

Minutes for the Board of Trustees of the Williamsburg Libraries

Monday, Sept. 23, 2019, 7:00 pm
Meekins Library, Williamsburg, MA

Present: Pat Billingsley, Joan Coryat, Beverly Bullock, Charlotte Meryman (recorder), Ken Borden. Absent: Rob Stinson, Cynthia Barker. Guest: Maureen O'Brien.

1. The meeting was called to order by Joan at 7:06.
2. Newly appointed trustee Ken Borden was welcomed to the board.
3. Minutes
 - a. Charlotte designated as recorder.
 - b. Aug. 1 minutes reviewed and amendments suggested. Joan moved to accept as amended, Pat seconded; unanimously approved.

4. Director's report (Bev)
 - a. **School Program:** School visits began two weeks ago, with each class visiting every other week, so all the classes have now had one visit, except for the preschool and sixth grade, which will schedule visits occasionally as needed. At Bev's request, Naomi (our Kmit librarian) created a library skills curriculum for each grade level, K-6. Naomi provided this to the sixth-grade teacher, and Bev reported the response was enthusiastic, which she hopes will lead to more regular library visits by the sixth grade this year.

John has submitted the library services bill for the first half of the year to the School Committee. Bev will confirm that last year's contract continues into this year.

Bev submitted to Principal Stacey Jenkins a bill for approximately \$700 for missing materials checked out by school staff and students, prompting the return of most of the items. The outstanding total is a bit over \$120, and Bev has submitted a revised bill for this amount.

b. **Friends of the Library:** The Friends would like to purchase museum passes for the library again this year. The possibility of purchasing two passes each to the Clark Museum and MassMoCA was discussed, due to the popularity of both. Also discussed was the option of reducing the loan period from the current one week to three days, which is more in line with other area libraries and would increase availability. That would be possible only if borrowers could return the passes via the drop box. Bev said Bobbin is looking into the purchase of durable plastic envelopes for the passes, which could also hold a museum brochure and return instructions. In the meantime, Bev has instituted a \$5 late fee for museum passes.

Friends liaison Maureen O'Brien reported that the group is in the process of preparing their fall fundraising letter. She said they would like to accept online

donations via their page on the library website. Pat advised her that the Friends would need to set that up directly with the processing bank, which is not a simple process. Pat observed that very few donors use the online option currently available for the trustees' Annual Fund.

The Friends continue to be interested in supporting technology, and Bev has suggested they clarify as a group the types of things they would like to fund (e.g. hardware, software, etc.).

Pat inquired about the possibility of the Friends re-establishing a discretionary fund for the director from which she could fund smaller and/or urgent needs as they arise over the course of the year. Such an arrangement existed during Lisa Wenner's tenure as director, Pat said, and consisted of several thousand dollars transferred to the library budget at the start of each fiscal year. Charlotte suggested the Friends could request an accounting from the director every few months or at the end of the year as to how the funds were used. Maureen will discuss the idea with the Friends.

c. **Staff:** Bev reported that, as planned, Michele and Amber are now alternating Saturdays. Amber also has extra hours on Thursdays to train with Bobbin and is now cataloguing the periodicals. Additionally, both Amber and Michele are taking a Mass. Library Systems (MLS) cataloguing course. Daria has dropped her Thursday desk hours and is now working the desk only every other Saturday, so that she can devote more of her time to the archives, her area of expertise, and to preparing for the Meekins Market, an annual fundraising sale of donated items. All of Daria's hours are volunteer. Bev reported that volunteer Lisa Zacks is now working one Saturday a month and is especially enthusiastic about creating displays. However, the library remains one person short on the desk every other Saturday.

Bev attended an MLS training in preparation for submitting the state financial report Oct. 1 and has also signed up to take MLS workshops on grant writing and effective meetings.

d. **Technology:** Bev reported that after investigation by Johnson Electric, it was determined that the Riverside Room computer cannot be hardwired to the Internet, so the Central Western Mass. Automated Resource System (CWMARS), which provides the library's Internet, worked with Paragus IT to connect it via wifi.

Bev reported that the town's transition to a VOIP phone system this summer ran into serious complications at Meekins Library. The VOIP requires plugging phones into computers, she said, which the CWMARS system does not support, so Charlene Nardi has reactivated the library's Comcast Internet account and the phones are connected to that via wifi. Charlene is working on a more permanent solution, which may involve requesting money from Special Town Meeting for hardwired phones. Additionally, the library temporarily lost its connection to the police and fire departments, and the fire alarm was repeatedly triggered. An alarm company representative determined the panel is outdated

and needs to be replaced. Bev has forwarded to Charlene the bills from the alarm company relating to the VOIP transition, which total about \$1,200.

Bev, Pat, and Cynthia plan to meet with Charlene to discuss the library's technology needs and the inclusion of the library in the town's contract with Paragus IT.

