

Camden Public Library Board of Trustees Minutes of the Meeting of February 18, 2021 via Zoom

In Attendance:

Silvio Calabi, John Fitzgerald, Susan Fitzgerald, Ken Gardiner, Ken Gross, Dave Jackson, Pat Jones,, Elinor Klivans, Nikki Maounis, Colin Page, Betsy Perry, Kristen Smith, Susan Todd, Marti Wolfe

Guests in Attendance: Hallie Arno (intern with the Watershed School Climate Action Leadership Lab), Alison McKellar (Camden Select Board), Shri Verrill (Senior Watershed Restoration Manager Midcoast Conservancy)

Absent: Penny Abbott, Jenna Lookner, Jeremy Pratt, Sarah Serafini

Welcome: Pat Jones welcomed guests and called meeting to order 4:00PM.

Minutes of the January 21, 2021 Library Board of Trustees were reviewed. John Fitzgerald suggested a change of wording under the heading, *FY 2021-2022 Draft Budget Presented*, bullet point seven reads, "Contribution from the Town of Camden will be the same." John Fitzgerald made a motion to amend this point to read, "*Assuming that the contribution from the town will be the same as the previous year, we the Trustees do not plan on asking for an increase.*" Pat Jones seconded, and the minutes as amended were unanimously approved.

Notes on Harbor Park: Ken Gross

Ken provided background/historical information related to the establishment of Harbor Park and its transfer to the town in 1932. He framed the legal aspects regarding stewardship of Harbor Park by the Trustees of the Camden Public Library and cited several sources; Library By-laws, Camden Town Ordinance, and notes from Mary Louise Curtis Bok to the Town regarding the conveyance of Harbor Park. The power, authority, and duty to manage and control the Camden Public Library, Amphitheatre, and Harbor Park is in the hands of the Library Trustees.

Ken noted that he and Marti researched History Center documents looking for some indication of MLCB's vision for Harbor Park. Historical photos and details from her letters (prior to HP completion) were shared. "Clearing away ugly buildings," "creating a green shorefront," "putting the shorefront part of it (park) in good condition," and "building up the broken wall" are quotes from her letters.

Again in 1951, MLCBZ (Mary Louise Curtis Bok Zimbalist) requested the Olmsted Bros. make further improvements along the waterfront including a new seawall. Part of the cost for the work was requested from the Town and was eventually furnished.

The deed to Harbor Park is conditional. Harbor Park must be used for park purposes only or revert back to MLCB's heirs and legatees.

Montgomery Dam and Harbor Park Update: Alison McKellar (Select Board), Shri Verrill (Senior Watershed Restoration Manager Midcoast Conservancy), Hallie Arno (intern with the Watershed School Climate Action Leadership Lab)

Alison McKellar began the presentation with a video of Harbor Park during extreme high-tide events and rain/wind storms. A surging dam, submerged benches, erosion of the upper bank, and a submerged seawall were evident. In addition, photos and footage of flooding issues upriver from the dam were shown. Alison reported that these flooding events are happening four to eight times per month.

Also shown were precipitation data charts and tables showing a trend of increasing rainfall amounts and the prediction of more intense precipitation events in the future. The Northeast US is expected to receive the greatest increase in precipitation due to Climate Change.

Alison explained how the Dam Control Agent manages lake water levels. She noted that the entire Megunticook Watershed passes through downtown Camden.

The Feasibility/Alternatives Analysis Report, Montgomery Dam, Megunticook River, May 3, 2019, was explained. Before reinvesting in Montgomery Dam the Select Board commissioned this study to look at pros and cons of different alternatives. This study, Feasibility/Alternative Analysis, concluded that the best thing from a long-term cost standpoint would be to remove the dam. This option, if selected, would cause the greatest change in area, Harbor Park included. Therefore in making any decision about the dam, the Town needs to work with the Library Trustees who control Harbor Park.

Alison went on to describe grant funding received by the Town to study the dam removal alternative. The Town received a \$139K grant from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to study the larger watershed. A Technical Assistance Grant from Maine Coastal Program was acquired to create a design that would be highly likely to receive outside funding from environmental organizations. If stakeholders decide as a community to following the recommendations of these environmental organizations, Camden could possibly implement the project, with dam removal, without any cost to taxpayers.

It was noted that no decision has been made and multiple layers of approval will be needed from Select Board, Library Trustees, and Voters. The grant itself does not make the Town able to move forward until everybody comes to an agreement.

Next, she explained that Interfluve has continued to study the area. They have taken borings from Harbor Park and conducted hydraulic monitoring, tidal gauge monitoring, and the impact of dam removal on the float system. These studies will result in more sketches and options. For now, the Town has a few conceptual drawings to show select groups of people with the goal of gathering feedback and input. Alison asked that Trustees be cautious about sharing details/information from the drawings with the public at this time. The grant deadline is June.

