

Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees

Wednesday, March 13, 2013 7:00 pm

Thornton Room, Brooks Free Library
739 Main St., Harwich MA 02645

Agenda

1. Call to Order/Attendance
2. Approval of Minutes of Feb. 13 2013
3. Public Comment
4. Reports:
 - A. Chairman
 - B. Library Director
 - C. Building Maintenance Committee
 1. Emergency Lighting Project
 2. CFL Lighting Project
 3. Parking Lot Lighting project
 4. Phase I - Exterior Work
 5. Updates on other work
 - D. Liaison from Board of Selectman
 - E. Friends of Brooks Free Library
5. Correspondence:
 - A. Cape Cod Five letter dated Feb. 27 2013 re: bequest
6. Old Business:
 - A. Update on Compliance with State Ethics Test Requirement
 - B. Articles for May 2013 Annual Town Meeting - discussion & vote
 - C. Reorganization Plan - discussion and vote
7. New Business:
 - A. Acceptance of Monetary Donations
8. Trustees' Report
9. Adjournment

Authorized posting officer

Virginia Hewitt

Brooks Free Library

Date: 3/7/2013

Posted by

Town Clerk's Office

Date: _____

Agenda submitted electronically to Town of Harwich for posting March 7, 2013

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**Brooks Free Library
Library Director's Report
March 8, 2013**

Personnel:

Return to Work

I'm happy to report that Public Services Librarian Suzanne Martell has recovered from her injury and is now working full-time again.

Reorganization

I've continued to work on the reorganization and have prepared a new job description for the vacant Staff Librarian position. The old job description is from 1997, so it was very much in need of updating. Since the position already exists and is included in the classification and compensation plan, filling it does not require negotiations with the Harwich Employees Association. The position is a lower grade than the professional librarians and serves as a generalist, assisting and supporting the Reference, Youth Services and Public Services Librarian and also has responsibility for technology and electronic resources. It will be filled at 18-hours per week, so no additional expenses related to benefits are incurred by the Town.

Funding for the Staff Librarian in FY14, which starts July 1st, is not an issue as we will be using funds from vacant positions/hours, but funding for FY13 is problematic as additional Salary and Wages funds may be needed as the result of two unbudgeted extended medical leaves. As we've discussed before, our FY13 Salary and Wages budget did not cover the unanticipated (when budgeted) coverage needed for the Reference Librarian's 12-week maternity leave last summer. In January and February 2013 we also had to cover for another staff member's extended absence due to a non-work related injury. Last year we anticipated needing a Reserve Fund Transfer for coverage of different 12-week maternity leave, but were instead able to cover it with an end-of the year transfer from Expenses (lower utility costs than budgeted) to our Salary and Wages line. There are restrictions on this type of end-of-year transfer, but it may be a possibility this year also. I am monitoring this as we get closer to the end of the year before submitting a request to the Finance Committee for a Reserve Fund Transfer.

Funding for this year's unbudgeted staffing needs has added a complicating factor to when we can fill the Staff Librarian position. If we're not able to fill it this year, we should be able to fill it on July 1st at the latest. If that's the case, I anticipate advertising the vacancy and going through the interviewing and selection process in May and June. The vacancy must be advertised within in the Harwich Employees Association first and will not be open to outside applicants unless an internal candidate is not selected.

Operations:

Feb. Blizzard

As I reported at the last meeting, the Library closed early on Fri., Feb. 8th and was closed on Sat. the 9th because of the blizzard. Power outages were widespread, so we implemented our plans to help the community in a natural disaster or emergency by opening from 12-4 on Mon., Feb. 11th, when we're not normally open, providing normal library services while also serving as a community warming site. We put the word out on our website, Facebook and Twitter, Channel 18 and email and contacted local media outlets who reported it on the radio, in print, on their websites and social media accounts. We received a lot of favorable recognition for opening that day, with a notice on the front page of the Cape Cod Times and inclusion in that day's editorial and an opinion column later that week. The Mass. Board of Library Commissioners was delighted to have their pilot project with Mass. Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) furthered in this way.

