



Board of Trustees Meeting Materials for December 12th, 2023

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Tuesday, December 12, 2023 4:45 PM
Meeting to be held on site or via Zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83917781481?pwd=TGtGVHZlS0J2OEErWGIYN3N4MkQ5UT09>

Meeting ID: 839 1778 1481 Passcode: 359655

AGENDA

Call to Order / **4:45 PM**

Agenda/Changes or additions

Public Comments

Minutes of November 14, 2023 <https://brookslibraryvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/20231114-Trustees-Minutes.pdf>

COMMITTEE UPDATES/ DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Friends of the Library

- Update—Annual appeal letter + book sale

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

- Update

C. Technology Committee – Leo Schiff, Chair

- Update

D. Buildings and Grounds—Karen Tyler, Chair

- Update

F. Strategic Planning Committee—Ann Varilly, Chair

- Update

G. Department Reports: Director, Reference, Youth Services

CONTINUING BUSINESS

- Social work and safety assistance at BML update
- Town budget process - next steps
- Board terms and nominating committee

PLACE HOLDER

- Town charter review, as pertains to BML Board
- Staff recognition

BROOKS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Tuesday, November 14, 2023

Present: Jenny Rowe, Sirkka Kauffman, Ann Varilly, John Woodward, Starr LaTronica, Nikki Holland, Karen Tyler, Amanda Whiting, Joyce Sullivan, Kate O'Connor

Absent: Leo Schiff

*Ann called the meeting to order at 4:49pm

*Additions to the Agenda: None

Changes to the Minutes:

John Woodward moved to accept minutes, Sirkka Kauffman seconded it.

Committee Updates and Department Reports:

Friends of the Library:

The Annual Letter is underway.

The Friends currently have \$65,000.00 in the bank. Projected purchases: new laptops, hot spot, bicycle pump, possible replacement of batteries for E-bikes.

A request letter to be sent out to businesses is being drafted.

The Friends currently have their own Facebook Page and are looking for a volunteer to help with their webpage.

Finance/Asset Committee: John Woodward

Current profit from the auction is \$12,000.00. Discussion regarding the use of this profit.

Middlebury College will take the Bas Relief Portrait.

Balance of the Laud is \$25,000.00, its purpose remains to be determined.

Adding a narrative regarding the deferred maintenance was suggested for the Treasurer's annual report.

Technology Committee: Nikki Holland

In process: Town's Wifi, needs assessment (patrons' needs require more attention), seeking volunteers to help with tech support for patrons.

Building and Grounds Committee: Karen Tyler

Holding pattern continues for outside project.

DPW to block the gully.

Strategic Planning Committee: Ann Varilly

No Report

Department Reports:

Director: "White Cane Awareness Day", visually impaired people will walk down

Main Street as an effort to be more visual.

Youth Program: Pocket Change collection

Child's Program: The Children's Room has its own Facebook Page.

Continuing Business:

Social Work and safety assistance at BML

Mary from HCRS has made a HUGE impact. Her pre-existing connection with many of the patrons has helped stabilize and defuse situations, as well as her clarity as to where to refer people.

Town Budget Process and Next Steps

Request made for Social Worker and Program Outreach positions.

Starr will present the BML budget to Selectboard. No substantial increase is expected, just a reflection of inflation.

Staff Recognition:

Kate motioned to move into executive session, Jenny second it. All in favor.

Amanda was excused from the meeting.

Both Starr and Jeanne Walsh were voted as remarkable women.

John Woodward made a motion to give \$275.00 for gratitude to all staff. Joyce Sullivan second it, all approved.

A gift card will be purchased for Vista Volunteer to coincide with gifts to staff.

Nominating committee to reconvene for one trustee opening.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30

Respectfully submitted by, Joyce Sullivan

Director's Report for November 2023--Activities that support the Strategic Plan

Engage the community through a wide range of educational, recreational, and cultural opportunities that support diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Collect materials in accessible formats (print, nonprint and electronic) to reflect the world at large.

- Intentional increase in graphic novels, contemporary fiction (including sci-fi), and materials that reflect the diversity of the world have been appreciated by the public. (approximately 300/month)
- Interlibrary loan services provided access to approximately 100 unique volumes/month.
- The DVD collection has had an influx of new titles, which have been received with much public appreciation.
- Weeding the adult collection of outdated, duplicates and worn materials is progressing well, thanks to Sara, Anna and Marybeth. (About 200 books have been withdrawn monthly.)
- Chloe has completed a thorough weeding of the teen collection.

