

Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees
Wed. Dec.7, 2022 at 7pm
739 Main St., Harwich MA 02645

1. Call to Order/Attendance
2. Annual Meeting with Rockland Trust regarding trust funds - discussion and possible vote
3. Vote to Approve Minutes of Nov.2, 2022 Trustees Meeting
4. Public Comment
5. Reports:
 - A. Chair
 - B. Library Director
 - C. Review of Staff Reports and Other Information in Meeting Packet
 - D. Building & Grounds Committee
 - E. Liaison from Board of Selectmen
6. Correspondence
 - A.
7. Old Business
 - A. Update on the FY24 Budget
 - B. Staff Survey
8. New Business
 - A. Open Hours on Christmas Eve & New Year's Eve - discussion and possible vote
 - B. One Day Closure on Jan. 24th for Training for new Integrated Library System - discussion and possible vote
 - C. Vote to Accept Monetary Donations
9. Trustee Reports and Requests for Next Meeting's Agenda
10. Upcoming Meetings/Events
 - A. Library Board of Trustees – Wed., Jan. 4, 2023 - 7 pm
 - B. Library Board of Trustees – Wed., Feb. 1, 2023 - 7 pm
 - C. Library Board of Trustees – Wed., March 1, 2023 - 7 pm
 - D. Board of Selectmen/Finance Committee Budget Hearings - Sat., March 4, 2023

Authorized posting officer

Virginia A. Hewitt

Brooks Free Library

Posted by

Town Clerk's Office

Agenda submitted electronically to Town for posting. The full packet for the meeting will be posted on the Town website, www.harwich-ma.gov/brooks-free-library-board-of-trustees, and Library website, www.brooksfreelibrary.org/brooks-free-library-board-of-trustees on the Friday preceding the meeting.

** Per the Attorney General's Office: Boards/Commissions may hold an open session for topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting following "New Business." If you are deaf or hard of hearing or are a person with a disability who requires an accommodation, contact the Library at 508-430-7562 or brooksfreelibrary@clamsnet.org.*

Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees

Wednesday November 2, 2022 at 7pm

Thornton Room, Brooks Free Library

739 Main Street, Harwich, MA 02645

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Call to Order/Attendance: The Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Present were B. Waystack, J. Wheeler, J. McCarty and K. Remillard. Also present Library Director Hewitt, Board of Selectmen Liaison Larry Ballentine and Finance Committee member Dan Tworek.
2. Vote to Approve Minutes of October 5, 2022 Trustees Meeting
Motion: J McCarty Second: J. Wheeler
Passed.
3. Public Comment: Lynn Budell from the Friends of the Brooks Free Library thanked Director Hewitt and library staff for all the crucial work they do for the residents of Harwich. The Trustees expressed their gratitude for everything the Friends do to support the library
4. Reports:
 - A. Chair-none.
 - B. Library Director- in addition to her written report, Hewitt reported that she submitted a press release for National Friends of Libraries Week, to highlight all our Friends group does. Unfortunately, it did not get published. Ads for the vacant Staff Librarian and Senior Library Technician positions were placed in the Cape Cod Chronicle and statewide and CLAMS library job listings. Also, the Community Center is considering adding computers for public use and plans to visit the library to see how it is done.
 - C. Assistant Library Director- position vacant.
 - D. Review of Other Staff Reports or Information in Meeting Packet- Several Trustees commented on the work Suzanne Martell, Staff Librarian/Technical Services, has been doing to keep library services running smoothly.
 - E. Building and Grounds Committee- none
 - F. Liaison from the Board of Selectmen- none
5. Correspondence:
 - A. Director Hewitt shared an e-mail from Facilities Maintenance Manager Sean Libby regarding the library roof contract stating "funds could not

be found to support the amount over the article.” Going forward he will be requesting an additional Capital item to support the original article.

