

Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees
Wed. May 1, 2024 at 7pm
739 Main St., Harwich MA 02645

Agenda

1. Call to Order/Attendance
2. Vote to Approve Minutes of April 3, 2024 Board of Trustees meeting
3. Public Comment
4. Reports:
 - A. Chair
 - B. Library Director
 - C. Review of Staff Reports and Other Information in Meeting Packet
 - D. Building & Grounds Committee
5. Correspondence
6. Old Business
 - A. Update on FY25 Budget – discussion and possible vote
 - B. Update on Implementation of Reorganization – discussion and possible vote
 - C. Revised Trustee Bylaws - discussion and possible vote
7. New Business
 - A. Letter to the Editor re: Library article re-purposing funds for sidewalk repair and tree replacement - discussion and possible vote
 - B. Vote to Accept Monetary Donations
 - C. Potential Date Change for July Meeting (7/3) – discussion and possible vote
8. Trustee Reports and Requests for Next Meeting's Agenda
9. Upcoming Meetings/Events
 - A. Annual Town Meeting – May 6 and 7, 2024
 - B. Annual Town Election – May 21, 2024
 - C. Library Board of Trustees – June 5, 2024 – 7 pm

Authorized posting officer

Posted by

Virginia A. Hewitt

Brooks Free Library

Town Clerk's Office

Agenda electronically posted to Town website.

** 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 Meeting
739 Main Street, Harwich, MA 02645
Wednesday, April 3, 2024 7PM**

DRAFT

Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM

Members present: J.Brown, J. McCarty, L. Cebula, B. Waystack,
K. Remillard, W.Crowell

Absent: J. Wheeler

Also present: V. Hewitt, Director

Vote to approve the minutes of March 6, 2024 Board of Trustees meeting

M. McCarty 2nd Brown V. Unanimous

1. Public Comment none
2. Reports

A. Chair

Has comments which will come under Old Business.

- B. Library Director** as submitted. Additional positive comments shared by a new hire were reported. Stipends were processed and should be received by Trustees shortly. Library management now has access to Docu-Sign.

- C. Staff Reports** as submitted

- D. Building & Grounds** no report. (Roof will be done once the rains stop.)

- 5. Correspondence** none

6. Old Business

- A. Update on FY 25 Budget and article: *Budget has been approved and article posted*
- B. Updates on Implementation of Reorganization: *job has been posted for Deputy Director and we have confirmation from ATA to support it.*
- C. Draft Charter Change Language for Board of Trustees: *chair requested any final changes that should be made. One point to be clarified is 6-7-4 by adding language to state that the Board of Trustees shall hold authority for all personnel actions. No further edits or revisions to the draft were deemed necessary.*

7. New Business

- A. Vote to accept monetary donations none

- B. Vote to accept grant donation in the amount of \$3323.60 from the James B. and Helen P. Athens Fund of the Cape Cod Foundation
M. McCarty. 2nd. Remillard. Vote: Unanimous
- C. Review of Trustee Bylaws
Discussion and drafting of revisions or updates needed. Chair will circulate Draft for review prior to the next meeting

8. *Trustees Reports and Requests for next meeting's agenda.*

9 Upcoming meetings and events

- A. Annual Town Meeting, May 6 & 7, 2024
- B. Library Board of Trustees, Wednesday, May 1, 2024 at 7pm
- C. Annual Town Election May 21, 2024
- D. Library Board of Trustees, Wednesday, June 5, 2024 at 7 pm

Motion to adjourn at 8:15 PM.

M: Brown 2nd: McCarty V: unanimous

Respectfully submitted,
Bernadette Waystack

Library Director's Report
for April 3, 2024 Meeting of the
Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees

4.24.24

PERSONNEL

Implementation of Reorganization

- On April 1st the Select Board voted to add the Deputy Director to the Personnel Bylaw.
- The position was advertised internally from April 3 to April 10.
- One internal candidate applied and was interviewed.
- Jennifer Pickett was selected. She is extremely well qualified, having served as Acting Assistant Director for the past 10 months and as Reference Librarian at Brooks Free Library for 18 years. Jennifer also has years of experience in other fields of library service at prior public libraries, including six years supervising large numbers of staff members in two very busy Circulation departments in the greater Boston area, so she brings both depth and breadth of experience to this position.
- Jennifer's promotion to Deputy Library Director was effective April 11, 2024.
- New job descriptions were provided to Administration for the three senior librarians (Reference, Youth Services and Circulation) on March 28th.
- I met with Assistant Town Administrator Meggan Eldredge to review the job descriptions on April 4th.
- The Town will meet with the HEA regarding the reclassification of these positions.