Bev reported that among the surplus items she has found in the basement is an old NEC phone box, which can no longer be used but may have some value. Pat moved that Bev be authorized to dispose of it in any manner she sees fit. Joan seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

e. **Paycheck issues:** Pat reported that Bev's training days in late June could not be covered by the leftover money in the staff budget line, as planned, because unbeknownst to us the bill needed to be paid before the end of the fiscal year. Bev is instead being paid from the FY 2019 local donations account. The only alternative was presenting a request at Special Town Meeting, which would have delayed Bev's payment several additional months.

f. **Other library news:**

Bev has met twice with Senior Center Director Jennifer Hoffman to discuss ways they can collaborate.

Forbes Library Director Lisa Downing and Assistant Director Molly Moss visited Meekins for a tour and lunch meeting. Bev said they are interested in collaborating on projects and programs, such as One-Book Hamptons, which could potentially be expanded to include Williamsburg.

Bev reported that there is renewed interest in the Cabinet of Curiosities, which is now booked for the next several months. Scott Haskins will present a program on the current display: his metal detecting finds.

The library recognized Banned Book Week Sept. 22-28.

Bev reported that The Greenway Committee will mount a display in the Hawks-Hayden Room in October, with a reception Oct. 5. The board welcomed the idea of using the space to display information on important town issues and suggested the Public Safety Complex committee might be interested, as well.

Pat asked Bev to include mention of upcoming programming in her library blurb for the next town newsletter.

Bev is considering reviving the library's membership in the Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL), which was discontinued several years ago and which she found helpful in a previous job.

Bev will look into whether funds from her unpaid vacation time this summer can be used elsewhere in the budget and whether such a transfer would require approval from Special Town Meeting.

5. Financial reports (Bev)

a. The Annual Fund remains at \$55, with two donations.

b. The budget is on track in all areas.

6. Old Business

a. Maintenance and Repair: Bev is awaiting a response from John Hoogstraten regarding several needs: There are 11 hard-to-access overhead light bulbs that need replacement, and the light over the Curiosity Cabinet is working only intermittently, which may indicate an electrical issue.

b. Trustees liaison to Friends: Maureen suggested the Trustees not send a representative to the October Friends meeting, which likely will focus primarily on planning for the Columbus Day Book Sale. The board agreed to hold off until the Friends' November meeting.

7. New Business

a. Election of officers: After a brief discussion, it was agreed that the current officers would remain in place for the coming year. Charlotte moved that Pat Billingsley be reelected as Chair, Joan Coryat as Vice Chair, and Cynthia Barker as Treasurer. Ken seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

b. FY 2021 Annual Campaign: Charlotte agreed to draft a new letter to be mailed in December. The board discussed the possibility of reviving the Hilltown Challenge as a way to widen the donor pool.

c. Route 9 crossing: Maureen said she spoke with former trustee Jon Gould, now assistant to state Sen. Adam Hines, about this issue, which many feel has still not been adequately addressed. John recommended the town put in another request for a stoplight and ask the state Department of Transportation (DOT) Highway District 1 director, Francisca Heming, to meet with stakeholders, including the library, school, and town. Bev wondered whether the Police Department might be able to provide an escort to school children during library visits, or some other type presence. Charlotte asked about the possibility of the school hiring a crossing guard for library visits.

d. First Amendment "audits": Rob brought to board's attention (via Pat and Joan) a recent incident in eastern Mass. in which activists created a disturbance by filming library patrons without their permission, apparently to assert First Amendment rights. The board agreed with Rob's suggestion that the best course of action was for the board to establish a formal policy on filming inside the library. Bev will draft one, based on the St. Louis policy Rob provided.

e. Other:

i) Bev has been going through the basement and has identified a number of items stored there that are no longer needed and present a potential fire hazard by blocking access, including chairs from the Hawks-Hayden Room recently replaced by the Friends and multiple musty boxes of old *Life* magazines that our archivist has determined are no longer needed. On a motion by Pat, seconded by Joan, the board voted unanimously to declare as surplus the following items:

18 small wooden children's chairs; 18 red plastic chairs; 16 blue cloth chairs; boxes of Life magazines (1950's to 1990's); and old wooden shelving.

ii) Bev and staff have also completed the annual culling of surplus books, which Bev will donate to Round About Books in Greenfield.

iii) Bev has been looking into requirements for the next long-range plan, due to the MBLC in the Fall of 2020. Though we currently have a five-year plan, she learned that Forbes Library has a three-year plan, which the director there recommends as less involved to prepare and easier to stay on track with. Bev will investigate this option.

iv) Pat asked Bev to think about her ideal staffing plan and bring it to the next meeting for discussion.

8. Next meeting: Monday, October 21, 7 pm, Meekins Library

9. Joan moved to adjourn at 9:26 pm, Charlotte seconded; approved unanimously.

P. A. Billingsley