

**BROOKS MEMORIAL LIBRARY**  
**Board of Trustees Regular Meeting**  
**Tuesday, May 11, 2021 4:45 PM**

**Minutes**

Present: Leo Schiff, Howard Burrows, Sirkka Kauffman, Kate O'Connor, Jenny Rowe, Jane Southworth, Karen Tyler, Ann Varilly, John Woodward, Starr Latronica, Courtney Carey, Jeanne Walsh, Sarah Vincent-Hoag (notes)

Call to Order / 4:45 PM- Leo

Agenda/Changes or additions-none

Public Comments- Starr will send notes

Minutes of April 13, 2021- Changes: add Sirkka to participants

-In the Buildings and Grounds update, Jane suggested inviting Bob Stevens but didn't say she would do it. (SVH will make changes)

**COMMITTEE UPDATES/ DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**A. Friends of the Library**

Starr read Joyce's message to the Trustees regarding new Friends and a heartfelt thankyou to Betsy who is leaving. Next meeting is May 19 from 4:30 – 6PM and all are invited to join. Starr will send the Board an email with meeting invite and log in info. Sirkka will be the representative for the May meeting. Starr will resend the Friends assignments to the Board.

**B. Finance/Asset Development Committee—Jennifer Rowe, Chair**

Financial reports: As promised in the previous Board meeting, Jenny unpacked and explained some of the key details of the expenditure report. She gave a detailed explanation of what to look at for expenses and income for each month. Jenny will send around will send out visual chart of accounts, to all Board members and is happy to explain if there are questions and/or at the next meeting. Ann suggested not sending around duplicate reports. There was a consensus to hold 2 town reports back.

**C. Technology Committee—Leo Schiff, Chair**

The tech committee did not meet this month. Leo asked for an update on the elements of the website that were not resolved yet. Starr: We have not heard back from MPW re: booking tools. Chloe is looking at analytics on search reports regarding ways to mitigate issues. Jeanne: The focus of the project is now to maintain the site (as opposed to create and build) and they are putting procedures in place for this. Jeanne is working on a style document to ensure a consistent tone in format and appearance.

**D. Buildings and Grounds—Jenny Rowe**

The committee met and discussed longer term projects: i.e. space. Jenny gave many details of the shorter-term projects taking place (e.g.: display for the mammoth tusk – Billy is working on it), carpeting has been done, the floor waxed. Please refer to the Buildings and Grounds minutes

Starr: Steve Horton has put out a request of bids on stuccoing the outside. Anthony of GPI will seed and landscape the patch of earth behind the library.

New floor: Anthony has original drawings. Starr will query Bob Steven to see if he is willing to take a

look at the possibility of adding a third floor and B&G committee will discuss. Starr will meet with Sue Fillion (Town Planner) to discuss process.

#### E. Advocacy and liaison to library organizations—Howard Burrows

Howard will send a list of what he has attended out to the Board and reminded everyone about joining VLA and NELA. He recommended logging into their websites to find out more information. Jeanne: VLA is doing a spread out conference over May and June, you can join and then conference is free. There will be great speakers (Ryan Dowd). Lara may also do a session on strategic planning. Starr: Lara sent her info on trustee training and strategic planning and Starr will forward it to the Board. The Trustees reimburse the cost of memberships so please let Starr know if you sign up.

#### F. Department Reports: Director; Reference, Youth Services

##### Reference

Jeanne: Today was the first day with patrons in the library (no appointment) and there was a different pace. She is feeling optimistic about how it is going and the patrons are engaging her with their in person reference questions. Reference budget: She is looking at what needs updating wrt online resources and \$ left. Looking at updating computer books section. NYT database: We had a really good deal before, and the cost went up by 62% this year. Jeanne feels it is important we keep the full NYT, will take \$ from the new fiscal year budget to support it. People really like and use the Times. Jeanne is happy with the array of news sources the library currently offers: VT Digger, News page for the Reformer and the Rutland Herald and local (BCTV). Jeanne will monitor usage numbers for NYT.

##### Director

Starr: There was a color photo and coverage in the reformer for the library's participation in this month's art walk. Katherine Paterson will be brought to the literary fest this year. There were funds left over for the COVID care kits, so a copy (soon to be signed) of Ann Braden's new book will be added to each bag. New title of bags is: Stay Safe Stay Kind.

Starr: A patron would like to bring family into the library but they can't tolerate wearing masks. Can they still come in? Starr will supervise them in the CR after 5PM and there will be nobody in the room for 10 hours after they leave. Board was ok with it.

Starr shared some of her favorite moments about patrons' responses to the library being open today.

#### **CONTINUING BUSINESS**

##### Update on phased reopening and volunteer re-entry.

Starr: By next week 3 more staff will be fully vaxed. Most people are comfortable with patrons in library. As more staff fully vax, we can start expanding hours. There was a steady stream of patrons today. Tomorrow will be the first evening hours open. There are no volunteers back yet. There were low patron numbers today and they were good about leaving on time. Magazines are now available to check out. Leo: Will there be interim planning around volunteers? Starr: hasn't gotten to this yet. Only one volunteer has expressed interest.

