

SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS LIBRARY SUBCOMMITTEE
MAY 15, 2020. 1:30 P.M. VIRTUAL MEETING

MEETING MINUTES

The May 15, 2020, 1:30 P.M. LIBRARY SUB COMMITTEE meeting was duly advertised and held electronically through Zoom Virtual Meeting Platform. The meeting was held in this manner due to the current State regulations in place from the COVID 19 pandemic.

Attendance: C.L. Lindsay, Chair, Kay Reiss, Dennis Mankin, Noel Barrett, Supervisor, Robert McEwan Supervisor and secretary, Alex Nagy, Zoom technical operator.

Audience Attendance: (Zoom User names): Ron Cronise, Darcy Fair, Connie Hillman, Eric Jacobson, other public residents.

Zoom Recorder turned on.

- I. Meeting Called to order 1:34 PM. C.L. Lindsay outline the protocol for the meeting
- II. Meeting participants identified themselves
- III. Task Force Purpose:
 - I. C.L. Lindsay outlined the need to:
 - I. Define the legal relationship between the Free Library of New Hope Solebury (NHSFL) and the Township
 - II. Define the potentially needed processes to appoint the Township's 1 or 2 Library Trustee members
 - III. Define the process to determine funding
 - IV. Accountability processes
 - II. Dennis Mankin added that in his view our task was more general in nature and questioned whether we should define a process for funding, but should:
 - I. Set forth the finding of our research into the law
 - II. Research the structure and governance of other area libraries.
 - III. Outline the history of the library, its' financial structure and of its relationship with the Township
 - IV. Document (if possible) the impact past township contributions have had on library performance
 - V. Consider setting out suggested overarching principles Board of Supervisors follows when allocating public monies
- IV. Legal aspects of our study: A wide ranging discussion on a review of the statute included:

- I. We tentatively agreed that at this point a draft agreement with the Library regarding the township-appointed members was premature and may be unnecessary
- II. The Board of Supervisors' objective should be to seek competent Board appointees
- III. Once appointed these Library Board members would owe their fiduciary duty to the Library
- IV. The Board of Supervisors' "power" to direct the use of township funds contributed to the Library ends at the point of distributing the money from the Township
- V. From a discussion on the issue of overarching principles which the Township should use in its governance of Taxpayer dollars:
 - I. Kay Reiss reported from her position as a past Library Boards member, that any fund contributed went to lower the Library Board's fund-raising burden, which seems to constitute a majority of the Library Board's time
- VI. Connie Hillman, Librarian, was asked by the Chair to give a short view of Pa. Statute 141.21 which sets out the principles on how the State funds each library. It was thought this could shed some light on possible structures to recommend to the Board of Supervisors. The Chair will follow up with Connie who is quite familiar with this statute. CL to follow up with Connie on this issue
- VII. Discussion of issue assignments as follows:
 - I. History of the township support and impact of past contributions on library services. And point (Dennis and Kay)
 - II. Governance and Structure of other Libraries (Kay). As part of this discussion it was noted by several people that getting good data and comparing community to community was almost impossible. In addition, the governance structures and the reporting data are extremely varied
 - III. State law (CL and Dennis)
 - IV. Evaluation of existing relationship. S.W.O.T (Robert)
- VIII. Possible agreement with New Hope Borough: the question of whether a formal agreement, concerning the Library, with New Hope Borough was needed was discussed. Title 24 Section 9320(b) concerning joint action by municipalities was referenced. It was concluded a formal agreement might not be needed, but this is a strictly legal issue and this along with other legal questions will be listed and given to the Board of Supervisors for possible referral to the Township attorney. It was noted that in the one instance we could find (Kennett Sq. Library) where more than one municipality

contributed to the Library's operation funds, there was no written agreement among the 8 municipalities

IX. Next dates:

- I. May 29th exchange of drafts of assigned issue papers among the members. Next meeting tentatively set for June 12th

X. The Chair opened meeting to public comments:

- I. Ron Cronise, Library Board Chairman: Thanked the committee for its' work and volunteered his time and the Librarian, Connie Hillman's time to help study in Ron's case the finances and in Connie's, the state Statutes. In referring to the committee's comments that it was difficult to find good comparison numbers from local and State data bases Ron agreed. He caution, for instance, the State reports all income of each library in one line: state, local municipality, interest income, fund raising etc. So that alone makes it impossible to compare like for like from community to community
- II. Darcy Fair: Library staff: Suggested committee members turn to the staff for data searches, which is one of their special missions. However, we would have to wait for the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions
- III. Connie Hillman, Librarian: Thanked the committee for the work and interest in the library. In addition, she also volunteered to seek data or give insights to Dennis and C.L on State Library laws. She mentioned Pa. was special in its' overwhelming mix of how communities manage, support and structure relationships with Libraries. Some states have clearer Statues so library management and funding are clear cut

XI. The Chairman adorned the meeting at 2:37 PM