

**BROOKS MEMORIAL LIBRARY**  
**Board of Trustees Regular Meeting**  
**Tuesday, May 9, 2023**

**Minutes**

Present: Sirkka Kauffman, Kate O'Connor, Ann Varilly, John Woodward, Nikki Holland, Jenny Rowe, Leo Schiff, Karen Tyler, Starr LaTronica, Matt Wojcik. Guests: Alec Goldschmitt, landscaper; Kim Frost, town finance director. Absent: Joyce Sullivan

Ann called the meeting to order at 4:46.

Addition to the minutes: To New Business: ALA attendance for Starr.

Changes to the minutes: None. Kate moved to approve, Karen seconded. Approved.

**Committee Updates and Department Reports:**

**Building and Grounds:**

Alec Goldschmitt answered questions about his proposal for a new walkway and outside table area around the rear entrance. The project is feasible to schedule and complete this summer. Materials for steps up to the back parking lot will be mica schist. There will be steps and flat runs as necessary to make up the grade. It is unclear whether a railing would be required. The town has had a first look at the proposal. The proposal includes a roof shelter on three levels. If we do not want to add the roof now, Alec recommended installing footings and conduit now so that we can add roofing and lighting later.

Leo expressed difficulty visualizing the three-dimensional project from the base (topography) map and suggested that seeking grant funding might be easier with a 3-D drawing. Alec commented he has been part of other grant proposals recently that did not require more than a base map. Starr thought it would depend on the grant.

Second, extended terrace option: John asked about cost savings if we added in a possible later phase and extended the terracing further down the hill. Alec said the grade is very steep. He hopes the insurance company will not require a railing for the retaining wall in the current proposal but the wall would have to be much higher if we included another terrace further down the hill. Stairs would also be necessary for access. Matt relayed staff concern that children might fall from the top of the garden wall if they are playing near the top. Alec can provide for the 5/19 B&G meeting a cost estimate and rough map of an extended second terrace, which would be green space with a concrete wall on the down side. One construction difficulty would be that there is no good truck access to add the necessary fill.

Book drop proposal: Alec has also made a proposal to B&G for a cover for the book drop area. He made the roof proportional to the small size of the book bin itself but it is still high enough to walk under the eave. The roof will be metal.

In other B&G news, Karen reported that the soffit, which has tar stains on it, will be encapsulated to contain asbestos at some point in the future. This project is in the town capital projects budget but last year drew no bids. A new banner is up near the back entrance. The staff room cabinet has arrived. Starr and John stripped and primed the wall where the mammoth tooth will be displayed. Lindsey's family put together the new shelving for children's and teen rooms.

### **Finance/Asset Development:**

Jenny presented the visual chart of accounts and explained the endowment policy. This is a good refresher for trustees every year or two. Kim Frost, the town's finance director, has been in the position about a year and was present to hear details about the library's many restricted accounts.

John reported that dates are set for auction houses to pick up fine arts items for sale. When auction dates are set, we will send out a public notice. Starr continues to speak with members of the public who want information about destinations and choice of items. Ann is working on notices for items without clear title.

The finance committee has begun talking about budget categories for next fiscal year. We want to add a few additional budget lines divided children-adults-teens for digital media. These are big expenses and not well tracked.

### **Friends:**

Karen attended the last meeting. Annual meeting is May 17. "Novels, Nonfiction and Nosh" is the next event. Starr asked the trustees to attend the event on the 19th at 6:00 if at all possible.

### **Strategic Planning:**

Ann reported no meeting this month. Next meeting May 16. The committee is still working on wording for the values and asked for board comments: does "access" belong with "inclusion"?

**Department Reports:** no questions.

### **Continuing business:**

Social work assistance at the library: Mail service for Groundworks clients will be at the library for another two weeks. Currently, during the two midday hours when the Groundworks drop-in center is closed, the closure is evident in increased traffic at the library. Starr reported that staff is finding it very labor intensive to deal with patrons who would otherwise be at the drop-in center. Patrons come in with shopping carts and sleeping bags or leaving them in the alleyway next to the building. There have been some fraught interactions. Matt commented that friction between patrons who want to return to the same spot in the library every day and find it taken is sometimes a problem. The food policy has been relaxed of late and enforcing it is another source of conflict.

The library will be asking for funding for civil social work help during the next town budget cycle.

Leo reported that over 200 people were housed in motels during the pandemic and an additional 55 were added when Groundworks closed. About 110 will be out of the motels at the end of May and the rest at the end of June. He expects the library will be impacted.

Leo further said that services the drop-in center will be providing going forward will look very different than they used to, less inviting, more focused on safety protocols and delivery of services. During the Groundworks closure, some patrons found that they are comfortable at the library, and will probably keep coming.

Safety: Starr reported that the town and library are looking at how to put another staff person upstairs at night. Ann asked how many children are in the motel program and might be spending more time at the library. Leo thought 40 or 50. It is unclear for how many the program is about to end.

#### **New Business:**

Committee assignments and work plans: deferred to next month.

Appreciation gift for Laura Perkins: This volunteer has spent 10 hours a week for the past month helping Ann with the Fine Arts collection. Ann proposed a \$300 gift card. Kate moved and Ann seconded. The funds will come from Board Approved Projects. Approved.

Laura Perkins contract for deaccessioning: Starr and Ann propose to hire Laura to oversee the deaccessioning at \$20 per hour, not to exceed 40 hours total. The funds will come from Contract Services. The Board expressed informal approval.

Marketing: A team is being developed. Discussion deferred to next month.

Board picture: deferred to next month.

ALA attendance: Starr would like to attend ALA in Chicago and asked for board approval. The total cost of the trip will be \$2,000-\$2,500. This will exceed the remaining Conferences and Training budget of \$1,500. Kate proposed paying the balance from Board Approved Projects. John moved to pay up to \$1,500 from Board Approved Projects for Starr's train, hotel, food, and admission costs. Karen second. Approved.

Meeting adjourned at 6:42.

Minutes submitted by Jenny Rowe.