6. Old Business:

- A. Status of Recruitment Efforts for Staff Librarian and Senior Library Technicians- See Library Director’s Report.
- B. October 24th Annual Meeting with Board of Selectmen- Chair L. Cebula made a few brief comments as the Selectmen have a written copy of the Trustees Annual Report. Chairman M. MacAskill thanked the Library for providing excellent services to the residents of Harwich.

7. New Business:

- A. Visit from Finance Committee Member Dan Tworek- Mr. Tworek introduced himself to the Trustees and gave a brief overview of the Committee’s responsibilities such as reviewing spending plans of town departments. He reminded everyone that the Finance Committee’s Strategic Plan is on the Town’s website.
- B. FY24-FY28 Capital Plan- Review of the Library Capital Plan requests will be Monday November 14th at 10:00 am in the Griffin Room at Town Hall.
- C. Vote to Accept Monetary Donations- None

8. Trustee Reports and Requests for Next Meeting’s Agenda – No Requests

9. Up Coming Meetings/Events:

- A. Review of the Library Capital Plan Requests – Mon., Nov. 14, 2022- 10 am
- B. Library Board of Trustees- Wed., Dec. 7, 2022- 7pm
- C. Library Board of Trustees- Wed., Jan. 4, 2023- 7 pm

There being no further business, the Vice Chair called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion: J. Wheeler Second: J. McCarty Passed unanimously

The Meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Remillard
Secretary, Board of Trustees

Library Director's Report to the
Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees
for the Dec. 7, 2022 meeting

12.1.22

PERSONNEL

Interviews for the vacant full-time Staff Librarian (Circulation Coordinator) and part-time Senior Library Technicians will be conducted over the coming weeks.

Substitute Library Assistant Marissa Antosh resigned her position effective 11.29.22 as she's accepted a Youth Services Librarian position in Norwell.

Ensuring staffing levels during open hours are sufficient to cover public service desks continues to be problematic. Service to patrons has not suffered yet but providing that desk coverage is impacting our ability to perform the behind-the-scenes cataloging, technology, administrative and managerial tasks.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Holiday Hours

- Christmas and New Year's Day are on Sundays this year. The Town will observe the legal holiday on Mon., Dec. 26 and Mon., Jan. 2nd. The Library will be closed those days.
- Normal Saturday hours for the Library are 10 AM to 4 PM.
- I am requesting that Library hours be reduced to 10 AM to 1 PM on Christmas Eve (Sat., Dec. 24) and New Year's Eve (Sat. Dec. 31), as we have in the past.
- The holidays can be a lonely time, not all community members celebrate Christmas, and patrons who come in very much appreciate the opportunity to use the Library.
- Below is information on holiday hours and data on check-outs in prior years:

2021 - Christmas and NY Day were Saturdays. Friday was the legal holiday and all Town buildings were closed Friday and Saturday

2020 - The Library was closed to the public due to the pandemic.

2019 - The Library was open 10-1 on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve

Monday 12/24/19 - 90 patron checkout sessions, 188 items checked out

Monday 12/31/19 - 105 patron checkout sessions, 267 items checked out

2018 - The Library was open 10 - 2 on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve

Tuesday 12/24/18 - 97 patron checkout sessions, 489 items checked out

Tuesday 12/31/18 - 144 patron checkout sessions, 388 items checked out

- If we're open until 1 pm on Sat. 12.31, the Youth Services Librarian plans to run a "Noon Years Eve" program at 11:30 for little ones, counting down until noon time.

- Staff members won't receive more paid holiday time than other Town employees if you approve reduced hours on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Those who are scheduled to work will need to use leave, make up the hours another day that week, or be paid for fewer hours of work.

No Trespass Order

- On Sunday, Nov. 6th while working for the First Sunday program series I observed a man urinating in the parking lot with no attempt to conceal his activity from me and the Friends Board member standing a few feet away from him.
- Two weeks prior to this incident patrons leaving the Library called police when they witnessed the same behavior. Officers responded and informed the man that he could not urinate in the parking lot.
- I spoke to the man, who did not seem concerned about the warnings, and then called the Harwich Police Dept. An officer responded and a No Trespass Order was issued.

