

Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees

Monday Nov. 16, 2015 7:15 pm
Thornton Room, Brooks Free Library
739 Main St., Harwich MA 02645

Agenda

1. Call to Order/Attendance
2. Approval of Minutes of Oct. 14 2015 regular session
3. Public Comment
4. Reports:
 - A. Chairman
 - B. Library Director
 - C. Building & Grounds Committee
 - a) Update on Columns
 - b) Update on Capital Outlay and CPC funding requests
 - c) Update on Furniture for Doane Room
 - D. Liaison from Board of Selectman
 - E. Friends of Brooks Free Library
5. Correspondence:
 - A. Town Administrator and Selectmen's Budget Messages
6. Old Business:
7. New Business:
 - A. Acceptance of Donations
 - B. Potential Revision to Assistant Library Director Position Description
 - C. FY17 Budget Submission – review draft and vote
8. Trustees' Report
9. Upcoming Meetings
 - A. Next Trustees meeting – Wed. Dec. 9, 2015 at 7:15 pm, Brooks Free Library
 - B. Community Preservation Committee – Thurs. Nov. 19, 7 pm, Town Hall
10. Adjournment

Authorized posting officer

Virginia Hewitt
Brooks Free Library

Posted by

Town Clerk's Office

Agenda submitted electronically to Town of Harwich for posting

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Minutes

Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees

Wednesday, October 21, 2015
Rm Community Center Rm. 3
100 Oak St., Harwich, MA 02645

Draft

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Chair Mary Warde at 7:14. Present were Mary Warde, Joan McCarty, Jeannie Wheeler, Bill Crowell, Ann Emerson and Library Director Virginia Hewitt. Absent: Joanne Brown and Kathleen Remillard.

Approval of minutes: Joan McCarty made a motion to accept the September 9, 2015 minutes. Mary Warde 2nd Mary Warde seconded the motion.. The motion carried.

Public Comment: none

Reports:

Chairman: No formal report.

Library's Director's Report: See Report.

Ginny reviewed her report and reviewed the lighting problems in more depth.

Buildings and Grounds Committee: Mary Warde reviewed the Memo from the Town Administrator regarding the columns in front of the library. Discussion followed. Bill Crowell made a motion that we approve the use of poly/classic FRP replacement columns subject to approval by the Historic Commission. However, if the historic district doesn't approve the Poly Classic, and requires wooden columns, then the Trustees approve wooden columns. Any work to proceed forthwith. The motion was seconded by Joan McCarty. The vote was unanimous. Ginny will inform the Town Administrator of this vote by the Trustees.

Mary Warde informed us that the Capital Outlay meeting will be 11/3/15. There is no date yet for the CPC meeting.

Jeannie Wheeler presented a quote for recovering existing stools in the Library, and also a quote from WB Mason for the furniture for the Children's Room.

Bill Crowell made a motion to approve the bill for the stools to be recovered by Beth Williams to be paid for from the Fial Gift Account, not to exceed \$1000. The motion was seconded by Anne Emerson. The vote was unanimous.

Bill Crowell made a motion to approve the WB Mason bill for furniture for the Children's Room to be paid from the Fial Gift Account, not to exceed \$12,000. WB Mason was selected from the MA State Bid List. Anne Emerson seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

Correspondence: A thank you note was received from St. Joan of Arc church for the presentation by Suzanne Martell.

Old Business: A request from Carey Sims on behalf of a Junior Girl Scout Troop to approve the use of the meeting room from January to June, two Fridays a month was reviewed. Motion to approve made by Bill Crowell, seconded by Anne Emerson and the vote was unanimous.

Bill Crowell made a motion to declare old furniture from the Book Sale/Mending/Storage Room in the basement as surplus. It was seconded by Jeanne Wheeler and the vote was unanimous.

The gift donations that were received were \$25.00 from Joan & Thomas Dolan, and \$100.00 in memory of Mary Dillon. A motion was made by Jeanne Wheeler to accept the \$125.00 donations and seconded by Bill Crowell. The vote was unanimous.

The Trustees Annual Report to the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Monday, 11/16/15, at 6:30, with the Trustees Monthly Meeting following at 7:15pm at the Library.

The vote to adjourn was made at 8:58pm by Jeanne Wheeler and seconded by Anne Emerson. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan McCarty, Vice Chair

Library Director's Report
Nov. 13, 2015

Administrative:

Trustees' Annual Meeting with Board of Selectmen:

The written report for your Nov. 16th meeting with the Board of Selectmen is included in your packet. The meeting starts at 6:30 and is held in the Griffin Room at Town Hall.

