

Minutes for the Board of Trustees of the Williamsburg Libraries

Monday, August 17, 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.

Handouts: Director's Report; FY'20 final Financial Reports; FY'21 initial Financial Reports; Scheduled Maintenance spreadsheet

1. The meeting was called to order by Joan at 7:03 pm.
2. Minutes
 - a. Charlotte designated as recorder
 - b. July 20 minutes reviewed and amendments suggested. Fred moved to accept as amended, Pat seconded, unanimously approved.
3. Director's report (see attached)
 - a. **Plans to reopen under Covid-19 restrictions:** Town Administrator Charlene Nardi has asked all department heads to outline possible staff reductions for the new fiscal year due to changes in operation under pandemic restrictions. Bev and the board agreed no staff cutbacks could be made at Meekins without cutting services. Bev will think about possible scenarios.

The Hamptons Reopening Group continues to meet regularly. Bev reported that at this point Westhampton Library has opened with very limited hours and perhaps only for scheduled visits, and Lilly Library in Florence is allowing access to the circulation desk only, with no browsing. At Meekins there are only four staff members, including Bev, who could work the circulation desk, and two of them are over 60 and thus in a higher-risk group. The rest are themselves or have family members who are immune compromised and thus do not feel safe interacting with the public.

Bev reported there have been only a few patron complaints about the current lack of physical access. The main desire expressed is for access to the public computers and associated Internet. However, those computers are located next to the work station of an immune compromised staff member. The board discussed possible ways to address this, which Bev will explore further.

Bev reported that, in accordance with Mass. Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) guidelines, all materials being delivered to the library or coming out of the drop box are being quarantined for four days in the community room.

- b. **School program updates:** Bev has been working with Naomi, the Kmit Children's Librarian, on a remote curriculum proposal, and Naomi is coordinating with Brian, the school's technology instructor. The school plans to open on a hybrid model, with a virtual curriculum and students attending in person two days a week, in two alternating groups. Getting books into children's hands is a priority for Bev. Bev will update the library's contract with the school to encompass virtual services and submit the agreement and a bill for the coming school year to Principal Stacey Jenkins.

- c. **Maintenance and repair updates:** Jamrog is scheduled to repair the mini splits, with the town covering the cost.
- 4. Friends News and Updates

Bev reported that the Friends are weighing alternatives to an in-person Book Sale, including delivering themed bundles of books directly to customers. Maureen reported that the Friends annual membership solicitation will be mailed by Sept. 15. Charlotte will be the Trustees representative to the Sept. 14 Friends meeting.
- 5. Financial reports
 - a. The end-of-year budget reports were reviewed. It was noted that there is a surplus in the general accounts. Anticipating budget challenges due to the pandemic, Bev reduced spending on new materials this spring after the MBLC announced it was temporarily suspending annual purchase requirements for member libraries. Because salaries are funded separately by the town, however, this surplus cannot be used to offset potential staff cuts.
- 6. Old business
 - a. **Meekins Library Corporation tax status:** Ken spoke with the state Attorney General's office and with a representative from the IRS, and was told we must fill out form 1023 and pay a significant fee to reapply for non-profit status. The board discussed the possibility of engaging an accountant to sort out the matter and negotiate a different resolution. Bev and Joan will solicit recommendations. In the meantime, Ken will complete the missing 990PF's and state returns. Joan will work with Ken as needed.
- 7. New business:
 - a. The library was notified by a Northampton law office that it is the beneficiary of an estate comprising some \$6,000. Bev said the decedent was a Cumington resident who belonged to a writers group that met at Meekins.
 - b. Noting the recent anti-racism declaration by Forbes Library staff and trustees, the board discussed how it might address this cultural moment. Bev said Forbes trustees have created a committee to plan their response and that she would be happy to work with anyone who wants to do the same here. As initial steps, the board recommended Bev purchase additional copies of the most in-demand books on the topic (some of which she said now have waiting lists in the hundreds), and promote relevant online titles via social media as they become available free under the Overdrive program. Bev added that she is considering starting a virtual book club and that a relevant text could perhaps be selected for that, as well.
- 8. Next meeting: Monday, Sept. 21, 7 pm via Zoom
- 9. Ken moved to adjourn at 8:46 pm, Pat seconded, approved unanimously.

Director's Report

Bev Bullock

August 17, 2020

Community Connections

- Weekly teleconference meeting bi-weekly with Town Department heads to discuss town response to coronavirus.
- The Hamptons Reopening Group met 8/4 Easthampton, Westhampton, Southampton and Northampton & Lilly Libraries and Meekins. I missed the meeting but the next one is 8/20.

Staff Updates

- All staff back to work.
- Staffing problems associated with re-opening. Immune compromised or family member immune compromised. Staff and volunteers over the age of 60 risking exposure.
- Summer reading will end August 22. There is still time to read and be eligible for prizes. <https://meekinslibrary.beanstack.com/reader365>
- Socially Distanced Pizza Party at the Library on Saturday, August 22 for anyone completing the summer reading challenges
- We are exploring ideas to provide some virtual programming in the coming year as most likely we will not be having large gatherings in person

Technology Updates

- Winston Bancroft has hardwired the phones so no more WIFI voip phones
- I have been working to straighten out some programs with Paragus IT, the town's provider. We are working on getting Bitdefender as our antivirus software. We also have to get new licenses for our DeepFreeze software that keeps permanent changes from being made on our public computers.
- The website upgrade is in the works- here is the dummy front page- no active links yet- <http://meekins.sv9824.si-servers.com/>

Maintenance and Repair- Building Update

- Mini split leaks. The Board of Selectmen has voted to fund the repair of the mini splits through the Building Maintenance Fund. There will be a special article for the October Town meeting. We are on the list for repairs in the next two weeks.
- The grounds have started to look scruffy with weeds. I plan to contact Nick Dines and Ken Woofenden. I am not sure if the Deadhead group does this or not.

School updates

Preparing to send annual invoice for library services on August 15. Have been in touch with Stacy and expect a follow up soon.

Friends News and Updates

- The Friends contributed to the purchase of an iPad mini for a summer reading prize. Florence Bank also contributed \$200.
- The Friends purchased wire rack shelving to make our curbside pick up easier and neater.

Director Continuing Education and activities

- Small Libraries Check in Zoom meeting- August 14, 2020
- CWMARS has started a discussion group for library directors on dealing with racism both in libraries and the country.
- ARIS reports – Bev currently working on this
- Budget plans – working with John on this
- Long Range Planning for 2021- no new work on this