

**Brooks Memorial Library**  
**Buildings and Grounds Committee**

Mon March 29, 2021 8:30 AM - 9:30 AM (EST)

In accordance with public health guidelines, this meeting was held virtually.

Present: Jenny Rowe, serving as chair; trustee Jane Southworth, committee member Elizabeth Tannenbaum, library director Starr LaTronica, staff members Jeanne Walsh and Lindsay Bellville.

- 1) Call to Order at 8:33.
- 2) Agenda/Changes or additions -- none.
- 3) Approval of Minutes of February 26, 2021: Moved to approve by Jane, second by Elizabeth; approved.
- 4) Public Comment -- none.
- 5) Current projects:

Reopening: Lindsay is thinking of ways to hold outside programming over the summer. Street noise tends to overwhelm story hour if it is held at the front or side of the building. Possibilities are to erect a few panels of fencing to screen the dumpster and use the small grassy area directly behind the library, or if the town is agreeable, rent a large tent/canopy and erect it in the back parking lot.

Furniture: Lindsay would like to have new children's room chairs ready to go when the library re-opens. They would be clean, and cleanable, unlike the old fabric chairs. Downstairs furniture also being re-thought in view of cleaning needs. List ready to go soon. Jenny will check on the status of the board funds already allocated to B&G. **The committee will make a request to the board for additional furniture money if necessary.**

Garden: Volunteers are starting work on the existing garden space.

Art objects: Billy Meyer visited and took the mammoth tusk with him for cleaning and re-mounting. He measured the William Morris Hunt horses in preparation for making a new vitrine and examined the way it is hung on the wall. He and Starr located a new, better spot for this piece (outside the mezzanine reading room, where there is good light). Billy is thinking about a more elegant means of attaching it to the wall. He also measured the dinosaur fossil and is considering a new presentation structure for it. Moving these objects presents an opportunity to strip wallpaper and repaint walls, which Starr will coordinate with the town.

**Sign: The committee will recommend to the board that we move forward with this project immediately.** Starr will discuss with Peter the best way to get community input on design of a new outdoor sign. The town arts committee might be a source of design expertise. Jeanne pointed out that coordinating the design of new, consistent indoor signage with a new outdoor sign would be extra nice. Jane will check with design-oriented friends to get their reactions and expertise.

**Quiet study space and small meeting rooms:** Jeanne reported that, of the three enclosed rooms adjacent to Starr's office on the mezzanine, the quiet study room gets heavy use and the archive and fine arts storage rooms little use. A better use of the combined space would be to shift the archives to the locked, light-blocking storage and open up a second quiet room for patron use. Jane suggested a consultant to help consolidate the fine arts collection.

**Service to West Brattleboro:** Starr has been exploring unstaffed options such as a kiosk that holds an internet hotspot, books and DVDs and allows downloads of e-books. The fire station is a possible location since it would have many daily hours of community access and perhaps some community space already. This and any additional services are pending community input; we need to know what is wanted.

6) Possible new, large projects:

Starr reported that it is likely there will be federal money for large projects, some of it specifically aimed at library construction. Projects that might attract this funding:

**Front sidewalk area renovation:** the town has a plan for this area and we could add patio seating, reconfiguring of trees and garden space, front approach to library.

**Upper entry outside area:** patio seating, terracing, collaboration with municipal center rehab to create a jointly used outside space.

**Third floor for library building:** The space is needed. The children's rooms and teen rooms are cramped, especially given their circulation numbers. More small meeting rooms and a large community meeting room would get a lot of use. A cafe is a long-standing community request. The building is supposedly designed to support a third floor. First step is to find out if that is true. **The committee will make a request to the board to work with the town to hire an engineer for more information.** Starr has a rough estimate of cost already, based on a prior study by Bob Stevens: \$1.7 to \$2 million.

**Addition to second floor:** a more modest alternative expansion project would be to build on a room or two at the back.

7) Next meeting tentatively set for Mon Apr 26, 8:30 AM

8) Adjourned after a motion from Elizabeth, second by Jane, at 9:35.