Personnel:

Personnel matters have continued to occupy much of my time over the past month. The Town has not yet set guidelines on when a temporary appointment or temporary increase in hours qualifies an employee for health benefits. In the meantime, in order to avoid incurring any unauthorized eligibility for health benefits we had to end Lynne Graziadei's temporary promotion to Staff Librarian. In addition, progress in filling the vacant Senior Library Technician positions was halted during our temporary two-week closure.

FY16 Budget:

The spreadsheet of year-to-date expenditures through Oct. 31 is included in your packet as are the budget messages for FY17.

Reserve Fund Transfer:

We have had a number of large, unanticipated repairs this year and will need to submit Reserve Fund Transfer requests to cover the cost of the emergency light inverter, discussed below, and the repairs to the fire sprinkler system, discussed last month.

Holidays:

The Selectmen have declared Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve as Selectmen's holidays, so we will be closed both days. We have traditionally been open 10-2 those days, and I would like to continue that as it is a real service to community members at a time of year that can be depressing and stressful for many people. Under the union contract, however, staff members who work a holiday would receive double time and be entitled to another day off, and we would also have to pay to cover those shifts. We're not budgeted for this - but since this has happened several years in a row, I will include those costs in our FY17 budget request.

We will be open our normal hours, until 7 pm, on Wed. Nov. 25th, the day before Thanksgiving. We will be also closed on Friday, Nov. 26, which has been a Town holiday for many years.

Operations:

Partial Closure due to lack of emergency lights/regular lights

On Tuesday, Oct. 13 we returned to work to discover the emergency light inverter was not working, which meant we had no emergency lights. Almost all the lighting circuits in the Library pass through that inverter, so they were also not working. We were closed to the public on Tuesday and Wednesday, but when it became clear we would not have an immediate solution we

began planning how to continue to provide services to the public. On Thursday Oct.15, we opened a “Library in the Lobby.” It was open from 10 am to 5 pm, not until our normal 7 pm closing, because we could only have staff in the building during daylight hours. Patrons were able to come in to the lobby and pick up items they had on hold. We also filled the lobby with book carts filled with books and DVDs so that patrons had a small collection of books to select from and check-out.

On Thursday we realized the closing may extend into the following week so we began making arrangements to hold our programs at other locations. Our first concern was to open an after-school site for middle-schoolers. Other programs and group meetings are nice to have things that enhance the lives of community members, but missing them for a week or two is more of an inconvenience or disappointment, not a necessity. That’s not the case for parents of working families who rely the safe, welcoming atmosphere and enrichment activities that we provide for their youngsters. The Harwich Junior Theatre readily agreed to allow us to use the HJT Arts Center for this the second week of the closing. Parents were very appreciative that we recognized their need for after-school care as a priority and made arrangements. Cape Destinations was very cooperative and quickly changed their drop-off location to accommodate the changed location and Monomoy Schools used their Connect-Ed service to contact parents with news of the closing and updates. We held story-times that week at Chase Library and, thanks to the generosity of the Configuration Dance Studio who offered use of their studio, at the Harwich Port Library. Carolyn Carey was extremely accommodating and found space for our book groups and writers groups to meet at the Community Center, and we used the Town Hall Library for several meetings and held the large “Aids and Appliances for People With Vision Loss” program in the Town Hall Griffin Room on Oct. 22nd.

A technician from the manufacturer replaced the blown circuit board on Friday, Oct. 23rd and we were able to open for full services to the public again on Saturday, Oct. 24th.

I am extremely proud of how the staff responded to this unexpected event. Instead of just closing our doors and taking care of internal housekeeping matters and staff training, which we could have easily done (and could really use to do), we were proactive in looking at ways we could continue to provide service to the community. That wouldn’t have been possible without the positive attitudes of the staff members. Everyone pitched in and worked as a team, adapting to instructions that were frequently being changed as events unfolded. Through-out the long delay in waiting for the repair, they kept service to the community first in their minds.

Patrons were very appreciative of the extra effort we put in continuing to provide services when we could have just been closed. It actually required more staff time to do so, because we weren’t operating in the normal efficient manner and also because we did not have any volunteers those two weeks, and they do a tremendous amount of the day-to-day work of keeping the Library operating.

Building Maintenance:

Electrical Repairs:

As discussed above, the emergency light inverter failed resulting in a closure for almost two weeks while waiting for the parts to be shipped and the manufacturer to send a technician. Facilities Manager Sean Libby did all the work related to the technical part of things, dealing with the manufacturer and trying to arrange service. I was very thankful to have his services

with that, which left me free to deal with the Library's operational issues. The manufacturer is analyzing the blown circuit board and will send a report on whether the cause was external (power supply from Eversource) or internal (on the load side, from within the Library.)

We continue to have problems with flickering, brightening and dimming lights. Eversource has been here again and, after seeing videos of the problem, the technician agreed to recommend that the transformer on the poll be replaced. Sean spoke to an Eversource representative on Nov. 12 and she told him we can expect a response next week on whether that replacement will be approved.

