

Brooks Memorial Library Technology Committee Minutes - Tuesday July 22, 2020

Ironically, the Technology Committee meeting started late and had several interruptions due to problems with technology. The full committee began discussion at 4:40.

Minutes from June 24th accepted.

Public comment: none.

Old Business:

Website project. We reviewed the message from Zack at MRW about the new plan and timeline. Staff feel good about the timeline and process. Goal is to launch the new site in September. We're working to get a new photographer for pictures on the new site. Staff will also be trained to update and maintain the site. Input from the wider library team, including the tech committee, could be funneled through the tech working group, who would send feedback to MRW. Starr will send around a copy of the RFP to the committee to remind us of our goals for the site. Jeanne will make sure everybody on the committee has access to opportunities for feedback in a meaningful way, keeping an eye on the goals of the site and our service goals related to the website. We won't sign off until we're satisfied with the product.

Public access to Zoom through the library. Starr reported on Zoom accounts for patron check-out. Matt looked into it, and it's unfortunately not set up to be used for multiple users at different times. We can keep looking. Later in the meeting, it was suggested that the library could act as a go-between to launch meetings for groups. That opens some concerns about staff time, plus there would have to be very clear policies, as there are for use of meeting space, which affirm that the library doesn't necessarily endorse the meetings it enables.

Budget planning related to technology. Starr reported on her discussion with Matt about the technology budget. The whole committee should think about whether and how to expand our technology resources or, alternately, divert those budget monies to other purposes. We brainstormed and discussed possibilities, noting that staff time is often the big cost. Having nice technology is great, but setting up and maintaining those resources and making them accessible is another matter. We must make sure that new technologies are supportable and scalable, and that there is a plan, so that we're not simply "buying toys." A big part of maker spaces, for example, is having programs and outreach to engage the public, plus the space itself. Are we willing to give up one of our public meeting rooms to enable a maker space? It's also a time when the library can/should have a big role in supporting the town's current focus on human services, and technology resources play a role. Digital literacy, print literacy, and news literacy are important. There are innovative possibilities, such as citizen science projects/information sharing platforms inspired by projects like online community birding databases.

We discussed planning and how rapidly the world is changing and the important roles that library has to play right now—and also the challenge of that, especially related to staff capacity.

Next meeting: August 26th, 4:30 pm

Meeting adjourned at 5:45.