

MINUTES

**WILLIAM PULLEN TRUSTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2023
WILLIAM L. PULLEN MUNICIPAL BUILDING MEETING ROOM
ONLINE NON-INTERACTIVE ON TOWN HALL STREAMS
6:00 p.m.**

Trustees present: Irene Hawes, Anita Brown, Paul Gaudreau, Judith Brogden, Bill Packard (Select Board), Jim Justice (Select Board), and Adam Fuller (Select Board)

Others present: Jay Feyler (Town Manager), David Poulin (library), Scott White, Christy Todd and Karen Strunk (school), Ellen Harrison and Rosalie Brady (Parks and Rec), Erik Amundsen, and others

1. **Call the meeting to order:** at 6:00 p.m. by Anita Brown.
2. **Approve minutes of June 29, 2022:**

Motion by: Jim Justice
2nd by: Irene Hawes
5-0

3. **Review Pullen Fund Requests:**

a) Scholarships

Irene commented that she felt there is enough money to give this amount.

Motion to give the Scholarship Committee the \$23,875.13 by: Irene Hawes
2nd by: Jim Justice
5-0

b) Union Elementary School

Anita said Principal Scott White, who was present, had provided a very thorough breakdown of information on what they would like to do with the funds re: Sestercentennial, trips, etc. Anita confirmed they are asking for a total of \$12,480.

Scott noted two esteemed colleagues in attendance, Christy Todd and Union resident Karen Strunk.

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Jim commented they did a great job of breaking it down. Irene commented that everything was listed very clearly, and of all the things in the packet, this is the one thing that Mr. Pullen would really jump for joy for – he would love this.

Adam Fuller and Judy Brogden arrived.

Motion to approve the \$12,480 total by: Adam Fuller
2nd by: Irene Hawes
7-0

Scott thanked the committee on behalf of the school, saying this is a big deal; kids will get a lot of things done that they otherwise would not have, and this is going directly to them. Christy thanked them for the opportunity to have field trips, speakers, etc. Irene reminded some students have never gone to Portland, so these kinds of activities really expand their horizons. Consensus was that the presentation was great and made it easy.

c) Vose Library

Anita said David Poulin, president of the library association, was present, and that their request partly continued something the committee already put money into: the Story Walk and the pathway that goes out behind the library, the green space that can be bush hogged and expanded. The other request concerned summer reading, projects, etc. Total request amount was \$2,275.

Adam asked about Story Walk turnout. David said it's fairly popular, especially as they try to change the stories out every month. People are there at any hour, at their leisure (not at night of course). David added the library's outdoor space is getting popular, and this proposal deals with opening more of the back up. They are looking at a long-range plan to open that up, build structures, maybe have programs, etc. but they just don't know what they have out there right now. They will also be extending the trail.

In answer to Adam, David said the library director works closely with the school. The Story Walk was funded by the Pullen Fund. Irene noted interesting upcoming events.

Motion to approve the \$2,275 at the request of the library by: Adam Fuller
2nd by: Bill Packard
6-0-1 abstention (Gaudreau)

d) Parks and Recreation

Anita said Ellen Harrison and Rosalie Brady were present to speak to the rough estimate the committee had, in terms of funds needed to rebuild the tennis courts, between \$210,000 and \$300,000.

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Ellen spoke of having enjoyed Union's tennis and basketball courts with her children since 1985, and now enjoying pickleball which got started at the TCC and has quite a group going. She spoke of promoting racket sports in general, noting pickleball can be played on these courts as well. She said the tennis and basketball courts are a unit as far as the original grant that had them built in 1977 is concerned.

She said they found a way of getting some funding to redo the tennis courts by revisiting the original federal grant that put them there. This generally only supplies part of the funding needed to rebuild the courts. They came to see if they could get support to help restore the recreation area restored to its former glory. She welcomed questions.

Adam said Jay has been dealing with the state on the federal funds and thought 2025 (application 2024) would be the next funding round. To be clear they are talking basketball and tennis courts. Numbers they've seen indicate maybe a third of what might be required, with the idea being the courts are a pretty integral part of growing up in Union.

