

November 8 Ballot Issue

“Shall the Town of Wardsboro accept the Gloria Danforth Building, related property, and financial assets as a gift from the Friends of the Wardsboro Library?”

Frequently Asked Questions

How did the Friends of the Wardsboro Library acquire the Gloria Danforth building, home of the Wardsboro Public Library?

- In 1999, a dedicated group of community members got together with the goal of expanding the Wardsboro Community Library which was in a small room in Town Hall.
- The Friends of the Wardsboro Library was formed and raised \$95,000 to purchase the old farmhouse and barn from the Town, which had received the property in a bequest from the estate of Ruth McMichael.
- As owner of the Gloria Danforth Memorial Building, the Friends of the Wardsboro Library – a 501(c)(3) non-profit volunteer organization – renovated, expanded, and maintained the building over the past 20+ years.
- With the support of Wardsboro residents and second homeowners, approximately \$800,000 has been raised to accomplish these goals.

Why do the Friends of the Wardsboro Library want to donate their property and financial assets to the Town?

- Having accomplished their goal of creating a first-class library facility and resource for the community, the Friends of the Wardsboro Library feel it is an appropriate time to transition ownership of the building, grounds, and financial assets to the Town.

What are the roles of the Friends of the Wardsboro Library and the elected Library Trustees?

- The Friends of the Wardsboro Library, as owners of the property, are responsible for maintenance and upkeep of the facility and other operating expenses including utilities, mowing, snow plowing, and insurance.
- The Library Trustees are responsible for operation of the library, including supervising staff and the expenses of books, other library materials, and programming.
- Working together the two groups share a common goal of providing a library of which the Wardsboro community can be proud.

Can the physical and financial assets of the Friends simply be gifted to the Town?

- Acceptance of the physical and financial assets from the Friends of the Wardsboro Library must be approved by the registered voters of Wardsboro at the November 8, 2022, election.

What are the average annual expenses for maintenance and utilities for the building? How have the Friends of the Wardsboro Library raised the funds to cover expenses?

- Over the past 5 years, the average annual expenses paid by the Friends of the Wardsboro Library are \$11,600. This includes heat, electricity, insurance, general maintenance and repairs, lawn service and snow removal. A spreadsheet of expenses incurred by the Friends of the Wardsboro Library over the past 5 years will be available in the library, Town Office, and Wardsboro Public Library website(www.wardsboropubliclibrary.org) as of September 15.

- Over the years the Friends of the Wardsboro Library has solicited contributions from the community through an annual appeal and fundraising activities such as the Gilfeather Turnip Festival, Annual Plant Sale, and raffles. Additionally, the Wardsboro town budget provides an annual appropriation which is currently \$3800. The Library Trustees pay \$1200 annually to the Friends of the Wardsboro Library for rent.

If the transfer of the building occurs how will these expenses be covered?

- The Library Trustees and the Town will be responsible for all expenses. The Library Trustees have prepared a 5-year projection of anticipated expenses. A detailed spreadsheet will be available in the library, at Town Hall, and on the Wardsboro Public Library website as of September 15.
- The financial assets of the Friends of the Wardsboro Library (approximately \$150,000) will be put in a restricted account to be used for future major repairs and updates to the building.

What will be the potential impact to property taxes if the Town accepts the building?

- Based on the Trustees' 5-Year projections, the impact to the property tax rate would be \$3.50 per \$100,000 in assessed value, if needed.

What is the condition of the building? Who will be responsible for repairs?

- A recent building inspection by an outside professional found the building in very good condition except for a few minor repairs the Friends of the Wardsboro Library will address. A copy of the inspection report will be available in the library, at Town Hall, and on the Wardsboro Public Library website as of September 15.

How will the transfer of ownership impact what the library offers the community:

- The transfer of ownership will not impact the operation of the library in any way. The library will continue to offer an excellent selection of books and other media, adult and family programs, after-school opportunities, and more.

Will the Friends of the Wardsboro Library still exist? What role will they play in the future?

- To gift the library property and financial assets to the Town, the Friends of the Wardsboro Library must officially dissolve as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Volunteers will continue to support the library's fundraising efforts and programming.

How can I get more information before the Town vote on November 8?

- Information meetings are scheduled for Saturday, October 15, at 2:00 pm at the library and Tuesday, November 1 at 7:00 pm at Town Hall. Members of the Friends of the Wardsboro Library and the Library Trustees will be available to answer any questions. If you are not able to attend either of these meetings or have questions call Paul Spector, Friends of the Wardsboro Library board member (440-382-4743) or Karina Martin, Library Trustee (802-896-6263).

Prepared by the Friends of the Wardsboro Library and the Library Trustees