OPERATIONS

Migration to New Integrated Library System

- We continue to work on data clean-up of the patron and bibliographic databases in preparation for the migration to Koha.
- CLAMS has scheduled Circulation training for Jan. 24 from 9 AM to 5 PM and Technical Services (Cataloging, Acquisitions and Serials) training for Jan. 25 from 9 AM to 5 PM.
- Circulation is the foundation of Library operations so we'll take advantage of the ability to do the training remotely since that will allow other staff members to watch the training presentations.
- I'm recommending the Library close on Jan. 24th (or alternate date if the date changes). If we close on this date I don't anticipate needing to close another day for staff training. We'll train all staff in smaller groups over the next few weeks prior to the implementation of the new system in late February.
- Several librarians will also attend the Tech Services training so that the Staff Librarian/Technical Services will have others to assist in ensuring a smooth transition in those areas as well. This should not impact desk coverage so I'm not recommending we close that day.

Children's Stroll

- The Youth Services Librarian has planned a Winter Stroll to Town Hall on Wed., Dec. 14th at 10:30 AM as part of the Read Around Harwich series.
- Children and families will meet at the Library for a story, then walk over to the Griffin Room in Town Hall where staff members will read winter themed stories, the children will have hot chocolate and do a craft.

- Conservation Administrator Amy Usowski has been working closely with Ann and making the arrangements for the Town Hall activities.

Circulation Information

Item Circulation (check-out of our items here and at other libraries)

November - 7794 items,, an increase of 3.7% over November 2021

Year-to-Date through Nov. 30 - 48338 items, an increase of 5.3% over FY22

Direct Circulation (items checked out here belonging to Brooks and other libraries)

November - 7805 items, an increase of 2.1% from November 2021

Year-to-Date through Nov. 30 - 48707 items, an increase of 3.3% over FY22

MAINTENANCE

Leak in Circulation area

- Staff members noticed water dripping from the ceiling tile as they were closing the building on Sat., Nov.8th. They notified me and when I received no response from DPW staff I came in to assess the situation and prevent further damage. I relocated a computer and book carts, removed the ceiling tile, lined the carpet with a vinyl tarp and placed an extra large trash barrel under the leak before leaving for the night.
- When I returned on Sunday, the water had stopped dripping. A member of the Facilities staff arrived on Sunday afternoon when I was at the Library for the Friends program.
- The leak was from a sprinkler system pipe. We have a dry system but flow tests must be conducted every few years and water remains in low spots even after the system is drained, eventually causing a leak.
- The sprinkler company came that week to make a temporary repair to seal the pipe.

Flooding in the Parking Lot

- The catch basin on the west side of the parking lot, by Bank St., receives a high volume of water since all the water from the hill at the Bank St/Main St intersection flows into it.
- In one recent storm flooding caused a knee deep puddle that extended from the island all the way across to the other side of the parking lot. The entrance was impassable and all those parking spaces could not be used.
- That storm was unusually intense but flooding is becoming a frequent problem during moderate rain storms.
- DPW is aware of the problem. The catch basin has been cleaned to the extent it can be. Further repair or replacement may be necessary.

FINANCIAL

FY24 Budget

- We have not yet received the Selectmen or Town Administrator's budget message and instructions to use for preparing our FY24 budget requests so I don't have a draft budget to share with you.
- I anticipate the deadline to enter the draft budget into MUNIS will be sometime in December so I'll present it to you for your review and vote at your Jan. 4th meeting.