With our own investigated work on Nov. 12 we have identified a possible short in a lighting circuit in the meeting room. This may not be causing the building wide issues but could be contributing to it, or at least making us aware of an underlying problem that might not be as noticeable otherwise.

Capital Outlay Requests

Chairman Mary Warde and Building and Grounds Co-Chairs Jeannie Wheeler and JoAnne Brown and I met with the Capital Outlay Committee on Nov. 3rd to discuss the projects we have submitted. They were supportive of all the projects, though no formal votes will be taken until they're finished reviewing the requests from all departments and committees. They were especially complimentary about the high quality of the CPC-funded assessment done on the Library exterior, stating that they were very impressed with the professionalism and expertise of the consultant. They also expressed interest in seeing a generator installed at the Library so that we're able to provide services to residents during short-term power losses, serve as a heating and cooling center, as well as during major disasters. We discussed the roles a library can play as a "safe haven" and also to help residents with their information and technology needs immediate following a disaster and during the recovery phase.

For discussion purposes, I'm repeating the list summarizing Library projects that were submitted this year:

1. FY17 – Library Exterior Preservation/Restoration - \$800,000
2. FY17 – Library Replacement of Heat, Smoke & Duct Detectors - \$29,000
3. FY18 – Library Interior Modifications - \$100,000
4. FY19 – Library Generator – \$110,000
5. FY20 – Library Roof Replacement – 135,000

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia A. Hewitt
Library Director

Assistant Director's Report October 2015 Report

I would like to commend the staff for their hard work, creative thinking, and flexibility during the two weeks we were closed to the public. The day we discovered we would be unable to open to the public for the remainder of the week I presented them with a challenge and asked for their input on how we could offer limited services to patrons without allowing them into the building. Each and every staff member present that afternoon was instrumental in making the first day of the "Library in the Lobby" services possible. That initial process was refined and streamlined as we put it into practice over the next several days. The success of our limited services during the lighting outage is due wholly to the cooperation and ingenuity of our staff members.

Technology:

The final piece of the 2015 implementation of our Technology Replacement Plan is to upgrade our public print system with a new Kenmark printer/copier. Kenmark has both the new printer/copier and the software for the print release station ready to install. Once I have located a reliable used PC to use for the print release station I will schedule installation. Additional replacements scheduled for this year include the Research Computer on the 2nd floor and two Catalog computers.

Outreach:

This month I continued my visits to both Pine Oaks and the COA for monthly technology assistance. I have enjoyed this opportunity to meet new patrons and share information, not just about our technology programming but library services in general. The response continues to be one of gratitude and interest continues to grow. This month I also had an opportunity to meet with Norma Craffey, Title I Reading Teacher at Harwich Elementary School. We discussed ways in which we might coordinate programming and collection development in order to assist Title I students and families in the local school system. Some of these ideas have already been implemented by Ann Carpenter just in time for the holidays. Both Ann and I look forward to future opportunities to work closely with the Title I teachers, students and families.

Respectfully submitted,
Emily Milan
Acting Assistant Director

Youth Services Report

Nov. 13, 2015

The annual Halloween Parade was a rousing success, despite having limited publicity due to uncertainty about the status of the library during the lead up to the program. There were an estimated 50-60 people gathered to participate, with a lot of positive feedback. A picture from the parade was on the cover of the Cape Cod Chronicle (and also, incidentally, showed off our lovely new rugs.)

I set up a StoryWalk at the elementary school, which was enjoyed by several classes before the inclement weather required that I take it down again. We will be doing an indoor StoryWalk as a pilot program at the Harwich Elementary School in a few weeks, and intend to do a series of outdoor StoryWalks when the weather improves this spring.

Former Brooks Free Library staff member Sarah Idman is now working as the school librarian at Harwich Elementary School, facilitating cooperation between our two organizations. I have arranged to do book talks every Friday to different classrooms, suggesting books they may like (which I then leave in the classroom) and reading a picture book to the students. The first book talk on November 6th appeared to be a success for everyone involved.

We are once again partnering with the Chamber of Commerce and Cape Destinations to provide a Polar Express Event. Everyone involved was quite surprised when the Chamber created an online form to sign up for the program, and then proceeded to sell out within two hours. We had not been told the signups would begin, so we were caught off guard and not able to alert our regular patrons. We have already discussed with the Chamber methods to streamline this process for next year so that there will be a wider range of awareness before the tickets go on sale. Members of the Teen Library Corps will be volunteering their time as "elves" at the program, and have already begun creating decorations.

We have been circulating board games for a number of years, which has been a popular inclusion to the collection. To help support the students in our community, we have recently purchased half a dozen games that came recommended by the Title 1 teacher at HES as being fun ways to support math skills and logical thinking.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Carpenter
Youth Services Librarian