

Goodnow Library

Board of Trustees

Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2008

Goodnow Library, Trustees Room

7:40 p.m.

Minutes

Present: C. Hull (chair), Phyllis Cullinane, Lily Gordon, Bob Iuliano, Barbara Pryor, Jill Browne, and Bill Talentino.

1. Call to Order and Minutes: the June minutes were approved with one typo correction. B. Iuliano/J. Browne)

2. Financial Report (Final FY08): for a variety of reasons FY08 was an uncharacteristic year. There were several large and unpredictable expenditures that came up, primarily building repairs, and two unexpected surpluses in salaries. The surpluses were a result of staff illnesses. Ultimately we were able to balance the budget by transferring surpluses from Salaries into Building Maintenance. As part of this transfer, money was carried forward (\$9,700) into FY09 because some of the repair work could not be completed by the end of FY08 -June 30.

(July/August FY09): the appropriated budget is less than the level service budget for FY09. The level service budget reflected the estimated cost increases in utilities, maintenance, library materials (books), personnel and other areas of the budget. This version of the FY09 budget totaled \$998,515 which was \$47,776 over FY08. The largest portion of the increase, \$24,000 was for salary step and COLA increases that Goodnow is obligated to meet in FY09. Most of the remaining increases represented inflationary costs for utilities, service contacts, building supplies and books. The library received \$965,156. This is \$14,405 over the FY08 budget but \$33,359 below the level effort budget for FY09. The \$14,405 increase was appropriated to salaries. To stay within budget, the following reductions were made: \$10,300 in salaries, \$8,300 in library materials, \$6,000 in utilities, \$5,400 in contracted services (cleaning etc.), and \$2,000 in building maintenance and supplies, \$1,000 in office expenses and travel, and \$700 in automation.

Two months into the new fiscal year the library has used the majority of its repairs budget. There have been a large number of repairs-mostly to the elevator. Spending is not unusual in other areas.

3. Friends Report: the first Friends meeting of FY09 started 15 minutes prior to the Trustees meeting. Bill introduced Michael Briody to the Friends before attending the Trustees meeting. Bill used the opportunity to also reiterate his interest in working with the Friends to find ways to attract more young family members.

4. Director's Report:

a) Personnel: the new Head of Circulation Michael Briody began in late July. He has acclimated well. The YA/reference Librarian is back and has assumed her regular schedule and duties. The difficulties experience in personnel in FY08 taxed the staff and had a negative impact on service and our focus on goals for FY08. However, Bill believes the staff as a whole came out of it stronger. Assistant Director Karen Tobin made a major contribution to this effort.

b) RFID Report: Brookline, Cambridge and Wellesley are going forward with the RFID project. They have the funding. Several other MLN libraries will follow soon. Bill has remained an active member of the RFID group. With other members, he visited a library in Long Island network that is using RFID and the same automated circulation vendor as Minutemen. The library is also using one of the RFID vendors under consideration by the RFID group. The group gained valuable practical information from the visit. It reinforced its appreciation for the substantial positive impact RFID has on library services-both for staff and library users. As discussed at the May and June trustees meetings, it seems clear that the level of additional staffing called for in Goodnow's Strategic Plan will not be realized in the foreseeable future. It is unlikely that Goodnow will see any meaningful increases. It is more likely to see small reductions. At the same time, Goodnow's circulation continues to increase. It went up by 21,000 items in FY08. It is on the rise in FY09. In addition to increasing staff size, our Strategic Plan calls for addressing staffing needs by acquiring technology that will enhance staff productivity by minimizing the amount of staff time invested in laborious and repetitious activities such as circulation tasks. Given the Town's current economic status, Bill believes the technology component of the Plan offers the most promise in terms of resolving staffing needs. He asked the trustees to consider making a commitment to an RFID plan in 2009-2010. This would mean looking anew at potential funding sources. Part of this commitment would be to move forward in a phased-in approach. By initiating the project in the upcoming budget year as opposed to later years, we will be addressing the growing gap between staffing and workload sooner as opposed to later.

The strategy Bill presented relies on the sparest configuration for supporting RFID. Phase I calls for relying on our own equipment, furniture and staff (conversion), as much as possible, and acquiring the least expensive equipment and feature options, the cost would come to about \$130,000. It could be phased in over two years. Other aspects of the RFID project, additional user and staff stations and an inventory component (software and hardware), could be added later.

c) Recycling Paper: this effort became more complicated than I expected. Placement of the dumpster is no small matter. We will probably have to have an enclosure around it. Bill is on a newly formed committee of department heads looking at building issues. This is an item that the committee will take up.

d) Building/Facilities: the new configuration of seating and stacks for the magazine and oversized book areas is a huge success. Bill hopes to be installing the new lights over the New Books area this week. Karen and Bill will be visiting sign making stores next week for ideas on signage to market material.

The landscaping efforts the Library and Friends made on the north side of the building, combined with the efforts of the Park Dept. seem to have had a positive impact. The area can be loosely described as a lawn. It will not end up in a House and Garden photo shoot, but it looks OK and seems easy to maintain.

The Town Manager formed a Facilities Committee to look at building maintenance and repair issues and costs. Bill, the Building Inspector, the Town Buildings Manager and several staff of SPS are on the committee. The group will look at ways to improve maintenance and control costs more effectively.

e) Technology: Goodnow acquired 6 new PC's in June with \$2,000 from the FY08 Goodnow Trusts. Keeping the old monitors from the PC's that were replaced brought the cost down. This infusion of new PC's was needed. Bill believes that we will need to follow this pattern annually. Based on past practice, it is unrealistic to assume that the Town will replace and upgrade a meaningful percentage of our PC's regularly. Mark Thompson has been as supportive as possible, but the funding for maintaining hardware and software is quite limited.

f) FY10: assuming that level services are a given, Bill think our goals for "new initiatives" should be to acquire RFID, increase the book budget, and restore the 4 lost Sundays.

g) Strategic Plan: Bill revised it slightly and extended its timeline through June 2010. Karen has reviewed it. He will revise the detailed timeline this week. She will review it as well. Once revised, the plan will be sent to the MBLC. To get grants, a library has to submit a plan to the MBLC.

h) Trust Funds: the FY09 proposal was submitted to the Trustees of Town Donations (TTD) in August. We received approval today. Bill distributed the TTD's June report on trusts at the meeting. The trustees noted that the value of investments went down.

i) Selectmen: Goodnow's annual meeting with the Selectmen is scheduled for 8PM on Tuesday, Sept. 23. Bill's plan is to provide a review similar to those in the recent past. He will focus on our goals and accomplishments for the past year and the goals for the upcoming year. The trustees asked that Bill express their concern for the growing imbalance between staffing and workload and delineate its impact on services.

5. Trustees Report:

a) Goodnow Foundation: waiting for word from the Sudbury Foundation. Bill has been gathering information relevant to moving forward with the consultant.

6. Old Business: none

7. New Business: none

8. Adjournment: 9:10 (B. Iuliano/L. Gordon)