Offer programs that introduce and illuminate a wide range of interests and opinions.

- We finished the month wandering through some classic films of the 50's with commentary by film aficionado and author Rick Winston as part of the Vermont Humanities Snapshot series.
- Local authors Ann McCloskey and Shin and Jim Freedman launched their new books to substantial audiences.
- We hosted the second of two community discussions on *Rough Sleepers*, by Tracy Kidder, with extra copies supplied by the Friends of BML.
- Our Stitchers group and Sci-Fi book club continue to meet regularly and grow in attendance.

Respond to the information needs of all members of the community by providing accessible, respectful, and reliable reference services.

- Jeanne fields wildly diverse requests for information daily. Please see her report.

Review and introduce new technology and develop related instruction.

- Matt assists patrons daily with individual instruction.
- All libraries in Vermont will need to transition away from the FiberConnect wireless network by the end of June 2024. The state is providing grant funding for equipment and consultation for this upgrade.
- Adult staff helps people apply for benefits, employment and navigate the printer/scanner/fax multiple times throughout the day.

Support young children and their caregivers by providing developmentally responsive learning opportunities through materials and programming.

- Preschoolers and caregivers attend Rhyme Time weekly for social and emotional growth experiences, exposure to books and early literacy tips for parents and caregivers.
- Legopalooza provides hours of small motor skill development, STEAM exploration and opportunity for verbal development each month.

Empower teens by providing them with resources for education, entertainment and engagement.

- Chole supported teens by gathering and validating input from the teen advisory committee.

Recruit, cultivate and retain a diverse, exemplary staff.

- Seth Thomas created a lively recruitment video which led to 53 applicants for a 20 hour/week position and 38 applicants for the 15 hour/week position.
- Sarah Vincent-Hoag resigned her circulation clerk position after 4 years. She will be missed by colleagues and patrons.
- Amanda Whiting participated in the VT Dept. of Libraries "Community Safety & Understanding De-escalation" training.
- All BML staff was trained in administering NARCAN.
- Amanda Whiting and Matt Wojcik were trained in administration of the Catamount Library System.
- Anna continues her training in OpenGov—the new accounts software program.

Empower and support staff well-being.

- Staff was grateful for the year end bonuses authorized by the Board of Trustees.
- We have been able to offer part-time staff additional hours for coverage, which they have graciously accepted. Staff shortages due to infilled vacancies and illness continue. I am grateful for the support and camaraderie that is inherent in our team to cover our open hours and provide essential service.

Provide welcoming and accessible spaces for all members of the community.

- The library is busier than ever with some people spending hours at a time (and sometimes all day), working in our space.
- The plastic shed on the edge of the library back lawn has been removed by DPW. We are looking forward to planting and expanding our greenspace next spring.
- DPW has also blocked off the eroding path along the north side of the building so people will not be able to use it when it is icy.
- AC Keir consulted with us on carving out another office space from the technical services work room.
- We have had problems with our baseboard radiators receiving heat. After exploration, it was determined that the water was filthy and in desperate need of flushing. Russ Brown has been terrific in managing the process.
- I served as a witness to a marriage ceremony in the Quiet Reading Room.

Establish, strengthen, and sustain community connections to promote a culture that is accessible and welcoming to all, making a concerted effort to reach out to groups that have been historically marginalized.

Increase relationships with local partners to promote initiatives and programs.

- I met with the Town Arts Committee to discuss possible projects, (interior and exterior murals, etc.)
- BML is planning partner programs with the Brattleboro Words Project and the Windham World Affairs Council.
- The Women's Freedom Center is planning activities at BML for their 50th Anniversary next year.

Identify and catalog community assets to better serve our patrons with resources and referrals.

- Beth continues work on the community resource database and has joined the meetings of the workforce coalition.
- I have spoken to the new director of SVECA and will meet with him in the new year to explore ways we can refer our patrons for SEVCA services.

Establish diverse and inclusive connections to support underserved and vulnerable sectors.