##### Electric bike loan program

Leo: Gave a quick review on the electric bike program, how many bikes, how it works etc. There are some reservation system glitches, but there has been communication to fix. VPR announced the program and there will be an article in the Commons. The legal/liability issues have been worked out. The bikes are pretty much booked till September and there will be a staff training on Thursday.

##### VISTA position update

Starr: There are three applicants. Interviews will happen late May/early June

### Debrief on Department presentations and Update on strategic plan

Leo: Asked for feedback and impressions (department presentation debrief)

A couple people commented that the library needs more space

Karen: found it a very helpful overall view of what everyone does.

Ann: There is a lot more to library operations than what meets the eye

Jenny: There is a need for more staff time

Leo: All roles involve advanced customer service skills and wrt the strategic plan, might need to highlight the customer service aspect

Ann: Wondering if the library could offer more web based learnings (an idea to track common repeat questions from patrons and offer instruction)

Jeanne: Most effective public library offers both paths: in person individual help and web/other means of help.

Leo: Next steps?

Jane: Suggested developing a survey/gathering data from patrons on what they like and what they would like to change, see and etc. in the library. Leo: The strategic planning committee might put together public input and questions and possibly hold a public meeting in the Fall.

Strategic Plan:

Jane: Suggested adopting the existing plan for one more year (if more time is needed).

Ann: Asked to see the current plan, Starr will send the link.

Leo: Strategic planning committee might think of some institutional stakeholders (i.e. schools, town etc.), and consider how to engage with them regarding info gathering and feedback

Jane: An idea to include political delegation to Montpelier

Jenny: suggested reaching non-library users (which may be challenging before everything opens up again, so extra time might be a good idea)

Howard: An idea to make a comparison with the Town strategic plan.

Leo: Suggested inviting Sue Fillion to the meeting. Starr: Sue could contribute her knowhow about Survey Monkey.

Leo: Asked Jane if she would be acting chair and pick a meeting date for the next meeting. Jane: Thursday June 3 at 4PM. Starr will set up Zoom. There was a suggestion to meet outside in person.

Leo: Suggested for next month's Board meeting to meet in person at 5. All were in favor.

This falls under the committee assignment topic but came up at this point in the meeting:

Jane: Question about how to arrange memberships in committees

Leo: Meeting days and times will inform who is on what committee

Howard: Is there a write up on what each committee does? And is there a write up on each one of the Board members?

Leo: We can put this topic on the agenda for next month's Board meeting

Tool Library update

Starr has spoken with Kevin. Tony Duncan of Time Trade is very excited about the TL, so we may see some movement with the TT interest

Leo: Can respond to the energy of the community wrt this project

Starr: Edible Brattleboro is invested in the gardening aspect of the TL

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### Committee assignments

Starr shared her screen of the committee assignments.

Buildings and Grounds: Jenny, Jane, Elizabeth Tannenbaum, Lindsay, Jeanne and Starr. Meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month at 8:30AM

Karen: Re discussed possible establishment of Community Outreach committee for the library to be engage with social services agencies in Brattleboro. Starr: Will put this on the agenda for next month.

Finance: Jenny, John, Leo, Sirkka and Ann. Meets 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month at 4:45PM. Leo: ok to step down from committee? Jenny: fine to step down, will keep Leo posted.

Fine Arts: Dormant

Nominating: (an ad hoc committee) meets in the late fall/early winter. Jenny, Leo, Howard

Planning: Jane, Jeanne, Lindsay, Starr, Howard, Sirkka (Karen would like to attend). Ann is interested in joining. Jane will stay on but not chair. Meets Thursday afternoons from 4 – 6 and the frequency fluctuates. Jane will send to the Board a description of the strategic plan process. Starr will send files to the Board as well.

The strategic plan minutes are located on the website. Jane: You can also read the plan for 2015- 16.

Technology: Leo, John, Howard. Meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 4PM

Liaisons and community building: Howard. Karen is very interested in community building and will write up her notes on this and send out before the next board meeting.

Jane: suggested that the department chairs write up what their committee does and anticipated activities for next year. This topic will be included in Continuing Business at the next Board meeting.

Courtney

Has resigned from her position as Circulation Manager to start as Assistant Director at the public library in Boylston MA. Courtney joined the meeting and shared that she is excited but sad to leave BML. She has enjoyed her time and couldn't have asked to work with a better group.

Jane: Thank you for all you have done.

Karen: Speaking as a patron, we will miss you.

Leo: Thank you. It's a better library because of you.

Ann: Good luck

Howard: Boylston might be a good "sister" library for BML

Land Acknowledgment

Starr screen shared the current draft statement and asked if the Board would be in agreement to put a statement up on the website (after taking it to the town, local leaders beyond and consulting with local indigenous people).

Board members gave suggestions and worked to redraft.

Starr: will converse with members of the indigenous community first and get approval, then run it by the Town officials.

Leo: Will review it at the next meeting and include town statement in Board meeting packet. There was a consensus to use this as a jumping off point together with input from the indigenous community.

Kate: Town has adopted a statement on Equity with input from BIPOC community that we may want to consider for website. Starr will send text to Board.

Leo - 6:43 Motion to adjourn: Karen. Jane seconded.

Thank you

Sarah Vincent-Hoag