

Minutes
Board of Trustees of the Williamsburg Libraries
Tuesday, January 17, 7:00 pm
by Zoom teleconferencing

Present: Pat Billingsley, Ken Borden, Beverly Bullock (Director), Joan Coryat, Charlotte Meryman, Rob Stinson (recorder).

Guests: Susan Farrell for the Friends, Todd Lynch (prospective Board member)

1. **Call to order:** Charlotte called the meeting to order at 7:04.

2. **Minutes**

- a. Rob was designated as recorder.
- b. The minutes of the December 15 meeting were reviewed. Ken moved to accept the minutes as amended, Pat seconded; passed unanimously.

3. **Director's report**

- a. **Covid-19 restrictions:** see Report.
- b. **Community connections:** see Report.
- c. **Senior services:** see Report.
- d. **Staff updates:** see Report.
- e. **Library programming:** Ken asked if there is a lead person on the Homebound Delivery program being considered. Bev indicated that in its formative stage there is not yet a lead. Several patrons have volunteered to deliver items. Bev would like to see a formalized delivery program to improve on a heretofore ad hoc, improvised service.
- f. **Technology updates:** Pat asked about the installation date for the door counter. Bev expects Johnson Electric to complete installation before the end of Jan.
- g. **School program updates:** see Report.
- h. **Friends news and updates:** see Report. Susan and Ken updated the Board on Friends news, including book collections for the October sale. Friends bylaws may be finalized at their next meeting. Anne Bussler will be the corresponding Secretary. Nikki Gardner will be the Treasurer and technology guide. The Friends Valentine event will be on Feb. 11 and the Eileen Stewart bench will be dedicated on May 6. The Friends approved a Director's discretionary checking account (and debit card) with an annual limit of \$4,000 and with the proviso that any expenditure in excess of \$500 be specifically approved.
- i. **Maintenance and repair updates:** Lauren Stara from the MBLC conducted a space evaluation and Bev will distribute the report. A central suggestion is that space use be consistent with and conducive to realizing strategic plan goals. The library's per capita circulation rate ranks 10th in the state while the per capita building space ranks 114th. Inventory reduction would help alleviate this mismatch. Significant library space is taken up by town archives, without compensatory town funding. The Board of Selectman approved \$28,000 of ARPA funds for the Meekins gutter/drainage project and \$50,000 for the library energy audit. Other ARPA library funding requests not approved may be the target of future capital improvement requests.
- j. **Other library news:** Bev continues work on various policies. She would like a Board working group or committee to assist in drafting a financial donation policy and associated procedure. Rob and Pat offered to help. State Representative Lindsay Sabadosa and State Senator Paul Mark will be hosting a town hall event at Meekins February 4 at 1:00.

4. Financial reports

- a. **Review current budget reports:** Ken reported that the income – expense balance is about \$9k greater than the same time last year. Charlotte moved to accept the financial reports, Joan seconded; passed unanimously.
- b. **Annual fund status (goal \$19,500):** Progress toward the goal seems on track. Reminder cards will be mailed in March and April.

5. Old business

- a. **Annual campaign:** Rob updated the Board on the analysis of street listing data for 2020 and 2022 that Joan generated to identify new residents who would be the recipients of a library introduction letter in the coming months. The Board discussed various options for sending thank you cards or letters to significant donors.
- b. **Haydenville Library physical condition:** see Maintenance and Repair updates. The Building Supervisor's involvement in the various improvement projects is not yet clear. Someone reported to Bev that the building's front door was wide open during a cold spell, cause unknown. Bev to check the status of the hot water heater. Books remaining in the building need final disposition.
- c. **Staff pay equity project:** The BOS has yet to release the final Wage and Compensation Study performed by the UMASS Collins Center. It is hoped that the Study will support upcoming library budget requests.
- d. **Potential new Trustees list:** The Board discussed several possible candidates to fill current and future Board vacancies. Given that the town nominating caucus is in early March, the Board hopes to have firm expressions of interest by the February meeting. Board members in contact with potential candidates will keep Charlotte apprised.
- e. **Pioneer Valley Library Collaborative:** Bev reported that the Collaborative focuses on the Climate Action Week. Bev will follow their activities.
- f. **Director's Evaluation:** Joan indicated that the last evaluation was in the March/April timeframe. The next evaluation may use a simplified form and include an opportunity for the Director to offer feedback to the Board. Joan will distribute the most recently used form for comment.
- g. **Designate board representative for next Friends' meeting:** Joan will attend.

6. **New business:** The Annual Report for the town is due on Feb. 15. Charlotte will draft.

7. **Review action items from last meeting:** Action items were discussed in the context of related agenda items.

8. **Next meeting date:** Tuesday, February 21, 2023

9. **Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 (Pat moved, Ken Seconded; passed unanimously.)

Meekins Library Director's Report

January 2023

Community Connections

- Bev met with Melissa Wilson, Senior Center director, to discuss programming for the year. The Senior Center has a grant and is hiring Peg Whalen from Chesterfield to help with technology questions. Peg will hold hours here on Tuesday mornings for any type of tech question. This begins 3/7.

Staff Updates

Programming

- Meekins Book Club, January 23 @ 6:00pm Hybrid on Zoom or Hawks Hayden Room. This month's book is *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks. Participants voted on books for the remainder of the year and a regular calendar has been established.
- Meekins Market has made just about \$1200 with some \$\$ trickling in still.
- Meekins Holiday Read was rescheduled to Saturday, December 17 @3pm due to weather.
- Meekins will be co-hosting an author talk with Isaac Fitzgerald (Dirtbag Massachusetts: A Confessional). Reading Public Library is sponsoring the Zoom talk.
- Interest is building for a possible Homebound delivery program run by volunteers. While the delivery of materials to patrons is taking place informally, the project needs to be formalized.

Technology Updates

- The new door counter is here. It will be installed by Johnson Electric in January.

Maintenance and Repair- Building Updates

- Lauren Stara, MBLC Library Building specialist, came for a walk through and space evaluation on Wednesday, December 21.
- Nick Cacammo is requesting submissions for capital improvements by Jan. 31, 2023. I will be sending any of the ARPA requests that did not get funded.
- Bev attended a workshop about applying for Massachusetts Preservation Projects Funding. This fund paid for the old front steps. The deadline is March 2023. There is one caveat; the town must match the funds 50/50.

School updates

- A shelf has been purchased by the school to display library items at ATD. Staff is considering potential themes for displays as well as promotional materials for parents.

- Melissa Nye, School Committee chair, has delegated the exploration of a joint school/library book challenge policy. Bev is working with Kathaleen Emerson on this.

Friends News and Updates

Director Continuing Education and activities

- Meekins has met all state requirements and will be receiving the initial payment of state aid in December 22. Payment reflected in reports. The second payment usually is released in the spring.
- Policy updates
 - Collection Development- Book Challenges and Censorship
 - Meeting Room updates for political groups
 - Donations

Strategic Plan is here! For your reading enjoyment

The staff and Director are meeting in January to work on programming and the action plan. It is my hope that the SP(Strategic Plan) will inform our activities over this next year.

Coronavirus and Reopening

All staff continue to be healthy. Staff has opted to wear masks at the desk to protect ourselves and vulnerable family members.

Respectfully submitted

Bev Bullock