

WALKER MEMORIAL LIBRARY  
BOARD OF REGENTS AND TRUSTEE MEETING  
February 15, 2018

4:00pm - Library Gathering Room

PRESENT: Judith Reidman, Jane Cote, Roy Leighton, William Hilton, Christine Latini, Alice Persons, Marian Peterson, Dawn Levesque. Fran Fritzsche-Jensen, Jerre Bryant, Rebecca Albert.

**Call to Order** The meeting was called to order at 4:00pm.

Approval of Minutes: Roy Leighton made a motion to accept the January minutes as presented. Bill Hilton seconded the motion. All were in favor, motion passed.

**Library Directors Report**

- A. The security cameras have been installed.
- B. The woodwork repairs in the Gathering Room have been completed.
- C. Enica gave a brief overview of the new website.
- D. Work space for the staff has been an issue. Jerre Bryant recommended hiring an independent space planner to help with this issue. Bill Hilton made a motion to have Dennis Lachman, from Lachman & Associates come and evaluate the library's space. Marian Peterson seconded the motion, 8 were in favor and 1 opposed. The motion passed.
- E. The balance in the Saunders fund is \$200.00. There is a reserve fund and a donation fund. Rebecca did not know the exact balances and needed to meet with the Finance Director to determine exact balances. R.G. Eaton Woodworks Invoice will be paid from the Library Reserve Fund.

**Unfinished Business**

- A. Rebecca gave the Board a rough draft of a new Room Reservation Policy.
- B. The ongoing issues with the parking lot must be regulated with a written agreement with the apartment building and the bank if so desired and with signage. The city and library are under no obligation to provide parking to either of them. Jerre Bryant suggested to deal with the biggest problem of overnight parking and vehicles that are parked for several days be a ban on overnight parking with signage for everyone from 11pm-7am. It is clear, simple and across the board which does not discriminate. Fran Fritzsche-Jensen made a motion to have restrictive parking regulation for the library parking lot. Jane Cote seconded the motion. 7 in favor 2 opposed, motion passed.
- C. Rebecca gave the board a card that noted all the locations that are accepting book donations.
- D. Rebecca still does not have a copy of the current contract for cleaning. The copy she had was from 2013-2015 and found that dusting was listed on the contract. Fran Fritzsche-Jensen made a motion to instruct the Library Director to get a current contract from the cleaning company. Roy Leighton seconded the motion. All were in favor none opposed, motion passed.
- E. Rebecca is still working on a job description for a Deputy Director and will be adding this to her budget request as a stipend position to a current employee.
- F. The circulation desk reconfiguration has been on the capital improvement list for several years. The Lending Services Librarian, Luke provided Rebecca with a few desired items and a cost of \$22,000. Rebecca does not see the sense in doing this until the lobby gets painted and new carpet.
- G. Enica and Matthew are working on redesign of the current Walker Memorial Library logo.
- H. Rebecca will request that the Administrative Assistant obtain a quote for the repair and repainting of the two outside signs.
- I. There is no new information on the opening of the Local History Room and Gathering Room.
- J. Rebecca handed out a copy of the Library's Mission Statement and Strategic Plan.

## **New Business**

A. Trustees, Marian Peterson and Fran-Fritzsche-Jensen made the following motion.

*TO: Library Board Members*

*FROM: Walker Trustees*

*DATE: January 29, 2018*

*RE: Local History Room*

*Walker Memorial Library is six years into a renovation project that started in 2011. It has been a slow and laborious journey but the results are notable. We have refurbished our historic slate roof, restored the original finials on each peak, added new gutters and downspouts and waterproofed the exterior foundation; we have eliminated the dampness that has plagued the ground floor space, poured a new cement floor, and created a mold free space for employees; we removed and re-constructed the foundation of our historic 14 foot granite steps; we have changed the heating system to efficient, dependable hot air; we have restored our original windows, cleaned, painted, re-carpeted the second floor historic rooms, restored the wood paneling, and more.*

*The Board is grateful to the City for their encouragement and support in each of these projects that have been a partnership of contributions of personnel, time, and money. The Board is most appreciative.*

*Today, the Board is confronting spacing issues. We have restored the Walker building into a comfortable, welcoming space, yet we are dealing with space constraints. The quiet public library that most Baby-Boomers grew up knowing is no longer the dynamic public library of current library users.*

*The components of what constitutes a vibrant, public library have changed. Pew Research Center reports that Americans want libraries to teach people digital skills and new creative technologies like 3-D printers. At the same time libraries should offer more comfortable places for reading, working, and relaxing. Americans feel public libraries contribute much to providing information and a safe place for people to spend time. Educational opportunities and creative spaces appear to be important to library visitors. 24% of those surveyed are in favor of moving print books and stacks out of public locations to free up more space for things such as tech centers, reading rooms, meeting rooms and cultural events.*

*(Pew Research Center: Internet and Technology: Libraries 2016)*

*Walker Memorial Library faces these issues knowing the library cannot please everyone. As technology advances, Walker is adapting and changing. A public library cannot ignore the demands of its public. Currently, a third of the main floor of the Walker building is devoted to local history. While in 1989, the idea of collecting local materials and making special books and memorabilia available to users was warmly received, in 2018, the idea of using a third of the Walker space for materials that are duplicated in the collection of Westbrook Historical Society appears contradictory to the needs of the community. Currently, Westbrook Historical Society has grown in size and community support. The Society is housed at Westbrook's Community Center at 426 Bridge Street and open and available six hours a week and by request. In 2018, the local history collection at Walker remains an extravagant duplication. While Walker's hours are longer, the availability of staff for one-on-one time presents constraint with current staffing levels. The demand for use of the materials is minimal and the traffic it generates is not substantial enough to justify the reservation of space or personnel.*

*Given the historical imperative of the Walker will, Trustees are responsible for the appropriate use of the building for the benefit of the citizens of Westbrook. It is in that interpretation that the Trustees make the following recommendation.*

*After considerable and careful deliberation, Walker Memorial Library Board recommends the elimination of the local history collection as it is currently structured. We recognize that Walker has a small collection of memorabilia that is not duplicated elsewhere. Those items should be confined to a locked case with notation in the catalog of its availability. Items not appropriate for Walker's general book collection, should be offered to Westbrook Historical*

*Society and to area libraries that may have the interest and space to house such.*

*Further, we advise the director to restructure the space herein toward amenable meeting, collaboration, and conference space available to non-profit groups and individuals.*

*The Board further recommends that the Gathering Room remain open during open hours and be available as a reading room unless preempted by programming.*

*This recommendation is made to make maximum use of the available space within the building, to create the appropriate atmosphere for residents, and to utilize Walker's resources to its fullest. With this recommendation, we charge the Director and staff to implement these changes.*

Bill Hilton seconded the motion, letters were read to the Board from Julie Peterson and Karen Spear regarding the Local History Room. All were in favor of the motion, motion passed. Christine Latini made a motion to charge the Administrative Assistant to contact the Historical Society for the local history collection items that they want. Dawn Levesque seconded the motion. All were in favor, motion passed.

B. The 2018-2019 budget was submitted to administration and the presentation to the City Council will be on April 9.

Next Meeting: March 15, 2018

Respectfully Submitted,  
Christine Latini