26, 1999.

Attending:

Board of Library Trustees: Maghi Geary, Chair; Arthur Pike, Secretary; James Cole; Bonnie Steele McGhee; and Debra DeJonker-Berry, Director.

Heritage Museum Trustees: Len Bowen; John Gair;

(and later on) Candyce Rusk; Fred Pappalardo.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm. It is important to record that the Caucus Room presented very difficult problems for this meeting, because of noise in the corridor as people arrived for two subsequent meetings of the Board of Selectmen in the Judge Welsh Room.

Status Review: The Chair introduced the idea that a possible move for the Library would be to the present building of the Heritage Museum. She asked the Director to give a brief review of need for and efforts to relocate the present Library. The Director noted that the Library is currently working in a space just under 5000 square feet; over a three-year period, she and the Library Trustees have developed reliable figures that indicate that our operation needs about 15,000 square feet. Town Meeting in April 1998 voted funds for a Feasibility Study for the consolidation of Library operations, School Department operations, and Recreation Department operations in both renovated space and new construction at the present High School. With input from the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee, three possible plans were selected from the report of the Feasibility Study; these plans had been discussed at several joint meetings of the various boards. However, when these three plans were presented at a duly advertised Public Hearing, the consensus of the Town seemed that there was no public support at all for such consolidation. Very recently, in ongoing studies for the Heritage Museum, Binder Boland Associates had begun to look at one possible option: moving the Library into the present building of the Heritage Museum, together with relocation of the Heritage collection into two sites, one being the present Library building at Freeman Street. On the afternoon of this Board meeting, two of the Trustees had visited the Heritage Museum, accompanied by Anne Larsen, consultant for the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners; and by Eric Johnson, one of the architects for the Feasibility Study on consolidation. No immediate red flags were noted by this team against a possible move for the Library into the Heritage building.

Input from Heritage Trustees: The Chair noted that her Board of Library Trustees needs to act quickly (possibly before 7 pm) if any action would be able to come before Town Meeting for April 1999. However, this Board would like to hear informal comments from the Heritage Trustees.

In a brief summation, John Gair indicated that the Heritage Trustees were in the middle of a process with Binder Boland to determine what work must be done on their building. It is probably premature to come to a decision soon about building exchange with the Library, even though he did not feel nega-

ively about such a move. There is not yet enough information available, especially as to any relocation of the Rose Dorothea.

Candyce Rusk concurred with John Gair that the Heritage Trustees are still in a process of learning the cost of the various options on which Binder Boland are working, with the Library option having been considered only in the last two weeks. In spite of the many difficulties that the Heritage building presents, she would like to see the Town retain the building for the Library.

Len Bowen raised questions about the Library's projected need for space, in comparison with other neighboring towns. He has negative feelings about the probability of Provincetown raising money for Library expansion, especially in the face of needs for sewerage and pier repair.

Fred Pappalardo suggested that new construction for a library might be possible in the parking lot on Bradford Street, next to Alden Street. It is his personal feeling that the present Heritage building is very expensive to renovate and maintain, with a probable drain on Library resources if a building exchange were accomplished. In a general discussion among the Heritage Trustees, the point was made that even a commercial use for the Heritage building will have to generate enough revenue for expensive maintenance. Fred also noted that the original purpose of the Heritage building was a meeting space, an auditorium. He believes that the Town could benefit most from keeping that feature, probably precluding use for the Library.

Questions were raised by members of both Boards about timetable. What can be done before the upcoming Town Meeting? What kind of maintenance is required on both buildings while major fundraising is begun toward renovation? How can public hearings be held to explain to the Town what various options might entail? Can there be referendum questions posed to Town Meeting to try to get a sense of public sentiment?

In response to these thoughts, Joy McNulty asked to speak; the Board agreed to her request. She stated that a warrant article has been circulated for 140 signatures, an article giving the Selectmen the right of conveyance for the Heritage building, but only when the time comes and the question is ready.

Len Bowen added an observation that it may be possible to convey the building to the (federal) National Historic Trust for perpetual maintenance and retrofitting for best usage.

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The Chair thanked the members of the Heritage Board for their input and their discussion.

Other Business: The Chair requested that the Board give authorization for payment for the completed work done for the Feasibility Study. In spite of the noise that had arisen around the Selectmen going into executive session, Arthur Pike moved that the Board of Library Trustees authorize release of any and all monies due to J. Stewart Roberts Associates for the work on the Feasibility Study. This motion was seconded by Jim Cole and was passed without further discussion 4-0.

Copies of the Bylaws and a set of Rules of Procedure were circulated for possible discussion. In view of the oncoming moment of meeting with the Selectmen as well as because of the extreme noise, the Secretary suggested that Bylaw discussion be deferred. The Chair asked the Board to study the documents for action at the regular March meeting.

The Chair opened discussion about the urgency of getting a warrant article on the Heritage building ready for Town Meeting. After some options were explored of trying for another meeting late in this evening or early Friday morning, Bonnie Steele McGhee moved that the Board empower the Director to draft a warrant article requesting that the Town appropriate \$20,000 for the purpose of obtaining schematic drawings to see how the Heritage building could be used as the Public Library. Jim Cole seconded the motion. Some discussion was raised about getting help from the Friends of the Library to cover costs somewhat greater than \$20,000. After further discussion, the motion was voted 4-0. **Note:** The completed draft was transmitted in a memo to the Town Manager and the Board of Selectmen. A copy of this memo is appended (Attachment 1).

The Chair also raised a question about whether the motion just passed should become a warrant article if the possible action of the Selectmen in the next few minutes might make the article useless. In response, Arthur Pike moved that the Board should not submit its warrant article if it is preempted by the Selectmen. Bonnie Steele McGhee seconded this motion, and it was voted 4-0.

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Adjournment:

James Cole moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded and passed 4-0. Adjournment was at 7:15 pm.

Arthur L. Pike,

Secretary. 3/18/99

approved:

(date) (initials)