- Mary Lachenal, a care coordinator from HCRS, is now spending a two-hour shift, twice weekly, in the library. This has been a tremendous benefit to both staff and public. She has helped members of the public find support and connect with services, and has helpfully intervened with patrons, saving staff stress and time for library work. *The staff continues to spend an inordinate amount of time dealing with social service issues.*
- The Brattleboro Community Justice Center is assisting with negotiating the provision of services to a former patron.
- BML staff attends the community response to homelessness meetings as well as those of the housing coalition.
- We partnered with Turning Point and BPC to present a workshop on addressing compassion fatigue.
- Close ties with HCRS, Groundworks, Turning Point and BPD have been instrumental in working with patrons in need of special help.

Increase awareness of library services, resources, and impact.

Clarify and prioritize marketing roles and activities to increase internal cohesion and external impact.

- We have included social media responsibilities in our newly created Circulation Clerk 2 position.
- We continue to receive good coverage in the local press from PR materials submitted.
- Posting in Front Porch Forum appears to be effective.
- Additional staff is being trained in Canva, a computer graphics program to create appealing signage and display materials.

Leverage municipal resources and community partners for promotional opportunities to convey the value of library resources.

- Town of Brattleboro communications director Seth Thomas creates appealing posters for events that are posted on bulletin boards around the area and includes library events in the Town community and employee newsletters.
- Downtown Brattleboro photographed staff, Friends and volunteers and promoted the library for Plaid Friday.
- The Friends of the Library have been terrific in promoting the library and its services through the Annual Appeal, publicity for the book sale, and their Facebook page.

BML Information Services:

Reference, Electronic Services, Interlibrary Loan, and VISTA
November 2023

Electronic Services: Matt

We're preparing for a Broadband shift. VTLib will no longer play a direct role in administering broadband services but will instead provide block grants for libraries (including Brooks) to update their equipment and services and sustain them independently going forward.

Matt is also taking on more responsibilities for troubleshooting and reporting technical issues within the Catamount Library Consortium. He and Amanda attended training in Bennington to help with that transition.

Interlibrary Loan: Jen, celebrating academic libraries (in her words)

In addition to the historical powerhouse of a lender that is Middlebury, the libraries of VTSU continued to supply a LOT of our requests, quickly and generously. I'm glad they didn't go away.

UVM has joined the courier and will soon make their resources accessible directly to VT libraries in Clover (instead of having to go through the state). It's great that they are becoming a more active partner in the world of VT resource sharing.

These libraries all have extensive yet different collections, which means our patrons have access to some pretty amazing resources!

VISTA: Beth

Work continues on the Access Brattleboro Community database, and Beth is strengthening connections with our partner organizations in the community.

Reference/Help Desk: Jeanne

I've assisted students on local history projects and adults on language learning and accessing ebooks and audio. Recent Help Desk topics include NY City in the 1940s, psychiatric researcher D.E. Cameron and his legacy, the evolution of housecats, and shifts in nutrition science around 2014. And this...

Holiday Help Desk Special: Smart Phone v. Help Desk, why should we care? *With festive recipe*

A patron wanted to know who invented an iconic American casserole. The Google hit list on his phone credited Elizabeth Raffald in *The Experienced English Housekeeper*, 1769. True? Partly. I was challenged to confirm with library sources, which told a story that's older and more delicious.



In a specialty cookbook in 641.82, we found a “contrary to popular belief” note that led us to *Soul Food* by Adrian Miller 641.097 (Chapel Hill: Univ of North Carolina Press, 2013).

Miller confirmed that Raffald's recipe was known in elite households in the English colonies, but it probably would have faded into history if not for James Hemings, the chef with extremely complicated family ties to one of the authors of the Declaration of Independence. Hemings was sent to study cooking in France and brought back a French version with a lot of cream.



The French variation is close to what we know these days, but, according to Miller, it was based on a dish developed in the 14th century and recorded in *Forme of Cury*, “compyled of þe chef mayster cokes of kyng Richardus þe seconde after þe conquest of Englonð.” That’s from the descriptive note from special collections at the University of Manchester <https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/rylands>. But here’s a handy transcript, free online through Project Gutenberg:

MACROWS

Take and make a thynne foyle of dowh. and kerve it on peces, and cast hem on boillyng water & seep it wele. take chese and grate it and butter cast bynethen and above as losyns. and serue forth.

