

BROOKS MEMORIAL LIBRARY
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Tuesday, July 13, 2021 4:45 PM

Minutes

Present: Jane Southworth, Leo Schiff, Sirkka Kauffman, Jennifer Rowe, Kate O'Connor, Karen Tyler, Ann Varilly, John Woodward, Starr Latronica, Matthew Wojcik (Electronic Services Specialist). Absent: Howard Burrows.

Call to Order / **4:46 PM** Leo

Agenda/Changes or additions: Starr added Poet Laureate to continuing business

Public Comments: none

Minutes of June 8, 2021: Karen was left off the Strategic Planning committee roster, and will be added. Jane moved to approve after that change. Jennifer seconded. All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

COMMITTEE UPDATES/ DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Friends of the Library

Jenny updated. Friends had first in person meeting in over a year. They discussed moving forward with programs including: a garden party on August 6th; an ice cream social later in August; and a book sale at the fall literary festival. Leo will be away on August 6th but offered to sponsor someone to attend the garden party. Kate will attend the next Friends meeting.

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

Jennifer presented and explained the chart illustrating how funds flow. She suggested we do not need to focus on the financial statements she had sent out, because the end of year ones will be available in August.

C. Technology Committee—Leo Schiff, Chair

Committee minutes were in packet. Leo highlighted that they developed a committee charge. Matt noted that our internet comes through the State's Agency of Digital Services, and the State has voted funds to upgrade the connection and equipment.

D. Buildings and Grounds—Jenny Rowe

B&G committee met with Bob Stevens regarding the third floor. He noted that building codes, especially for seismic reinforcement have changed, and if we were to go ahead with that project it would require closing the building for at least a year. He suggested that we look at space available around town, especially for storage and meeting space. Or we could build an addition on the side of the building one room wide and 4 stories high.

Jane suggested the need for a space and cost study, possible as part of the Strategic Planning process.

E. Advocacy and liaison to library organizations—Howard Burrows

No report.

F. Department Reports: Director; Reference, Youth Services

Youth services

Refer to report in packet.

Director's Report

Starr noted that the Reference report is not available because of staffing issues.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

Update on phased reopening and volunteer re-entry, including mask requirement

Starr: She has had conversations with Town officials about staffing needs, and is meeting with staff the next day to look at staff structures, especially in the children's room. Some volunteers are back, but they can only do shelving. The library is now open until 8 pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays also, and soon plans to be open until 9 pm and on Mondays. Jeni Clary will go full-time on July 21st. Starr could use more part-time staff so that professional staff can use their expertise fulfill essential functions. Leo suggested that we need to acknowledge the staffing deficit publicly.

Jane: please add discussion of staff structure to our August meeting agenda.

VISTA position update

Starr: There are no new applicants, but she hopes to spread the word locally. Target start date is August 31st.

Strategic Plan Update

There is currently no chair, but Karen and Ann will chair the next meeting. At the last meeting, the Committee recommended that the Board adopt the current plan for another year, to extend through December 31, 2022. Jane moved that the Board do so, Karen seconded. All in favor, none opposed, none abstaining.

The next meeting will develop a shared statement of purpose, identify the audience and stakeholders for the plan, determine how to gather input, and discuss the roles of the trustees and staff in the process.

Tool Library update

Starr said another meeting is coming up, and Edible Brattleboro may be involved. There may be a grant application to get canning and gardening equipment.

Committee assignments

Set at last meeting.

Committee charges

Technology Committee now has a charge. Strategic Planning needs to develop one.

Poet Laureate

Starr looking for staff to join, and will contact the Friends to see if they have anyone interested in being on the Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

Consent to close building for Town employee picnic at 11 am Monday, August 23

Starr clarified that the library would close for the rest of the day that day, and not reopen in the evening. Ann moved that we vote to close the library after 11 am on Monday, August 23. Jane seconded. All in favor, none opposed, none abstaining.

Personnel announcements

Starr noted that while non-union staff had received a raise, union staff did not, but she was able to get a raise for the lowest paid staff member with the help of the Town HR Manager.

Recognition for gardening volunteers

Starr suggested that we thank the two women who have volunteered throughout the pandemic, and the Board discussed giving them each a gift certificate, and a letter of thanks to the Reformer and Commons, after asking them if it was all right to name them publicly. Leo suggested that it be made clear that they were the only volunteers allowed during the pandemic, but that we are looking forward to welcoming back indoor volunteers.

ARPA spending

Starr reported that the library is getting \$17,733.64 from this non-competitive grant, and that the Town will be receiving more. Ann will help Starr explore ideas on how to spend it. Leo asked about self-checkout stations, and Starr responded that those may not help much with staffing but would with security and privacy.

6:33 Karen moved to adjourn, Jennifer seconded.