The effort to publicize the opening was very successful, with the Facebook alone reaching over 1,100 users. Despite the fact that it was not a normal day of operation, approximately 300 residents were served. 373 books, movies, magazines and other items were checked out, a circulation per open hour consistent with many mid-week days. In addition to checking out books, movies, magazines, games and puzzles, many patrons, both families and individuals, stayed for lengthy visits. They used the public computers and wireless Internet, read newspapers and magazines, charged cell phones and devices and played board games while enjoying the heat and power. Patrons were really appreciative of the opening - many thanking staff more than once. Even those who had power back commented how nice it was get out of the house and come to a community gathering spot. Weeks later we're still receiving compliments even from people who didn't come that day.

Cape and Islands Legislative Breakfast:

The Feb. 8th Legislative Breakfast was postponed until March 15th because of the storm. I'll be one of the speakers, talking about the increased role of libraries in emergency management planning and helping the community when a disaster or emergency occurs.

Programs:

Feb. vacation week was very busy again this year, beginning with a performance of the Otha Day Drum Circle on Sat. Feb. 16th and continuing on with on-going and special programs. The Slime program on Thurs. the 21st was especially popular - an overflow crowd of 50 youngsters attended, double the number anticipated! For adults, author Michael Tougias' Feb. 23rd presentation on his new book "A Storm Too Soon" was well attended.

Children's programs in March include a performance by Trevor the Juggler on Sat. March 9th and a showing of Library Cinema - "Wreck It Ralph" - on Sat. March 23.

For adults, we'll have a presentation "Tramping the Dune Shacks" and a craft program on book page wreaths. We're also starting a monthly Game Night program for adults and families with middle-school and older children on March 21st.

80 people attended the Friends' First Sunday program on March 3, a performance of the Bluestone Group of the Cape Rep Theatre. Their next program features artist Bill Maloney on Sunday, April 7 at 1 pm.

Yarn-Bombing

The Library was "yarn bombed" by our Knit-Lit Group this month. Patrons and staff members were surprised on Tues. Feb. 19th by the colorful creations all around the Library. There were colorful hats and scarves on the busts in the Reference area, on the fans, and decorations on computer monitors, book carts, table legs, etc. We received a lot of great publicity with photos and articles in the Cape Cod Times (and a video on their daily "Cape Cast") and Cape Cod Chronicle. The knitted items certainly added a lot of color to the dreary mid-winter days and patrons were very enthusiastic about it. The group plans to take them down in a few weeks, so stop in to see them if you haven't already.

After-school Programs

As previously reported, we've been revising our after-school offerings this year, replacing the DDR/Wii Sports on Tuesdays and Lego Mania/Wii Sports on Wednesdays as interest had begun to wane. We tried a Board Game program in Sept. and Oct., but it didn't attract many youngsters, so we then re-vamped the Lego program and began holding it in the Children's Room starting in Nov. The revised location and format has been very successful, and the program is regularly attended by 15-20 youngsters. The Children's Room is a more pleasant location, with nice seating for the parents and caregivers and activities to entertain younger sibling. Parents are staying for the hour instead of leaving their children as they did when it was in the Meeting Room, and the Children's Room is a somewhat crowded but very happy, noisy and fun spot on Tuesday afternoons now. The presence of the parents help with crowd control and any misbehavior and the parents enjoy the opportunity to chat and get to know each other.

After investigating various ideas for other after-school programs and ordering the equipment, we're now adding another. We're starting a new weekly Kinect program for middle and high school students on Wednesdays beginning March 13th. A novel form of video game, the X-Box Kinect requires the players to physically move their arms and bodies to control the play of the game, encouraging physical activity and providing a social context for teens to engage with one another in the library.

"Brooks Books" videos

Youth Services Librarian Ann Carpenter has begun a new series of book talk videos, called Brooks Books, based on the Reading Rainbow concept. The first video features several youngsters from our Homeschool Book Group talking about a favorite book. The video is now on YouTube and is also posted on our Facebook page. (A link to our Facebook page is provided on our homepage, www.brooksfreelibrary.org.) Ann plans to add these videos regularly, with book talks from adults as well as children.

Tumblebooks

We now have subscriptions to "Tumblebooks - eBooks for Kids" there are books for pre-readers, early readers and advanced readers up through high school. The collections include talking animated storybooks, read-alongs chapter books, graphic novels, classics & audio books. A language learning collection includes books in French, Spanish, Russian and Chinese. Access is provided through our website, on the E-Book page.