Alison showed a drawing that depicted the Megunticook River flowing naturally, dam removed. This option would significantly impact lower Harbor Park. She pointed out features in the drawing related to Climate Change recommendations such as building a staggered sea wall with natural features vs. straight walls. Once again, she emphasized that the Town will need a lot of feedback from the Library.

Photos of fish passages established in other Maine locations were shown. Alison pointed out that there are very few urban river restorations/fish passages.

Alison posed the following questions to the Trustees:

How much change might Trustees be willing to entertain? Who will be involved? What will the process be like going forward if we want to try to maximize the amount of external funding?

The presentation concluded with a variety of historical photos.

Hallie Arno, intern from Watershed School and a student at the College of the Atlantic, was introduced. Hallie is involved in Climate Change action. She described her studies and interest in Camden's Montgomery Dam project.

Shri Verrill, Senior Watershed Restoration Manager, Midcoast Conservancy, described her role in regards to the project. As a partner with the Town, she will lead the effort, facilitate the dissemination of information, and help folks understand options and make informed decisions.

Alison offered the Trustees additional resources and asked for questions.

Question:

In the drawing, a fish ladder is not really evident. Did I miss it, or is it there?

Alison explained: If Montgomery Dam is removed, then a fish ladder may not be needed. We may have a combination of natural river with fish passage enhancements. The drawing was created to incorporate a highest number of flood reduction and habitat goals. Turner Falls on Duck Trap River fish passage was cited. Shri added that the fact that a fishway did not pop-out is a testament to the natural look.

Question:

It is imperative that Trustees get involved in this process now and understand impacts of different options on Harbor Park. How are we going to move forward together? Who do we get in touch with? How do we get started?

Alison brainstormed ways for Trustees to become involved. It was decided that this question will be addressed outside of this meeting.

Comment:

Silvio offered to be involved and reiterated the need to meet demands of sea level rise and Climate Change. He suggested Trustees maintain an awareness of MLCB's original goals for HP and believes MLCB would be intrigued by the design as presented. He offered to be the Board's point person.

Question:

Behind the businesses (above the falls), what is that area to become?

Alison explained that the sediment would be removed to expose the ledge and shared thoughts about how one might make this area more visually appealing. It was noted that this is a big unknown and concern of business owners. Discussion ensued.

Nikki suggested that she and the Board of Trustees discuss the information presented and get back to Alison with the next step forward.

Pat thanked our guests for the presentation.

Executive Director's Report: Nikki Maounis

Annual Report: The Annual Report is in a new format this year. It will be mailed to Trustees, donors at \$500 and above level, the Town Budget Committee, Town Manager, and Select Board.

It is also available on the website and Facebook. Paper copies will be available at the Library door.

AARP Taxes for Seniors: This service will begin first week in March. Eighty people waiting and hope to serve 200 folks in the six weeks before April 15th. Patrons will exchange paperwork at their car to the volunteer. Tax volunteers will work in the Reading Room then return paperwork to the patron at the car.

Siemens: CPL is expected to make first payment to Siemens toward the end of FY 2021-2022; therefore, a \$13,000 adjustment was made on the FY 2021-2022 budget. Budget looks different, but the bottom line for the Town ask is the same. Silvio asked if we know when Siemen's crew will begin. Nothing definitive yet. Ken will have more for us on this timeline soon. Some control system difficulties starting again. Hoping Siemens begins soon.

Finance Committee: John Fitzgerald

John shared that donations were strong again in January. Book sales are also strong. Expenses were held in check. Overall, we are in the black. Nikki added that we are 71% of the way in meeting our increased donation projection for this year.

Facilities: Ken Gross

Siemen's will be in touch about the schedule. Nothing concrete at this time. New boiler and new tanks are supposed to be in place by September.

Development: Colin Page and Marti Wolfe

Eighteen artists lined up for the plein-air art event. *Camden on Canvas* will be divided into two events, Plein-air, July 30 - August 1, 2021 and an Exhibition of finished work at Page Gallery later in the summer or fall.

Pat commented on the Children's Art Show. Colin described the event which provided 200 canvases to young people who wished to participate.

Parks: Dave Jackson

Dave noted that he got a second opinion on the oak tree pruning (brown-tailed moth nests) and has decided to inoculate the trees like we did last year. It will get rid of a lot of the brown-tailed moth. Nikki mentioned that we had very few complaints about the brown-tailed moths last summer (Library properties).

Eighteen weddings planned, five cancelled. Dave is counseling all wedding couples about following health and safety guidelines. Weddings are restricted to 50 people again this summer due to pandemic. This number is based on the size of the Amphitheater, 5 people per thousand square feet.

New Business:

Nikki will start an email chain for Trustees to share feedback about the information presented, Montgomery Dam/Seawall/Harbor Park issues. Then she noted that we will need to make a decision about our next step in the next several days. The March meeting is going to be a Budget Committee meeting on March 18, 2021, Zoom 6:30PM.

Motion made to close meeting, seconded and unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned: 5:48PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marti Wolfe

Secretary, Camden Public Library Board of Trustee