

BROOKS MEMORIAL LIBRARY
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Tuesday, December 14, 2021 4:45 PM

Minutes

Present: in person: Sirkka Kauffman, Karen Tyler, Starr Latronica, Lindsay Bellville (Youth Services Librarian); remotely: Jennifer Rowe, Ann Varilly, Howard Burrows, Leo Schiff, Jane Southworth, John Woodward, Kate O'Connor.

Call to Order / **4:48 PM** Leo

Agenda/Changes or additions: none

Public Comments: none

Minutes of November 9, 2021: Jane moved to approve; Karen seconded. All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

COMMITTEE UPDATES/ DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Friends of the Library- Jane update

- Activities update: The book sale has so far netted \$4,000; the remaining books will be sold for \$5 a bag.
- Annual appeal: So far over \$2,500 has been received, and more continues to come in. Joyce gave Starr more appeal letters that we can send out with personal notes.
- The Friends have about \$45,000 in the bank, so we can request funds from them as needed.
- Ann will attend next Friends meeting.

B. Finance/Asset Development Committee—John Woodward, Chair

- Minutes were included from November in packet; note that Committee is moving to a bimonthly schedule. Online meeting with Gary Deziel of UVM extension – he noted that there is no universal chart of accounts used in Vermont. John showed a visual chart of our spending categories, based on Jenny's data.
- Loud funds update: John has spoken to several people about this, and also received a message from the original appraiser who noted that there should be insurance on this special collection.

C. Technology Committee

- No meeting. Leo was asked to resend the Committee charge to the members for review.

D. Buildings and Grounds—Sirkka Kauffman, Chair

- The Committee agreed on their charge, and forwarded it to Leo and Starr.
- At November meeting, Denis Maltais from Classic Signs toured the building and site, and has sent some renderings to Starr. The Committee will review those at the next meeting, scheduled for January 24 at 8:45 am. Starr has not received a proposal for the erosion site in the back yet.

E. Advocacy and liaison to library organizations—Howard Burrows

- No report.

F. Strategic Planning Committee

- Karen reported on December meeting (minutes in packet). She highlighted that Sue Fillion, Town Planner had suggested that the proposed survey would be more useful for those already engaged with the Library, and we might need focus groups to reach others. Brattleboro demographics show that household size is increasing, and there are more people of color.
- Starr and Ann attended a webinar on introduction to strategic planning that noted the differences between a consultant and facilitator, which we should think about in considering potentially engaging a consultant.

G. Department Reports: Director; Reference; Youth Services

Director's Report

Starr noted that we held two public forums to meet the new Town Manager.

Reference

No written report, but Starr indicated that circulation was very slightly down in November.

Youth Services

Lindsay reported that teen events have been well attended – Chloe had 20 at the first game night, and 8 at the writing workshop. Craft bags from the Children's room are popular – we handed out more than 100.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

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

Starr: With the Town- wide mask mandate it is somewhat easier to enforce in the Library. Next week the Selectboard will consider whether masks will be required of performers in the arts, potentially including our speakers. Leo asked about exemptions to the requirement; Starr replied that we allow face shields, and if someone cannot wear a mask staff will work to get them information or materials offsite. Starr also reported speaking to Jack Heddon of HCRS on how to serve patrons in emotional difficulty, especially since the social worker in the Police department left and may not be replaced. There will be a community safety review tonight at Selectboard.

Tool Library update

Starr: At November meeting, it was explained that we can't get a shed fully assembled on an 18-wheeler, so it will have to be either brought in partially assembled to be fully assembled by volunteers, or built from scratch on the site. To prepare for its placement we can't pour concrete (which would mean a "permanent" structure), so it will likely be on a bed of gravel.

Personnel update

Starr reported on a new hire to start next week, but a 25-hour person is out on medical leave until the end of January. Once all are back, we will have more staff hours than before we shut down. In response to Howard's question about staff training, Starr said that Town training and online training is happening.

Committee charges

Buildings & Grounds has sent theirs in. Leo will resend draft to Technology. John will put this on next Finance agenda. Leo will work with Karen on Strategic Planning charge.

Nominating Committee

Three applications were received by the deadline. Leo will contact the Committee members to block out a 2-hour block for interviews soon, so that we can get the name in the Town Meeting book by the second week in January.

E-bikes

Starr reported checking into who will carry the insurance, and noted that other libraries have done this.

NEW BUSINESS

- Holiday bonuses for staff

Starr noted that we brought this idea last year and the Board voted \$300 to full-time staff, \$200 to 20+ hour staff, and \$100 for <20-hour staff. The total was about \$4,000, and we have funds in both the staff employee leave account and Board approved projects. After some discussion of whether to attempt to work with payroll so that staff received these amounts net of withholding for taxes and benefits, it was agreed that would be overly complicated because everyone's situation is different. Jane made a motion to give staff the same amounts as last year; Karen seconded; all approved with no abstentions.

- Staff retreat for strategic planning

Strategic Planning Committee sees value in having the staff and Board meet together, and a suggestion was made to look for a day in April or May when we could perhaps meet outside. Leo noted that a consultant might facilitate, as it is good to have a neutral party. He also questioned if waiting until spring might slow down the process, and suggested we look at the pros and cons of having an in-person meeting later versus an earlier one virtually.

6:00 pm. Ann moved to adjourn; John seconded. Leo adjourned.