Digitized Central Cape Press:

The vendor has completed the digitization work on this historic newspaper, which was funded by Community Preservation Act funds. The newspaper covers the 1950's, the 10 years after the Harwich Independent ended and the project included a digitized set for the Historical Society. The vendor conducted an on-site training session with Reference Librarian Jennifer Pickett and volunteers from the Historical Society on March 5th.

New furniture on Mezzanine:

The new couch, chairs, coffee table and end tables purchased by the Friends for the Mezzanine were delivered on Friday, March 8th, and look great! It is quite an improvement. One of the old armchairs was still in good condition and was moved to the Non-Fiction Room. I offered the furniture to other Town departments and the Youth Counselor was happy to take the other armchair, which needs a slipcover, but is a very solid chair and better than what she has now. The Maintenance Dept. moved that chair to the Albro House and took the old couch to the Treasure Chest.

Wheelchair for use by patrons

Thanks to the Friends of the Council on Aging's equipment loan program, we now have a wheelchair at the Library for patrons to use while they're here.

Building Maintenance:

Parking Lot Project

The Highway and Maintenance Dept. installed a twin lamp head on the pole between the upper and lower parking lot this month, so the upper lot now has some light. Other work will need to wait until spring.

Damaged Enclosure:

The fence surrounding the chiller was damaged by the backhoe clearing the parking lot during the Feb. blizzard. The Highway and Maintenance Dept. is aware of it and plans to replace the posts and repair any damage.

Front door:

The Highway Dept. has not completed the repair on the front door they began last fall. An adjustment or replacement of the crash bar/locking mechanism is needed. I reminded Highway about it after we received a written notice about it during our building inspection last month. They assessed the door again to determine what was needed, but it has not yet been fixed.

Emergency Lighting:

When the Library lost power for 45 minutes on March 7, I was able to observe what lights were connected to the inverter. Several restrooms did not have lights and there were no working lights in the Cahoon Room - all of which were supposed to have been included in the wiring to the inverter. In other areas, only some lights that appeared to be on the same circuit were on. The Children's Room was excessively lit, with every light on. I did not have time to document emergency lighting in the basement or attic before power was restored. I have not yet had the opportunity to check my notes against the project's wiring plans, so I don't know if the plans were properly prepared to include

circuits we were assured would be included or the contractor deviated from the plans during construction or some other problem occurred preventing emergency lighting in the restroom and Cahoon Room. We will be reviewing this with the contractor soon.

Leak on Mezzanine:

An area on the Mezzanine over the stairs began leaking during heavy rain in the late afternoon on March 7th. I notified the Highway and Maintenance Dept. but since it was after hours I was told it would be checked out the next morning when they were coming to remove the old furniture from the Mezzanine. This leak is one the Maintenance Dept. is familiar with as they've investigated and repaired a leak in this area four or five times since the renovation. We covered the stairs with tarps to protect the carpeting and placed several large trashcans to catch the water, which was dripping at a fairly fast rate. I then checked the attic to see if I could identify the source of the leak, checking the cupola, top of the elevator shaft and several crawl spaces. I didn't find any wet areas or hear any sounds indicating a leak in those areas. The Maintenance Dept. came in the morning to move furniture but they were gone before I arrived at 9 am, so I did not speak to them. I was busy with other storm-related issues until after Noon, when the Highway staff leaves, so I did not get a chance to call them. As of this writing on Friday afternoon, I don't know if they investigated or were able to take any action on the leak this morning. The rate of dripping has slowed considerably as the rain has decreased today.

Parking Lot Lights

The Highway Dept. installed a twin lamp head on the pole between the parking lots, so the upper lot now has some light. Other work will need to wait until spring.

