

JONES LIBRARY

NORTH AMHERST LIBRARY • MUNSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

September 12, 2022

To: Amherst Town Council

From: Farah Ameen, Lee Edwards, Tamson Ely, Alex Lefebvre, and Austin Sarat, Members of the Jones Library Board of Trustees

RE: Jones Library Building Project

We are writing to reaffirm our continuing support for the building project. We believe that the plan developed after years of study, consultation, and support from the residents of Amherst offers the most prudent way forward.

Despite careful stewardship, the Jones building is in dire need of attention. Systems are well past their end of life and as a result are failing and are beyond a simple repair. Our wonderful staff is forced to cope without adequate space or the necessary infrastructure to do their jobs. And, most important, all of the library's patrons deserve a facility that is safe and can serve them well.

Before the start of the building project, the Jones Library Trustees considered a renovation and reorganization within the existing footprint. They concluded that such an approach would not meet the needs of the library if it is to serve everyone in our community equally. With the Town Council the Trustees reviewed the minimum cost for a repair of the building that would allow the library to continue to operate safely. We determined that it would cost the town as much or more to complete the minimum necessary repairs as to finance an addition and renovation of the kind we are now planning. None of this has changed, except that costs for both the necessary repair work and the renovation and expansion have escalated.

Costs have escalated in library construction projects across the state, and we hope that state government agencies will recognize this situation and offer additional financial support. Meantime, we have an energetic and effective fundraising effort in place as well as the support of our state and federal representatives as we seek additional funding opportunities. We have already seen the fruits of the Capital Campaign Committee's work as they have raised almost 50% of their original goal a full 9 months ahead of schedule. The library's legions of friends and supporters have been incredibly generous. And, as you know, we have pledged to backstop the fundraising so as to minimize any risk to the Town. We have said repeatedly that supporting the building project is necessary to equally support all members of our community. Children as well as teens, native speakers of English and those learning English, people who are economically advantaged and people who have been economically

LEARN • DISCOVER • CONNECT

joneslibrary.org

JONES LIBRARY

NORTH AMHERST LIBRARY • MUNSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

disadvantaged, people without physical disabilities as well as people with physical disabilities, neurotypical individuals and neurodiverse individuals all will be better served by the newly renovated and expanded building. Our library, like all libraries, is a critical piece of our community's social infrastructure and we must invest in that infrastructure to support its role as a crossroads for the community and a cornerstone of democracy.

We were pleased that the JLBC's voted to support continuing the work on the project through design development and preparation of construction documents. We think that is the right decision and we hope you will agree.

Stopping or pausing now will only lead to greater costs when needed work gets done. Amherst needs and deserves a first class facility for its first class library.

LEARN • DISCOVER • CONNECT

joneslibrary.org

JONES LIBRARY

NORTH AMHERST LIBRARY • MUNSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

September 12, 2022

To: Amherst Town Council

From: Jones Library Board of Trustees

RE: Jones Library Building Project Approved Motions

The following motions were approved during the Board of Trustees meeting held on Monday, September 12, 2022:

* **MOTION:** That the Trustees of the Jones Library, Inc. enter into an agreement with the Town of Amherst:

- (1) to enable the renovation and expansion project to be continued at least through the construction bidding process;
- (2) in the event a decision is made not to proceed with the project when the construction bidding process is completed, the Trustees will reimburse the town for the cost incurred in design development and preparing construction documents up to a specified amount or pledge to invest the equivalent of that amount at least for HVAC, roof repairs, and/or other necessary capital improvements at the Jones Library or identify some other means to ensure that the costs to the town are otherwise covered;
- (3) that this the agreement will specify the time period for the completion of any payment to the town, investment by the library in capital improvements, or other means to ensure that the costs are otherwise covered. *(Approved 6-0)*

* **MOTION:** To rescind August 22, 2022 motion [MOTION: To enter a new agreement with the Town pledging the value of the endowment to help fund the Jones Library building project. *Approved 5-0 (Pam – No)*] in favor of this new Agreement. *(Approved 6-0)*

* **MOTION:** That the Trustees of the Jones Library endorse efforts by the Town of Amherst to coordinate with other towns to secure additional state and other government funding to help cover inflation related cost increases of library building projects above their previously budgeted amounts. *(Approved 6-0)*

LEARN • DISCOVER • CONNECT

joneslibrary.org