FY23 Accounting

- A spreadsheet of year-to-date spending through the end of November is included in your packets.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Hewitt
Library Director

Reference Librarian's Report to Trustees
For December 2022 meeting

Temporary Promotion to Assistant Director 10/19-10/30:

During this period of time after Emily Milan resigned and Ginny was out of state, I read 113 email messages (not counting the many from unsolicited vendors), I composed and sent 44 emails and I wrote and posted 27 Slack messages (not including responding to threads). I spent a lot of time communicating with the rest of the staff directly as well. During this time there were patron issues, facilities problems, and management duties that I carried out. Some events of note were the massive rains that occurred on October 26 that caused a bit of a flood in the parking lot (the most water I have ever seen there in 16 years) and our custodian did not show up that day. It also happened to be a Wednesday morning - one of our busiest parking lot days due to the Knit Lit group. After I called them, the Highway Dept. folks came over several times and eventually the waters receded enough so that cars would not stall that were attempting to enter the lot.

In general since Emily left, I have been spending more time on patron issues and dealing more with inquiries from outside groups (for possible programs or for room requests). I am not unaccustomed to being the 'person in charge' as for most of my years I have been in charge when I have worked every other Saturday. I am certainly willing to step up and do what needs to be done to keep the library functioning and moving forward.

Ongoing projects/duties:

Vital Alcove: This summer we did a 'pilot project' with the Vital Alcove space and allowed limited use for tutors. Since July, the Alcove has been used 17 times in total for tutors - 10 times in July and August and 7 times Sept-October. We recorded another 13 times when tutors wanted the room this summer but it wasn't available. The most requested time for tutoring this summer was 10 am so we need to work with Carla next summer to make the room more available for that time slot. We also had a lot of requests to use that room for private phone calls or zoom/video calls. There is less of a demand right now for that space but I think we should start expanding public use of that room starting in the Spring of 2023 with details to be worked out over the next few months.

Confidential Corner: This project that I started in August of 2019 has been very successful and has now been replicated in many other Clams libraries. I have provided training and shared documents I created with all the other libraries in the system (as well as the library in Sandwich that now has their own Confidential Corner). Since I started the project, at least 194 items have been borrowed (which is likely an undercount because we wouldn't know if something was quickly taken and put back). I now have detailed spreadsheets on everything to do with the CC showing usage, cost, which titles are used the most, etc. I have discussed the CC at two Reference Roundtable meetings and have also had conversations with directors and other library staff who saw or heard the press about the project.

Data Collection and the future of reference:

I refined all our data collection points in reference for the present fiscal year so we now have more detailed statistics for almost everything we do at the reference desk. So far for FY23, as of today (11/29/2022) we have had 1,799 Reference questions asked at the Reference desk of which 46% are technology related (I have subgroups of this data as well). We have also done 90 'extensive help sessions' since July 1. This number represents reference staff directly helping a patron for longer than 15 minutes. Most of these sessions are helping someone with technology (this can be with their device or on our computers). Several years ago more of these people would have been referred for a 'book a librarian' appointment at a later date but now it has become essential (it is expected) for us to be able to help these folks on the spot. While the sheer number of tech questions is about half of what we get, the amount of time we spend helping folks with technology is closer to about 75%. For example Alan spent 40 minutes on the phone one night recently answering one tech question.

The increase in tech questions along with the addition of a new scanning and wireless printing system over the summer, has made it difficult for staff to cover the reference desk who are not very comfortable with technology. I feel that our patrons are currently being well served with myself, Alan Caughey, and Jamie Thornton covering the Reference desk and I was glad to give Alan a 2-step raise in recognition of his outstanding performance when I completed his performance appraisal in October. I make an effort to stay on top of new technology trends and advances (reading newsletters, discussions at roundtables, and I often reach out to colleagues at other libraries around the state) and I constantly share my knowledge and experience with my coworkers so that we can continue to offer a high level of service at the Reference Desk.

Ongoing duties:

I spend a significant amount of time mentoring, supervising, or assisting Alan and Carla Burke and over these past months I have collaborated a lot with Jamie. Jamie and I recently met with the staff at Gale to learn more about how 'Gale pages' worked so we could improve how patrons use our website to connect to the many state electronic resources. This was important to me as someone who served on the state database committee- I want our patrons to easily access all the new products the state added this year, so this was the end result of something I worked on for nearly a year.