Emergency Light Inverter:

Healthy Air Solutions has provided a cost estimate of \$2700 for exhaust venting that will activate when hydrogen is present (i.e., batteries are in use (discharging) and recharging after a discharge.) A hydrogen gas detector will activate the exhaust fan that was installed this fall and vent it to the outside. The venting system will not be attached to the inverter in any way, so it does not void any warranties or interfere with its operation in any way. This design is considerably less expensive than we planned and is a safety concern so I have authorized Healthy Air to do the work as soon as possible using funds available in this year's Maintenance and Repair budget. This means the cost of venting can now be removed from the Town Meeting article we submitted for venting and air conditioning. We have one quote for the air conditioning and are expecting two more shortly. Even with adding some funds for contingencies, this work should be able to be accomplished for \$9000. We may be able to pay for a portion of this work out of this year's budget, bringing down the additional funds we'll need to do the work. A potential source of funding for the Town Meeting article is having the motion use funds remaining in the Parking Lot article as a source of funds, but all the work for that project needs to be completed in time for us to know what the final balance is left. Another option is to request a Reserve Fund Transfer this year from the Finance Committee. If approved, that would eliminate the need for a Town Meeting article completely.

Telephone System Replacement:

Town Technology Coordinator Foster Banford has scheduled a cabling contractor to begin work on March 25th to connect us to the internet-based system used by Town Hall and

Public Safety. Some prep work needs to be done prior to that, so we will need to have the Computer Room cleared of all equipment and stored material by March 19th.

Financial:

FY13 Budget

A year-to-date budget spreadsheet is included in your packet.

Articles for May 2013 Town Meeting

Chairman Mary Warde and Trustees JoAnne Brown and Jeannie Wheeler met with the Finance Committee on March 6th to discuss our articles. They agreed with the Town Administrator's recommendation to fund the \$29,000 Technology article from free cash and indicated support for the maintenance projects, though a source of funds was not identified and no votes were taken.

The Trustees are scheduled to meet with the Selectmen on Monday, March 11 to discuss the articles.

Status of the remaining articles:

FUND LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY - \$29,000. The Town Administrator has recommended funding this article from free cash. The FinCom supports this article.

INSTALL VENTING AND AIR CONDITIONING IN LIBRARY BASEMENT - \$25,000. With the removal of venting, discussed above, and the estimate received for the air conditioning, the amount of this article can safely be reduced to \$9000.

FUND LIBRARY BUILDING MAINTENANCE PROJECTS - \$75,000. A source of funding has not yet been identified. The Building Maintenance Committee continues to investigate options and obtain estimates for the specific work.

FUND BROOKS FREE LIBRARY PHASE II RESTORATION AND PRESERVATION HISTORIC "BANK BUILDING" - \$38,000. As discussed previously, the Community Preservation Committee did not approve this project. A source of funding has not yet been identified by the Town Administrator.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia A. Hewitt
Library Director

Public Services Librarian Report to the Trustees
March 2013

Adult Programming:

Robby McQueeney, AKA “The Dune Tramp” is coming on Saturday, March 16 to give a slide show and talk about the dune shacks located in Truro and Provincetown that belong to the National Seashore. The slides are photographs of both the interior and exterior of the shacks so they present a glimpse of what life would be like to live in one of them.

A new monthly Gaming Night will be starting on the 3rd Thursday of the month from 3-7 p.m. run by Mark Donle of Wicked Fun Games who will teach participants how to play nontraditional games such as the Settlers of Catan. While aimed at adults, we will welcome teenagers over the ages of 12 who come to the library after school as well as families. We are finally holding our rescheduled Book Wreath Workshop on Saturday, March 26 (although it will probably snow as it has for all of the other crafts programs this winter). In April we are planning on a visit from Michelangelo as portrayed by Francis Smith of Chatham as well as a talk on slavery by local author Jim Coogan cosponsored by the Harwich Historical Society.

Scheduling: While I was out and doing the schedule from home, I started writing it on Google Drive so it could be shared with the entire staff and we could all access it from home in case of snowstorms, etc. With the help of Nicole Hansen, we are also working on a database of volunteers with addresses and phone numbers that will be shared and available for staff to see offsite that will be helpful. I will continue work getting a schedule for the volunteers set up similar to the staff so it can be shared with everyone online.

Circulation: Once again the staff rose to the occasion and did an excellent job of keeping the library running smoothly while I was out and working less hours. While there is always room for improvement, our staff is very dedicated and competent. We will continue to evaluate our workload and will delegate tasks to the appropriate personnel to have an even more efficient workflow.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Martell