

JTEL December Board Meeting
December 2, 2024

- I. Call to order & persons present: ST, Sarah Albers, Darwin Cameron, Kristin Haney, Kathy Nava, Bianca Blickenstaff. Devta Khalsa & Cat Stephenson via What'sApp
- II. Approval of agenda-by unanimous consent
- III. Approval of November's BOD minutes-by unanimous consent
- IV. Committee & Program updates
 - A. Grants (ST)
 - 1. The New Building plans were developed in 2011 and Phase 1 (underground water storage tank) was completed in 2016. State grant money ran out years ago and we never pursued additional funding. Grant writer Thelma Gower wanted to assist JTEL by advising us. We applied for Senator Murkowski's funding, but the Congressional finance committee shot us down. We then applied for a Tier 1 Rasmuson grant for an HVAC system in order to get our foot in the door with them. We just got approved for that grant and on Dec 9th Gary and ST will meet the installers for the system. We then have to wait one year to apply for the Legacy grant (also through Rasmuson for large, capital projects) for future development of the New Building, which is estimated to cost \$1.9 million.
 - 2. We discussed continuing our membership with the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce as it seemed it might be good for applications for grants. The cost is \$275. Members decided that it may not be needed at this time.
 - 3. Discussion about any other grants that could be applied for at State or Federal Level? At this time, ST was aware of only the Murdock Trust Grant.
 - 4. Cat mentioned that we should take pictures of the HVAC installation for promotional reasons. ST said she was certain Gary would do so.
 - B. Volunteers (ST) – The volunteer list is located on the credenza and board members are free to contact volunteers to assist with their duties
 - C. Facilities (ST)
 - 1. Snow plowing is going to be performed by Tandem Enterprises and we are looking for someone else to do the snow blowing. There was a low hanging electrical line which prohibited plowing earlier, but Tandem has a smaller truck to use. A community member (possibly Ben) assisted with his plow on a 4-wheeler this last storm, but it left a huge berm which then had to be removed. Kathy has a thank you card circulating for his assistance.
 - 2. Staffing handbook is on the credenza. If anyone staffs the library, please read and follow it. ST and Sarah spent a lot of time cleaning up the kitchen area - staffing people are responsible for keeping it clean

D. Treasurer's & Budget report

1. Budget (ST) – The proposed budget was presented. Most follows FY24's budget. The Board decided to add \$200 for marketing \$200 for the Art and Crafts Program. We also decided to add \$500 for office equipment for a new public use laptop
2. Monthly finance report (Sarah) – Sarah gave us a run-down of the year-to-date income and expenses. Of special note, Pick, Click, Give (\$627.75) and Michael Salzman (\$500) donated money. Approve budget by unanimous consent
3. CD recommendation (Sarah) – She did research on online banks. One bank had a 4.5% for a one-year CD. ST mentioned that the Board had earlier discussed \$25,000 from main savings and most of the Passive House savings account (\$14,000) should go into a higher interest rate CD, but that she thinks keeping the PH savings account should remain more liquid to possibly get someone to re-engineer and update plans. The Board approved \$25,000 from main savings be put into a 1-year CD

E. Mission/Vision/Values Statements (Sarah and Cat) – Both presented a couple of versions of statements, but it was decided that they should email everyone these statements so that we could really look them over. Most seemed to like “the heart of Ester” and the “respecting the first amendment” portions. We will continue and hopefully finalize these statements next meeting.

F. Policies Review (Sarah) – She started work by reviewing the Board Members policy. For example, we're supposed to elect officers by even/odd years, but that hasn't always been the case, so she'll probably change wording.

G. Seed catalog on internet (Kristin) - Mel has an online catalog and we can probably use that, too. Kristin will probably host the Seed Catalog Party in January.

H. GEB (Kristin) – GEB is hibernating right now

I. Historical photos (Kathy & Devta) - Mindy had been captioning photos already, but Kathy wasn't sure how many were done and how many still needed captioning. Kathy found an album of photos from the fire department Fire Plug Fundraiser and took those albums to her mom to help identify pictures. We can also digitalize the pictures and put them online to assist with identifying people. Discussion on putting them in a folder as an Ester Historical Archive. Ester Community has Historian Matt Recker.

J. Children's Program (Kathy) - Monday Art Class Workshop – has a couple of regulars. The kids' book club meets twice a month on Sat at 2:30 pm. Word of mouth seems to have been the reason both programs started and grew. We discussed other ways to market the Program.

- K. Collections (Darwin) - Last weekend met with Mindy and Karen Wilson and started learning the Dewey Decimal system. We have paused the acquisition of books for now.
- L. Marketing (website, FB, business plan) (Bianca)
 - 1. Social Media: Bianca has been writing to the JTEL and Ester Facebook sites.
 - 2. The bulletin board at the Post Office is pretty high and we're not sure how many people look at it. A suggestion was made for bright eye-catching display, but smaller flyers on the main bulletin board in addition to flyers at some local businesses. A suggestion was made to contact Jamie Smith for a cartoon character to be used for graphics.
 - 3. Website – Bianca tried to cut and paste text from our current website, hosted by WordPress, but was experiencing difficulties with the program integrating with the program that she is comfortable with. She recommended the paid site, at \$12/month. The board approved \$144 for a 1-year subscription to this site.
- V. Old Business – ADA outhouse. ST researched 3 possible options.
 - A. Outhouse with a 300-500 gallon plastic holding tank. One of the pump companies said that they'd pump out once a year, in the fall, for \$450/hour.
 - B. Composting toilet – organic material would have to be added, plus the compost would have to be stored for 3 years before it could be used as fertilizer for any edible plants. Devta said that due to Alaska's climate, the 3 years is probably too short.
 - C. Incinerator toilet – it would require a dedicated circuit, but it can be used in subzero temperatures.
 - D. More research needs to be done but it's not pressing since nothing can be done until an enclosure is built. ST said that the Carpenter's Union does free projects and had built the ADA outhouse at Ester Park. Gary didn't like their work due to the basic siding that they used, but Gary is also extremely busy and probably can't build the enclosure. We can probably use his plans, however.
- VI. New Business
 - A. Bank Resolution - A resolution needs to be done to add 4 signers to our bank accounts. ST, Kristen, Sarah, and Kathy will be added. The resolution was passed by unanimous consent.
 - B. Found CDs - ST found a short stack of CDs in the office. They appear to be music CDs from past JTEL music festivals. Do we want to keep these CDs? The Board stated that we should, and maybe put them on the website.
 - C. Background checks – With more and more kids coming into JTEL, we should do due diligence and get background checks on all Board Members and any staff that come into contact with kids. Kathy said that she got a background check from the State Troopers for \$20. Passed by unanimous consent.
 - D. New Building plans – With possible grant proposals in a year, we need to decide on the New Building – library, community center or what? Deirdre's original idea was a combination. Our grant advisor said that we are not committed to the original plans,

- but thought keeping the Passive House standards would be beneficial as grantors would want to be a part of new technology. ECA has been trying to get funding and land for a community center, so we don't want to step on their toes. Cat said she spoke with Mo a couple of months ago and she (Mo) said at the time that our space needs 9 more parking spaces. ST said that the lot on the corner of Main and Village could have more parking, as well as down the hill towards the gazebo. Board Members need to start thinking about what they want to do with the building.
- E. Newsletter – Kathy said that our board meetings are so close to the beginning of the month that she doesn't have time to get information from us and get the newsletter out, so she will email us to ask if we have information for the newsletter.

VII. Adjournment at 8:34 PM.