

EXHIBIT 2

Library trustees not properly appointed, selectmen say

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WAREHAM — Selectmen said Tuesday that the library board of trustees was not properly appointed and members must reapply for their positions.

With advice from a town attorney, the selectmen said they have the authority to appoint members to the board. They said the previous practice of three people — selectmen chairman, library board chairman and town moderator — making the decision jointly does not comply with the town charter.

"None of you are trustees, as far as I can tell," Selectman Bruce D. Sauvageau told the board members at a meeting.

As of now, the 12-member library board has no members. The appointment controversy follows earlier tension between the selectmen and the library.

Unless the charter specifies an alternative means of appointment, choosing members of a board falls to the selectmen, said Elizabeth R. Corbo, an attorney with Kopelman and Paige, the town's law firm. She also said the board's treasurer position was not approved by Town Meeting as required.

The trustees will have to apply for their positions, and the selectmen will consider them and any other applicants for the seats. The selectmen also voted unanimously to require the board's treasurer to turn over accounts and records to Treasurer/Collector John Foster.

"I'm appalled," Priscilla Porter, the library board's former chairwoman, said after the meeting.

She said previous selectmen had accepted the appointment practice used for 30 years, and she believes their appointments were legitimate. However, Ms. Corbo said during the meeting that the town's charter addressed how boards are appointed, therefore repealing any pre-existing traditions.

During the annual Town Meeting last spring, the selectmen supported a budget proposal that would have cut library spending by 54 percent. Town Meeting ultimately approved a 17 percent cut. Then-Finance Committee member Patrick Tropeano accused the selectmen of targeting the library because they don't like the director, Mary Jane Pillsbury. Selectmen Chairwoman Brenda Eckstrom denied his charge.

Mrs. Pillsbury could not be immediately reached for comment Tuesday evening.

Mrs. Eckstrom said after the meeting that the selectmen are not attacking the library but simply making sure the charter is followed.

"We're trying to do things right," she said. "We're not trying to go after anyone."

Mrs. Eckstrom said the selectmen will make appointments to the library board in the coming weeks, and Mr. Sauvageau encouraged people to apply.

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