He said he did not expect the Pullen Fund to foot that bill but to provide seed money, backed by some fundraising especially with the interest in pickleball combined with federal funds, and look at resurfacing the courts. He added we are currently in flux with that property; to be clear the courts and the TCC are separate. The TCC/MCOG working group expects to have something to bring to the voters within six months, so in theory we would know before we're spending any money exactly what that property is going to look like future wise. We could look at earmarking funds for that, under conditions that certain things stay with the property – that we're going to continue to use that as a community center or something like that. He said that is the backstory of this application.

Anita said in terms of Pullen policy this seemed a premature application. Judy agreed, stating that living here they would certainly be behind something like this, but it's hard to make decisions without any facts or figures, or knowing what it might cost, or what the federal funding will possibly kick in – a lot of ifs.

Adam said part of issue has been getting a clear quote from someone willing to do the work, as well as the issue of whether to patch or resurface. Most vendors said it's time to resurface them. As far as a fully-fledged application, the reality is this was a strong request from a community group.

Irene raised a fact on their criteria which says, "Can't be used for capital improvements," and to her this would be a capital improvement. She noted she was not against it, loves those sports, loves kids but is looking at that one last criteria. She also felt it was premature, as we have basically two pieces of property now in flux. She added it's not that they couldn't give some money to one or both in future – they are talking about youth, and "elderly youth," too – but it just seems like it's too early.

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Paul felt it appropriate at this time to just issue a declaration of support for the effort.

Anita brought up the standard of completeness of the application, and how they do not usually do seed money.

Adam said he would disagree that it's capital improvements, it's maintenance. He suggested the committee consider: if you are that community group, where does this leave you going forward? Can the Pullen Fund give them something, maybe just a letter of support, or some inclination on where this committee thinks that number might be, so they have some idea what they're working for?

Anita said they also have to develop plans for tennis courts and so forth on the land that we purchased, too.

Jay suggested we can apply at the end of 2023. They would make an award in 2024. By the time you get all your planning in, 2025 would be the earliest construction. You could probably wait until you get to that point. It was pretty well assured we could get funding, when he talked to the director; you would get answers then on dollar amounts and updated construction costs, etc.

In answer to Anita, Jay concurred this application was premature. Irene echoed Paul, saying in the future when we know more, we could possibly give some money to whatever entity is trying to get the money for the town and their courts.

Bill said, with his experience with pavement, it troubles him that water is getting down in there and will for two more years. The \$300,000 will not be a good number. Especially the upper tennis court will probably be a liability issue if we do nothing for two years. He favored upgrade, seal, get water out, make the courts playable so people can use them. In two years if we've got \$300,000 so be it. He added it's clear the application did not meet the criteria re: the Pullen Trust.

Ellen addressed the federal grant that originally put the courts in. Anita was aware of the Land and Water Conservation grant. Ellen said they are obligated, if we put our application in by the end of 2023, we were taken under their wing as a federal grant – if we had the courts for 30 years, they would provide half the money it takes to restore the courts, which means going from the template that's there and putting a new court system in.

Anita said they are looking at what the Pullen Committee can do.

Ellen said if the application is in by end 2023 there's a site visit in spring 2024.

Anita said those are issues that can be raised with the select board but not the Pullen application.

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Jay said they would look at it in 2024 during part of the grant process, make their announcement in 2024, but you will not see the funds and they will not approve the designs until probably 2025. The select board can vote to add \$30,000 to the budget, resurface it, and tear it up in two years.

Motion to table but try to be proactive once everything seems to be settled, and we find out how much money they really need, by: Irene Hawes
2nd by: Judy Brogden

Adam said he still thought this was a mistake, as the purpose of the fund is to support the youth of this town. He understood application concerns but noted this community group has a lot of members. He thought it would be worth extra meetings to hammer it out, and the committee could meet more often.

Paul thought the motion of support appropriate, and when the funding comes through or when the grants are awarded, nothing says we can't have a Pullen meeting on short notice to back up their request.

Motion passed,
5-1 against (Justice) – 1 abstention (Fuller)

4. Other Business:

Jay will set up a Bank of America meeting via zoom, probably after town meeting in June.

5. Adjourn:

Motion by: Irene Hawes
2nd by: Paul Gaudreau
7-0

Meeting adjourned at 6:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Abaldo
Secretary