

Minutes for the Board of Trustees of the Williamsburg Libraries

Tuesday, December 15, 2020, 7:00 pm

Virtual meeting via Zoom

Present: Pat Billingsley, Ken Borden, Bev Bullock, Joan Coryat, Fred Goodhue, Charlotte Meryman (recorder), Rob Stinson. Guest: Maureen O'Brien.

1. The meeting was called to order by Joan at 7:07 pm.
2. Minutes
 - a. Charlotte designated as recorder
 - b. Nov. 16 minutes (taken by Fred) reviewed and amendments suggested. Pat moved to accept as amended, Ken seconded, approved with Fred abstaining.
3. Director's report (appended)
 - a. **Community connections:** Pat noted that under new IRS rules, even those who do not itemize can deduct up to \$300 in charitable contributions made in 2020. She volunteered to draft a brief notice with this information, to be posted on the library website. Joan and Charlotte will collaborate on a brief announcement regarding the Annual Fund campaign for submission to the town's February newsletter; the Board will review the draft at its January meeting. Articles are due to the town by Jan. 28.
 - b. **Staff updates:** see Director's Report
 - c. **Programming:** see Director's Report
 - d. **Technology update:** see Director's Report
 - e. **Maintenance and repair / Building update:** Bev reported that Jamrog started work Dec. 11 installing the new ERV air exchange handler in the old section of the building. While they are on site, Jamrog will also look at the MRV system in the new addition, which is not working properly.
 - f. **School program updates:** Bev reported that Rochelle hosted an outdoor story time for a school class on the library patio today, and that staff continue to supply books to teachers as requested. Library instruction for students has still not begun, however. The board agreed that it would be a good idea to have Naomi (Kmit Librarian) reach out to Dunphy School teachers and Principal Stacey Jenkins via email to explain the remote services she is prepared to provide (and attaching her grade-by-grade curriculum). Bev will arrange this.

Bev also reported that the School Committee is expected to authorize payment of their initial library services invoice at their Dec. 16 meeting. The bill for the remaining balance will be submitted this month, with payment due in January. Charlotte asked whether the Board should consider reducing the second bill in recognition of the School Department's difficult financial situation this year. Board members noted that the pandemic is affecting the library's finances, as well, and it was agreed to leave the bill as is. It was noted that the bill is already somewhat reduced due to a clerical error that

listed the total at last year's rate of \$16,109 rather than this year's rate of \$16,431. Bev noted that the School Committee has proposed forming a joint subcommittee with Trustees to examine the school/library funding arrangement. Pat offered to serve on that committee with Joan.

- g. **Friends news and updates:** Maureen O'Brien reported that the Friends fall membership drive raised \$3,700. Joan won a membership gift drawing but graciously asked that another winner be chosen instead. A second free raffle will be advertised soon.

The deadline is Dec. 31 for Florence Bank customers to vote on a nonprofit to receive a cash award in their annual giveaway. The Friends have done very well in past years and will continue to encourage voting over the next two weeks. Maureen reported that the Friends are considering establishing their own web site with online payment via PayPal. They are still examining their board and membership structure and brainstorming fundraising ideas.

The Friends donated \$220 for stamps for the Trustees' Annual Fund solicitation letters, mailed last week. Trustees expressed their appreciation for the support. Pat attended the Friends' Dec. 14 meeting and noted that three members said they had not received the Trustees' letter and would like to. Bev will have John print letters to be mailed to them. Rob noted that the timing of the Friends' newsletter, so close to the Trustees' Annual Fund mailing, was not optimal. Charlotte suggested the possibility of a joint subcommittee to work on coordinating our fundraising efforts. Maureen will propose the idea to the Friends.

- h. **Coronavirus and Reopening updates:** see Director's Report
- i. **Other library news:** see Director's Report

4. Financial reports

- a. **Annual Fund status:** Five more donations were received in the first half of December, bringing to current total to \$3,300.
- b. **Current budget status:** Bev noted that money budgeted for a circulation assistant to help during class visits is being used instead to cover additional hours for an Intermittent Part-Time (IPT) circulation assistant (Lisa), who is handling social media for the library. It was noted that the Miscellaneous expenses line covers pandemic-related expenses, including PPE, cleaning supplies, and the paper bags used to package materials for patron pickup. Fred moved to accept the Financial Reports as submitted, Rob seconded, approved unanimously.

5. Old business

- a. **Annual campaign:** The Board plans to send a welcome letter to new town residents in February. Charlotte has obtained a list of residential property transfers since January 2019 but is not confident it is complete. Rob will look into whether there are town records that might list new residents. Charlotte will revise the 2018 letter and bring a draft to the Board's January meeting.

