

Town of Manchester

Board of Directors

RESOLUTION REGARDING SPACE NEEDS FOR THE MARY CHENEY LIBRARY

Introduced By: Director Sheridan, Director O' Neill, Director Zingler, Director Topping

WHEREAS, the Mary Cheney Library building was constructed in 1937 as a gift from the Cheney family to the Town of Manchester; and for seventy years the Mary Cheney Library has operated at its current location, enriching the lives of generations of Manchester residents; and

WHEREAS, today, the Mary Cheney Library is one of the busiest library facilities in the state, with an estimated 375,000 visitors every year and loans of over 700,000 items and a wide range of programming providing close to 800 different programs over the course of the year that are attended by nearly 20,000 people; and

WHEREAS, a 2003 study commissioned by the BOD determined that the current Mary Cheney building, at about 26,000 square feet in area, falls far short of what would be considered adequate size for its needs – based on existing and projected library usage a building of approximately 65,000 square feet is required to adequately house the library's activities; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, the Library Board determined that the existing Mary Cheney Library location was not suitable for continued use as a library and suggested the former Cheney Finishing Plant at Hall Court as the preferred location for a new Mary Cheney Library facility; and in 2005, the Library Board re-affirmed its determination that the former Cheney Finishing Plant at Hall Court should be the location for a new library facility.

WHEREAS, despite the recommendations of the Library Board, many Manchester residents believe strongly that the Mary Cheney Library should remain in its current location, and that expansion or modification of the existing building has not been adequately ruled out as a realistic possibility; and

WHEREAS, the residents of Manchester need to build a consensus for action and a strategy for how to address the inadequacies of the current Mary Cheney Library; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors is uncertain as to the feasibility and practicability of expanding the current Mary Cheney Library building, given the limitations of the site and the existing structure; and

WHEREAS, technical assistance from professionals with experience in the field of library construction, renovation and expansion is required to make reliable findings as to the feasibility and practicability of expanding the current Mary Cheney Library building.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors requests that the Town staff draft a Request for Proposal, Request for Quotation, or other means of soliciting professional assistance, to be reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors, for the hiring of a library architect or other competent professional to study, analyze and report on the

question of whether it is feasible or practicable to modify the existing Mary Cheney Library facility to meet existing and projected library needs.