

Brooks Memorial Library — Fine Arts Committee Meeting November 16, 2017

Present: Judith Bellamy, Prudence Baird, Connie Bresnahan, Howard Burrows, Christine deVallet, Alex Stinson. Staff: Starr LaTronica

Call to order Howard called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

Changes to agenda Judith added public art display furniture under Displays–General, and Walking Tour brochure revision

Public comment None

Minutes of September 6 and October 5, 2017, meeting. Both accepted as written. To comply with VT's Open Meeting law, the draft minutes will be sent to Starr for posting, and to Howard, within five working days. Any changes/corrections will be reflected in the subsequent meeting's minutes.

Trustee vs Librarian separation of duties. Howard reported meeting with the Secretary of State about VT's Open Meeting law. He said the library must be (1) essential to democracy and (2) a community center. The trustees' job is (1) to set policies; (2) hire a librarian and allow her to implement policies to operate the library, and (2) to manage the endowment fund. He said the FA committee, as an adjunct of the trustees, should set FA policies and advise the librarian. Howard felt the open meeting requirements are confusing, seeming to restrict the ability of committee members to get together to work on projects or discuss FA matters without a formal warning process. It was explained that the committee (unlike other board committees), because no staff is assigned to Fine Arts, is a working committee, with volunteer committee members doing the work staff would otherwise do.

FA Collection FA storage room: Organization, Inventory Crystal Gilman, a temporary Town employee, has been working part-time with Christine to organize the space. She is simultaneously working on a database of the objects she handles. Christine said Crystal has strong, appropriate skills and is doing a very good job, but it is unknown how long she will be available. Eventually a professional cataloguer must be hired, as the FA catalog must be integrated with the library's catalog in a standardized, portable system. Alex, Connie, and Starr will meet with Christine to learn what's currently in the catalog and what's needed. A list of items to consider for deaccession will be made in conjunction with the organization and cataloging of items in the storage room.

Research/documentation Marlboro College professor Seth Harter photographed some items in the collection to use in a recent Osher talk he gave on Japanese art. He is interested in researching the collection's Asian art and artifacts to update their documentation. It is hoped he will be willing to give a talk on the subject at the library.

Lighting for Snow Angel Howard will coordinate details with the electrician to install appropriate lighting in this area.

Placement of objects in public spaces Starr wants to display as much as possible, especially documents, both to clear space in the storage room and to offer more the collection to public view.

Exhibits Children's Illustrators • Starr announced that a blog post of the Association for Library Service to Children featured a long article on Brooks Library's children's illustrators exhibit program, and thanked Prudence for making the contact. • Prudence hopes to display Simi Berman's Christmas book (in Italian) and her work-in-progress on the invention of pasta during December. • Prudence again mentioned moving the marble bas relief of James Fisk from the alcove next to the children's cases to allow children's use of the space, and also centering the cases vertically on the wall at a better viewing height for children.

General • Starr proposed *asking the Historical Society to take the Fisk bas relief*. Since Judith had emailed Starr documents detailing its status as a long-term loan, the owner, Licia Kuhn, can be contacted to see if she will agree to transfer the long-term loan from the library to the Historical Society. • Starr said she had been approached by someone who would like to *display on the mezzanine walls* once the "printing in Brattleboro" exhibit comes down. She will pass the information to Christine for follow-up. • **Discussion of public art display furniture was tabled.** • Christine noted that placement around the building of items from the collection is not yet finished, and recommended *delaying discussion of revising the Walking Tour Brochure* until after all moving is completed.

Anna Dewdney event Prudence reported that the "Llama Love Reading and Valentine's Day Celebration of the Life and Works of Anna Dewdney" is set for Saturday, February 10, 2018, from 9 to 11 a.m. Targeted primarily to two- to four-year-olds, the event will include a "Llama, Llama" book reading, food, Valentine making, a costumed Llama for photos with kids, and a book for each child to take home. The event will be publicized through the elementary schools as well as many other avenues. In addition, Prudence is negotiating with Dewdney's executor for a possible exhibit during January/February.

FA community opportunities/programming partners NEH grant/The Words Project • The current exhibit comes down November 30; the next one is in March 2018. Prudence said exhibits will continue through 2021. A location in the building should be identified where the unused children's cases may be placed for Words Project exhibits. • Starr announced that as part of The Words Project and in conjunction with National Poetry Month, Shanta Lee Gander will perform at the library in April as Lucy Terry Prince, reputedly America's first African-American published poet.

Review of FA policies and forms The review was tabled until the December meeting. Connie suggested that committee members look at the strategic plan (available online) in conjunction with the FA policies before the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING Thursday, December 7, 2017, at 9 a.m.

Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:20 a.m.