The possibility of promoting the Annual Fund via the library's social media accounts was discussed.

- b. **Long-range strategic plan:** Bev asked the Board to consider over the coming months whether it wants to hire a consultant to help with the long-range plan.
- c. **Meekins Library Corporation tax status:** We will wait to hear back from the IRS and the state DOR on the recently submitted tax returns before taking any further action.
- d. **Staff pay equity project:** Joan noted that this is not the best time to be asking for additional funding, given the financial challenges brought on by the pandemic. Bev expressed her desire to see the matter addressed, and Trustees concurred. It was agreed that we should continue our research and work on shaping a proposal to clarify the issue. Rob will work on updating the spreadsheet he previously compiled of salaries at comparable libraries. Rob, Joan, and Bev are the subcommittee for this project.
- e. **Racial justice statement:** Joan and Charlotte will collaborate with Bev on a statement to be posted on the library web site.
- f. **Hiring a scribe to take minutes:** Joan spoke with Charlene, who said we should make a request to the Finance Committee if we want to hire a scribe. Joan said she is not comfortable asking for that if we are not asking for raises for library staff. She added that the MBLC advised it is permissible but not recommended to use state aid money for a scribe, as they feel all salaries should be funded by the town. Rob said the Conservation Commission's scribe is paid \$15 an hour. Our minutes would probably require four hours a month (two for the meeting and two to write it up), which at that rate would cost \$60 a month or \$720 a year. Pat observed that with four Trustees rotating (the chair and treasurer are exempt), we each take minutes only three times a year. It was agreed we will continue that arrangement.
- g. **Trustee representative to Friends meeting:** Ken will attend Jan. 11, 2021.

6. New business

- a. Joan raised the idea of posting Trustee photos on our library web site page. Trustees agreed to look at the site and discuss at our January meeting.

7. Action items were reviewed; all were completed.

8. Next meeting date: Tuesday, January 19, 2021

9. Ken moved to adjourn at 9:12 pm, Fred seconded, approved unanimously.

Documents Used:

Agenda

Minutes of November 16, 2020 meeting

Directors Report

Financial Reports from Library Bookkeeper

Meekins Library Director's Report

Bev Bullock

December 2020

Community Connections

- A town newsletter is planned for February. The deadline is January 28. Trustees and Friends are welcome to submit articles.
- The Hamptons Reopening Group Update: In January we will be kicking off a One Book, One Community Read series with Pecumtuck Valley Memorial. The book will be Station Eleven. All Hamptons programming will include book discussion groups and a presentation on being a trauma informed community.
- The warm clothing drive has ended.

Staff Updates

- Laurie Scanlon will be going to Costa Rica in January for two months. The same substitute from last year will be taking the hours

Programming

- Holiday Read is set up and ready to go.
- Anne Bussler is applying for Cultural Council grants to hold a book discussion group for tweens (10-13 years old) using materials from the youth adapted version of *Just Mercy*.
- Naomi continues to offer zoom based programs and take away craft kits.

Technology Updates

- Bobbin and I have been invited to attend the Town's technology Committee meeting in January. I look forward to this and hope that an ongoing relationship will develop.

Maintenance and Repair- Building Update

- Charlene got a grant for upgrades to ventilation systems in Town Buildings. A Jamrog project to upgrade the ventilation in the old part of the library was approved. An ERV air exchange handler is being installed. The \$8900 project needs to be completed by December 31, 2020
- The foul smell in the restrooms has abated. Pouring water down the drains everyday for five days seems to have worked

School updates

- Matt Willhelm has signed the MOA and sent it along to the school district to verify for the library services invoice

- We continue to supply books for teachers who request them.

Friends News and Updates-

- The side panel for the shelving units have been delivered. The remaining parts will be shipped on December 12-14. Thank you again Friends.

Director Continuing Education and activities

- Libraries Transforming Communities: Leading the Conversation Learning modules (6) with bi-weekly coaching calls on zoom with class. The class is required for the grant listed below.
- Grant possibility <http://www.ala.org/tools/librariestransform/libraries-transforming-communities/small-mid-rural-public> - February 2, 2021 deadline
- Letter of Intent for LSTA grant. On December 3, 2020 I completed a letter of intent to MBLC for potential Access for All LSTA grant. I consulted with MBLC consultant, Shelley Quesada, who will consult on the potential project. The grant would fund a collaboration with the Senior Center.

Long Range Planning for 2021-

The Action Plan FY22 has been submitted to MBLC and was approved as written. Looking forward to determining next steps with the Trustees.



Action Plan LRP
2021 final.docx

Coronavirus and Reopening updates- no updates. The BOS ask for updates from town departments prior to their meetings so that they know what is going on in town.