A lot of this is confirmed and cited in Wikipedia, but if we had started there, we would have missed the wonderful *Soul Food* and the beautiful library in Manchester. Yum!

Jeanne Walsh 11/2023

Youth Services Board Report- December 2023

Four hundred and twenty-three! A huge thank you to Francisco and Molly who worked an incredibly busy Saturday in November and checked out 423 items in 7 hours!

November 16 was a busy day when the three third grade classes from Academy school visited the Children's Room. Each hour long visit consisted of two stories; a discussion of libraries services around the world (such as delivering books by boat in Finland and by elephant in Thailand); a brief introduction to our library website (including using our language program Mango to learn how to speak pirate); a demonstration of our catalog and how to use the information; a tour of the Children's Room (the graphic novel section was a big draw); and a show and tell of items from our library of things (the telescope and ice cream maker were the favorites). It is always a great time when kids come visit the library and learn all the amazing things available at their library!

Most of the plates and bowls made during our Design-A-Plate event have been picked up. We still have about a dozen or so waiting. We will begin calling people with a reminder to stop in and pick up their plates.

We will be having a special LEGO-palooza session on Thursday December 28 during school holiday break. The special session will run from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Our new VOX books are a hit! VOX books are books which have a mp3 player attached to the book instead of having a separate cd. We in the Children's Room are constantly hearing parents explain to their children that they don't own a cd player nor a dvd player! Our initial order of 30 VOX books have been such a huge hit that I have ordered 40 more. I will be weeding the older kits which contain cds and have definitely seen better days. An added bonus of the VOX books over our older cd kits is that there is no cd to accidentally leave in the player.

In January, we will be offering a special afternoon series of Rhyme Time. The afternoon session will be a repeat of the Wednesday morning session. We hope that by offering an afternoon session that children who are in preschool in the mornings will be able to attend. We always see an increase in Rhyme Time attendance during school breaks as the preschool kids are able to attend. We often hear from parents during those breaks how much their kids miss coming to Rhyme Time. We will offer the afternoon sessions in January and if we get a good turnout and positive feedback we may consider adding afternoon sessions when Rhyme Time returns in March after a short break in February.

Lindsay Bellville, Youth Services Librarian

I have been working on a massive weeding project in the Teen room this year in order to make room for the more books and a couple of new mini sections: "Large Print" and "Pocket Change Collective". As of this week I have completed my weeding! My hope is to put the bulk of my budget into digital materials in the future so I will not need to weed quite so viciously... I've added some, but am still figuring out the Palace Marketplace and app so the collection isn't yet as robust as I'd like.

We have an (indoor) teens only Holiday movie coming up on Dec 15th. The teen board voted to show "Elf" with Will Ferrell, and it will be fun times!

We have two new teen board members! Oscar Vulte and Nora Berenguel have both joined ☺ (Thank you Nikki Holland for providing me with a whole set of teens to help with the Teen Board!) This Fall semester has been rough for Teen program attendance as many of our regulars were all seniors last year, but since we have some new members I am hopeful that we can tempt a new batch of kids in soon.