I am still doing typical 'extensive research' on subjects such as local history, genealogy, and on random specific topics (recently a member of our selectboard asked me for some research assistance with the town clerk issue) and most of these questions come directly to me via email. I order hundreds of non-fiction books every year and I have recently thoroughly updated our travel collection and some areas of the social sciences. Over the course of a year, I respond to more than a hundred requests for specific books that patrons are requesting that are not in the Clams network. I generally buy these books if they are newly published and I process Inter-library loan requests for the older requested items. The non-fiction publishing industry has changed significantly in the past several years and it is now much harder to find books from reputable publishers on health topics and technology topics in particular.

I regularly write the library columns for the Harwich COA newsletter as well as for the Chronicle, and my Evening book group is still going strong. This past month I have been working with Ginny and Ann Carpenter reviewing candidates for our advertised positions and developing interview questions and we should be starting interviews shortly.

Outside the Library:

On Sept. 15 I spoke in front of a large group at the **Pre-planning event** at the Community Center. I talked about library resources related to the issues of grief, funeral planning, end of life decisions, and legal help. I staffed a table at this event and answered questions, talked to people and even checked out a few books that I had brought over.

On October 12 staff librarian Jamie Thornton and I presented a program at the Community Center on Technology Resources at the library. I worked with Jamie to develop the presentation - a good general one that could be used for other times/locations. It was a good opportunity to work with Carolyn Carey, the community center director whom we met with again on Nov. 10 along with Sarah Eaton (the new town IT Director). At that meeting we talked about the multiple ways to set up public computers and printers. If you have little or no previous experience setting up public computers you might think it would be easy to create a 'simple station' with printing for limited use, but the reality is that there are many variables and complex issues with even the most basic set-up. I have spent a significant amount of time gaining knowledge in this area so it was great to show Sarah how we manage our computers at the library and to give Carolyn ideas and tips for her future set-up.

In conclusion- I apologize for the length of this report. A significant amount of my work time is spent on a public desk where it can sometimes be difficult to find the time to write a report so when I do write these, they tend to be long. Also, the nature of my job does not always lend itself to short sentences and bullet points and so at times I feel the need to explain what I do in more detail. I certainly have a lot more data and spreadsheets (use of all of our electronic resources, printers, breakdown of ref stats, etc) so if anyone is interested in more data or information about any topic in particular, please just let me know.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Pickett, Reference Librarian

jpickett@clamsnet.org

508-430-7562 x3

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For December 2022 meeting

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Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Pickett, Reference Librarian

jpickett@clamsnet.org

508-430-7562 x3

FY23 Budget Balances

Updated 11.29.22

AREA OF EXPENDITURE	Appropriated Amt	Spent	Remaining Balance	Percent Spent
Advertising	\$180.00	\$0.00	\$180.00	0%
Dues, Subs & Travel	\$3,524.00	\$376.44	\$3,147.56	11%
Library Materials	\$162,942.00	\$68,081.29	\$94,860.71	42%
Electric	\$27,475.00	\$14,086.74	\$13,388.26	51%
Employee Fringe Benefits	\$370.00	\$0.00	\$370.00	0%
Gas	\$8,867.00	\$541.52	\$8,325.48	6%
Library Supplies	\$13,000.00	\$2,538.96	\$10,461.04	20%
Maintenance & Repair	\$5,700.00	\$436.62	\$5,263.38	8%
Office Supplies	\$5,750.00	\$582.30	\$5,167.70	10%
Professional & Tech	\$50,973.00	\$43,511.82	\$7,461.18	85%
Water	\$1,402.00	\$150.50	\$1,251.50	11%
Total Library Expenses	\$280,183.00	\$130,306.19	\$149,876.81	47%
Wages & Salaries	\$758,150.00	\$304,252.89	\$453,897.11	40%
TOTAL	\$1,038,333.00	\$434,559.08	\$603,773.92	42%