

BROOKS MEMORIAL LIBRARY
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Tuesday—September 8, 2020 4:45 PM
Minutes

Present: Leo Schiff, Sirkka Kauffman, Jane Southworth, Jennifer Rowe, John Woodward, Howard Burrows, Beth Ruane, Starr Latronica, Courtney Carey (Circulation Manager), Sarah Vincent-Hoag (recording secretary).

Absent: Karen Tyler, Gabriel Sistare

Call to Order / 4:48 PM – Leo Schiff

Agenda/Changes or additions - none

Public Comments - none

Minutes of July 14 and August 11, 2020 – moved to approve both(Leo), Seconded (Jane, Jenny). All who were present at meetings in favor

COMMITTEE UPDATES/ DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Friends of the Library Jennifer Rowe updated

- Activities update

Moving forward with the fundraising letter campaign. Discussion of fundraising letter: Jenny sent it out yesterday and asked if everyone had seen it. Jenny said the final version will be better formatted, on letterhead etc. There was a discussion about whether the letter should include personal notes from people who know potential donors as in years past. Jennifer: There wasn't much difference in response in years when the personal notes were included to when they were not. It was agreed that it's ok to leave out the personal notes this year.

Jenny: There was a suggestion to include a bookmark with the letter. The cost is \$185 for white cardstock and \$190 for natural. 4 color printing. Courtney will design it and the cardstock that looks best will be chosen. Jenny will tell the Friends that we will go ahead with this and will send all w/proofing for Trustees to look at. Courtney will send the bookmark for feedback by the end of the week.

Starr: FYI Joyce is doing well

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

- Treasurer's Report and Update

Finance committee met about the annual appeal. There is ongoing discussion about how to make financial reports better (easier to read). One more policy re: destination of earnings on board project account, regarding what to do with the interest. A report will be ready by next month.

C. Technology Committee—Leo Schiff, Chair

- Update

TC met last month and they got to see the interactive pages from the new library website. Feedback was given. As discussed before it was great to have access to photos of the library and the project is coming along well.

Starr: On looking at the new website, it was apparent that it was text heavy and needed to have more "visuals". Starr asked for feedback on it from a recent (young!) college grad. She said that they are

looking at how content/visuals work together and making adjustments. The next step is training on how to make changes in-house.

D. Advocacy and liaison to library organizations—Howard Burrows

- Update

Attended the NELA meeting and made a good contact with people who can help with the fine arts collection (more on that under continuing business).

Covid19 recovery plan, Arts and Culture gathering. Howard joined as a community leader. He has not yet connected with Karen on her activities.

E. Department Reports: Director; Reference, Youth Services

Youth Services Starr: Lindsay and Chloe have done a wonderful job, gave SRP leftovers for the bookmobile. They are concentrating on ways to support families with homeschooling and remote learning activities and are involved in the Town day camp.

Directors Report Starr: Gave a report on the Work Today Program, saying that it is a source of pride, increased appreciation and affection for the library and esteem for the workers involved. She gave a few anecdotal examples of workers (Mike, Kenny) who are doing a really great job. It is the Brattleboro town day labor program operated through Youth Services – a wage stipend is provided by the town and the workers, some of whom are homeless or have life issues, are working 3 days a week. Finance and life skills are offered through this visionary program.

Leo: Thank you for including circulation figures for the library, the trends are interesting to see.

Starr: The Community Equity Collaborative is at the height of concern regarding safety. There was a discussion about the weekly Friday night solidarity meeting at 5PM at Pliny park and a call for community leaders to attend demonstrations in general.

Howard: is involved in the compassion group re: Wardsboro library and felt it is important to get both sides perspective.

Leo: If equity events align with your values, that's great. Makes him happy to see community leaders at events. With regards to library staff attending extreme opposition events (the example was brought up about white supremacists) his response offered was to "know your community".

There was mention of a weekly email digest of programs and activities/meetings in Brattleboro. If people wanted to email Leo privately, he offered to forward to the people who generate the list. Starr offered to send out a list of groups as well.

Jenny: If any staff member wants to attend a meeting of an "opposing" viewpoint group, she would have no problem with it.

Starr: Library has been granted a "handi-station", a hand cleaning station that will be decorated by local artists with a written/audio component. The theme of ours will be "The beloved community" (MLK).

CONTINUING BUSINESS

- Discussion of phased resumption of services.

Beginning of school impact: will kids be hanging out at the library?

Courtney: Stay as it is, to be on the safe side. Just now, the staff is finally evening out with opening to in-library patrons, so we should stay doing what we are already doing.

Jane: Trustees to take "marching orders" from the staff, to be supporters, not dictators.

- Fine Arts Collection update.

Howard met with the art conservator from Smith college who will be able to repair the broken pedestal. He also met some good contacts at the New England Library conference. He will write out updates and action steps for appraising, a summary of the names of contacts and what they can do. He will send this to the Trustees one week before the next

Trustee meeting.

Starr: Thanks to Howard for getting Billy Myers.

- Discussion of reciprocal borrowing privileges for out-of-town cardholders.
Starr: Windham County meeting has not yet been set up. Starr will put together names of Board members from Guilford, Putney and Dummerston libraries and send to the Trustees.
- Discussion of format for next month's meeting
Virtual vs in-person/hybrid: If in person/hybrid, there was a suggestion to use an audio console. Another suggestion to point the camera at the group/individual who is talking to collect the image/sound for those participating virtually. The October meeting will be in person/virtual, in the main room at the library and will start at 5PM. If you aren't comfortable to be there in person, contact Leo.

NEW BUSINESS

- Discussion of Town "day camp".
Starts next week: One hour a day, kids come into the library (supervised). If under 10 sign up it won't run, and the program can't take over 20 kids. The children's room staff are embracing it, but it's a "wait and see" to see if it works out.
- Zoom accounts for public use.
A discussion about how to manage a Virtual meeting space to replace in-person meeting space. Matthew Wojcik has researched this. The tech committee and staff agreed to pilot it. There will be a learning curve and they will see if there is a demand.
Matt will administrate the program.
There was a discussion around whether it will be a public program or private. It was agreed that the pilot can parallel what we do in the physical meeting space for presentations (which are in alignment with library policy and mores) and what is done in the private meeting rooms (meetings that can have more of an individual focus) in the virtual space.
- Policies update and strategic plan extension for discussion in October.
Starr and Jane met to discuss. Jane took home and drafted a revision of existing policies. This will first go through the staff. Starr will start looking at it and will send to staff in small bite size portions to start a discussion. She will get this together in two weeks (by September 23) and send it out to the board a week before the next meeting.

Leo motioned to adjourn 6:15PM, Jane moved, Jenny seconded.

Thank you