Chloë Liotta-Jones, Teen Services Specialist

Department Inquiry - November 2023

Fund: 101 General Fund --- Department: 201 Library --- Period Ending: 11/30/2023

Account Number	Description	Total Budget	YTD Actual	Balance
Expense accounts				
101-50000-201	Department Head Salary	84,651.00	25,985.12	58,665.88
101-50001-201	Staff Salaries	512,985.00	153,770.94	359,214.06
101-50002-201	Vacation BB - Retire Pay	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00
101-51000-201	Equipment expense	4,500.00	1,763.39	2,736.61
101-51003-201	Postage Expense	7,500.00	2,163.50	5,336.50
101-51004-201	Office Supplies	4,000.00	1,116.47	2,883.53
101-51007-201	Computer Supplies	4,000.00	1,411.17	2,588.83
101-51011-201	Reimbursable Expense	3,500.00	1,569.90	1,930.10
101-51023-201	Equipment Maintenance	2,000.00	1,815.69	184.31
101-51024-201	Professional Services	200.00	0.00	200.00
101-51027-201	Telephone	3,000.00	3,007.27	(7.27)
101-51031-201	Lost Book Refund Pmt Fees	200.00	145.34	54.66
101-51032-201	Book & Non-Print Supplies	5,000.00	2,040.05	2,959.95
101-51034-201	Fuel Expense	11,500.00	993.86	10,506.14
101-51035-201	Electric	18,875.00	8,361.04	10,513.96
101-51036-201	Utilities	1,840.00	856.01	983.99
101-51037-201	Building Repairs	20,000.00	8,282.17	11,717.83
101-51038-201	Maintenance Supplies	4,000.00	2,061.42	1,938.58
101-51039-201	Books - General	7,000.00	7,000.00	0.00
101-51040-201	Reference Sources	18,000.00	14,757.09	3,242.91
101-51041-201	Juvenile Books	8,500.00	5,209.80	3,290.20
101-51042-201	Young Adult Sources	3,000.00	621.04	2,378.96
101-51043-201	Replacement Books	2,000.00	673.12	1,326.88
101-51044-201	Periodicals & Newspapers	7,500.00	4,079.80	3,420.20
101-51045-201	Digital Subscriptions	12,000.00	4,236.62	7,763.38
101-51046-201	Non-Print Materials Adult	6,000.00	6,114.31	(114.31)
101-51047-201	Non-Print Materials Children	4,500.00	156.00	4,344.00
101-54004-201	Computer Equipment Maint	6,000.00	1,945.38	4,054.62
Revenue Accounts				
101-45007-201	Miscellaneous Revenue	(1,000.00)	(138.80)	(861.20)
101-45012-201	Reimbursements Revenue	(3,000.00)	(2,075.00)	(925.00)
101-45019-201	Library Copier Revenue	(4,500.00)	(2,660.45)	(1,839.55)
101-45020-201	Library Fines	0.00	(57.00)	57.00
101-45021-201	Non-Resident Fees	(13,000.00)	(7,178.00)	(5,822.00)
101-45022-201	Gift Books & Replacement	(2,500.00)	(975.44)	(1,524.56)
101-45023-201	Library Postage Revenue	0.00	(332.00)	332.00

Department Inquiry - November 2023

Fund: 401 Grants Fund --- Department: 202 Library Trust --- Period Ending: Nov 30, 2023

Account Number	Description	Total Budget	YTD Actual	Balance
401-51121-202	BR01 Buffer Account	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00
401-51122-202	BR03 Conferences & Worksh	5,851.40	1,467.66	4,383.74
401-51137-202	BR04 Contract Srvs Adult	6,237.33	0.00	6,237.33
401-51127-202	BR05 Books Adults	22,100.00	11,805.49	10,294.51
401-51139-202	BR06 Juvenile Programs	5,616.38	1,318.99	4,297.39
401-51129-202	BR07 Reference Sources	6,317.83	686.66	5,631.17
401-51128-202	BR08 Local History Source	6,026.24	25.00	6,001.24
401-51132-202	BR09 Young Adult Sources	3,107.94	31.32	3,076.62
401-51135-202	BR10 Non-Print	35,425.39	2,102.85	33,322.54
401-51134-202	BR11 Periodicals & Newspa	5,385.14	(6.93)	5,392.07
401-51124-202	BR12 Trustees Conferences	2,168.55	0.00	2,168.55
401-51138-202	BR13 Adult Programs	6,579.12	1,059.72	5,519.40
401-51130-202	BR14 Fine Arts	4,935.40	1,419.10	3,516.30
401-51140-202	BR15 Board Approved Proje	24,530.64	735.00	23,795.64
401-51131-202	BR16 Books Children	5,879.94	251.90	5,628.04
401-51141-202	BR17 Outreach	10,983.03	239.40	10,743.63
401-51126-202	BR18 Conservation	500.00	359.88	140.12
401-51142-202	BR19 Gifts	6,148.84	409.93	5,738.91
401-51143-202	BR20 Projects	36,989.84	0.00	36,989.84
401-51144-202	BR21 Legacy	22,499.22	0.00	22,499.22
401-51123-202	BR22 Staff Leave	5,377.73	0.00	5,377.73
401-51136-202	BR23 Downloadable Media	10,000.00	2,514.45	7,485.55
401-51125-202	Library Donations to Town	0.00	0.00	0.00
401-51133-202	RF01 Replacement	0.00	0.00	0.00
401-50022-202	Staff - Contract Srvs	0.00	0.00	0.00
401-43028-202	Trust Reimbursement	0.00	(14,723.25)	14,723.25