

BROOKS MEMORIAL LIBRARY
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Tuesday, October 11, 2022 4:45 PM

Minutes

Present: Sirkka Kauffman, Starr Latronica, Karen Tyler, Leslie Markey (technical services librarian), Jennifer Rowe, Howard Burrows, Leo Schiff, Joyce Sullivan, Kate O'Connor, Ann Varilly, John Woodward, Beth Johnson (VISTA).

Call to Order / **4:47 PM** Leo

Agenda/Changes or additions: New Business: discussion of possible library social worker.

Public Comments: none.

Minutes of September 13, 2022: Karen moved to approve; Jenny seconded. All who were in attendance voted to approve.

COMMITTEE UPDATES/ DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Friends of the Library- Starr update

- Karen (Friends president) is working on annual appeal. Jenny and Finance committee will assist.
- Book sale will be start day after Thanksgiving, and donations are being accepted.

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

- We have signed a contract with Amy Schlegel to appraise the Loud collection, and will move forward on the first phase with a revised cost of \$2,000. The Board previously approved \$5,000 total for the project. A draft of the first phase should be available in about a month, including recommendations of what to do with more valuable pieces.
- Jenny referred to the year-end reports in the packet, and noted that the endowment was down 15% over the year. The Committee met with Prentiss Smith for an overview of returns and investment policies.

C. Technology Committee

- No report.

D. Buildings and Grounds—Karen Tyler, Chair

- Karen referred to minutes in the packet, and noted progress in landscaping. The upstairs hallway will be painted this winter. We are looking for ways to improve the staff room. There has been no progress on signage, and Starr asked everyone to be on the lookout for signs in the community that we like for further consideration.

E. Advocacy and liaison to library organizations—Howard Burrows

- Howard will be attending the NELA conference in Manchester later in October. He and Ann have signed up for 4 State strategic planning sessions, and would ideally like some staff to join them in order to have a team.

F. Strategic Planning Committee

- Leo reported on the meeting with the trustees, staff and consultant. There will be a follow-up meeting on October 21st. We expect to identify core strategic themes and start a draft of the plan soon.

G. Department Reports: Director; Youth Services (in packet)

Director

Starr reported that after Baker & Taylor came back in business, staff has been busy getting new books out, including a collection on cooking, canning and preserving linked to our Tool Shed. Leslie noted that the attack on Baker & Taylor kept them down for 3 weeks, and though we could order by phone during that time, it was not ideal.

Starr noted the Literary Festival is in town this week, with many events held in the library, especially over the coming weekend.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

- Request to film Trustee Meetings and “publish” them on BCTV: Matt is still investigating the cost.

NEW BUSINESS

- Discussion of possible library social worker:
In response to increasingly complicated staff dealings with patrons, this was an initial exploration of having a social worker present in or available to the library. Starr noted that we had Groundworks personnel in the past, but years ago. She will be talking to police chief Hardy about whether the police could hire a social worker and share them with us. HCRS is no longer working with them.

Karen mentioned an NPR program about a Tennessee rural library needing social services which subscribed to an online service. She will follow-up on that report.

Joyce noted the push for telehealth services, including clearing houses with a roster of social workers or therapists that companies vet. Beth is looking into the overlap of social work and librarianship and whether a graduate student practicum might work. Joyce said they would need clinical supervision. Karen suggested reaching out to community volunteers for case managers, not necessarily clinicians.

Leo summarized a potential list of contacts: Police chief, HCRS staff, Groundworks, graduate programs, Brattleboro hospital and the Retreat. We could also look for potential grants, and Starr noted that Jeanne could do a targeted grant search for a pilot

project, but we would need to know what we want, and also need confidential space for interactions.

In response to Ann's question about training for staff on de-escalation and dealing with complex patron issues, Starr would like to offer such training to all staff, especially supervisors, and that the majority of staff would be interested. Kate reported that there is a pot of \$300,000 that the police are not using for safety training which could potentially be tapped for this.

Leo suggested a future potential working group of trustees and staff may evolve around these issues eventually.

The trustees offered a hearty "Happy Birthday" to Leo.

5:58 pm. Leo adjourned.