

**Minutes for Ainsworth Public Library Meeting**  
**Williamstown Public Safety Building**  
**Tuesday April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021**  
(Official)

**Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM

**Attendance:**

Helen Duke – Trustee Chair	Rodney Graham – Select Board Chair
Tammy Griggs – Trustee Secretary	Jessica Worn – Select Board
Sarah Snow – Librarian	Charlotte Mills – Community Member
Carol Corneille – Trustee	Alice Simpson – Community Member
Jill Plastridge – Trustee	Maggie Sample – Community Member
Karla Perkins – Trustee	

**Online participants:**

Gary Deziel – UVM Extension  
Lara Keenan – VT DOL  
Matt Roulou – Select Board  
Jackie Higgins – Town Manager  
Joan Hutson  
Ilene Elliot  
Monique Hayden

**Opening Remarks from Chairperson:** Helen Duke called the meeting to order. She stated the purpose of the meeting and proceeded to thank the Department of Libraries, Select Board members and all others for participating in tonight’s meeting. She explained the procedure of the meeting and what is expected of everyone.

**Trustee Questions:** Tammy Griggs presented the following questions to the Department of Libraries on behalf of the Trustee Board.

1. The library has been a municipal since 1911, if we separated from the Town, what kind of message would we be sending to the taxpayers? How would this affect our community?
  - Lara Keenan greeted everyone and explained that her position is to act as an advisor. She stated all communities are different. Here are just a few things to consider if the library is separated. There is a loss of efficiency, sending a question as to whether we are no longer valued, separation could cause higher costs and taxpayers will potentially lose a connection to local government. Final thought: what do the taxpayers want?
  - Rodney Graham clarified that the Select board in no way wants to separate Williamstown library from being a municipality. Their issue is the way the budget is handled.

- Maggie Sample asked what the amount was that the library went over on?
  - Matt Roulou stated he agreed with Rodney the select board is not looking to separate the library from the town municipal. The town and library need to be responsible for their budgets under the statues.
  - Gary Deziel discussed ways of budgeting that will best serve the town.
2. At the Select board meeting we attended in February the Chairman of the Select board mentioned Titles 22 & 24. Can you elaborate on what these two titles mean and why you mentioned them?
    - Rodney Graham stated the Trustees are elected by the town and they are responsible for the budget. The library budget gets merged into the General Fund and the town has no control over the Library monies. The select board would like to separate the library budget from the town budget to alleviate any future discrepancies.
    - Lara Keenan stated when she was a Public Library Director, she worked closely with the town Finance Director. The library didn't use their own accounting system they used the towns accounting system so there weren't discrepancies.
    - Rodney Graham stated concerns about the budgeting between the library and the town not matching up.
  3. Helen Duke asked Lara Keenan to explain Titles 22 & 24.
    - Lara Keenan explained in detail the operation of Title 22 & 24. One of the many things she stated is it helps the Trustees to protect the taxpayers, so they have access to information.

**Select Board Questions:**

1. Rodney Graham asked if there was any precedent or requirement that stated the library budget should be carried in the General Fund?
  - Lara Keenan stated it's done differently across municipalities and suggested to contact the VLCT or town Lawyer for suggestions on how to go about it if it is the intention to separate the library budget from the general fund.
  - Rodney Graham stated they have never found record of when the budget merged.
  - Lara Keenan suggested looking through all the minutes again.
2. Helen Duke asked Lara Keenan what the process would be if we were to separate the budget as a separate line item?

**Discussion:** There was a lot of discussion around the process of separating the library budget from the town budget as well as where the reserve fund went. And what happens to any money that is left over from the library budget.

- Jackie Higgins made clarification on the surplus reserve fund and how the library would need to proceed with getting a reserve fund.

**Public Comment:** none

- Rodney Graham asked the Trustees if we wanted to have our budgets separated? If not, then we need to come up with a plan on how we are going to proceed to resolve the budget issues. He suggested we meet again with the select board or have two members of each board work together to come up with a solution. He asked when we could let them know?
- Matt Roulou suggested we contact the VLTC to get some information on what is normal and make sense of what we are trying to do.
- Tammy Griggs stated that the Trustees wanted to work together as a team with the town and best serve our community.
- Helen Duke commented that the Trustees would be having a special meeting to discuss how we would like to proceed in the future with the budget. Then we will contact the board to schedule a meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION IF NEEDED – 1 V.S.A. § 313

Next Meeting April 9<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM

**Adjournment:** Helen called for adjournment.

**Time:** 7:46 PM

**Minutes submitted by:** Tammy Griggs, Trustee Secretary