Paraprofessional job openings

- Recruitment continues for substitute Library Assistants and part-time Senior Library Technicians. Jennifer and Staff Librarian Gavin Williams will begin interviewing soon.

Librarian openings

- Last week we began advertising for the Reference Librarian position that became vacant with Jennifer's promotion to Deputy Director. The internal posting closes on April 25th.
- Several staff members are qualified for this position and we anticipate filling it internally. We've posted an anticipated vacancy for Staff Librarian, which also closes April 25th.
- Interviews will take place when I return from medical leave on April 29th.
- If there are no qualified internal candidates for the Staff Librarian, we will begin advertising for external candidates.

Medical Leave

I'll return to work on Monday, April 29th.

PROGRAMS

Eclipse Viewing event

- The Eclipse Viewing event on April 8th was a wonderful community event, with approximately 300 people attending. Many community members approached me to express their appreciation, an experience also reported by other staff members.
- Many thanks are due to Larry Brookhart of the Harwich Observatory, who brought two solar scopes for community members to use to safely observe the eclipse. Larry was also aided by Tom Leach, who manned the second solar scope.
- Assistant Director Jennifer Pickett coordinated this event, assisted by Executive Assistant Carey Sims. Jennifer may provide additional details in her report.

Friends of Brooks Free Library "First Sunday" Series

- The May First Sunday program will feature "The Garden Lady" C.L. Fornari on May 5th. This talk is titled "Growing Vegetables on Cape Cod."
- The series concludes with a musical performance by Crabgrass Bluegrass on June 2nd.

Other program news

- Our new monthly Poetry series begins on Friday, May 3rd at 1:30 pm.
- We will be hosting an energy seminar sponsored by the Harwich Energy and Climate Action Committee, a committee of the Town of Harwich, on Thursday May 9th at 5 pm, which will feature speakers from Cape Light Compact.
- Deputy Director Pickett has been coordinating these programs and may provide additional information in her report.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

Roof Project

- After weather related delays, the roofing project began on April 9th and was completed on April 17th. One side of the parking lot was blocked off during construction, but for such a massive project there was minimal disruption to Library operations.
- Facilities Manager Sean Libby managed the project, observing and checking in with the contractor regularly.

Repair to sidewalk near parking lot doors

- A patron was recently injured when she tripped due to the uneven height of the cement sidewalk from the parking lot side doors to the side of the building and parking spaces in front of the chiller (to the right of the doors as you're facing the building.). One cement "block" is higher due to settling.
- The Facilities Maintenance Dept. will work on grinding the higher edge down on April 30th. In the meantime the higher edge was spray painted orange and an orange cone is being used to make people aware of the height difference.

Article Re-purposing Funds

- We have added the Trustees Oct. 23, 2024 letter requesting an article to repurpose \$25000 in an old article to add to the \$90,000 article for the sidewalk repair and tree replacement to the Trustees page on the Town website and the Library website. The purpose of this article is to ensure if/when the trees are removed, there will be funds to replace the trees.

- While the Library is not managing this project since it involves a Town sidewalk, the letter makes it clear how important the Trustees believe it is to ensure the trees are replaced with mature trees of the correct species.
- The letter is posted just above the McGinley Kalsow Assessment Report on the Library Exterior. The streetscape portion of the report, which documents the condition of the sidewalk in 2015 and problems being caused by the current trees, begins on page 30. The report documents the species of trees that are considered appropriate for locations adjacent to sidewalks, with roots that grow down.

To view the Trustees' letter and McGinley Kalsow's report:

- Town website: www.harwich-ma.gov, Boards and Committees, then Board of Library Trustees (direct link: www.harwich-ma.gov/brooks-free-library-board-of-trustees)
- Library website: www.brooksfreeibrary.org, About Tab, then chose Trustees. (direct link: www.brooksfreeibrary.org/brooks-free-library-board-of-trustees/)

FY24 BUDGET

A spreadsheet of year-to-date FY24 expenses is included in your packet.

Respectfully submitted,

Ginny Hewitt
Library Director

Deputy Director's Report for the May 2024 meeting of the Library Board of Trustees

Personnel:

Interviews have been scheduled for April 29 and May 1 for the Senior Library Tech and Library Assistant (sub) positions. Staff Librarian Gavin Williams and I narrowed down a long list of applicants and we plan to interview at least 7 individuals. While I am very happy about our internal promotions, I think that bringing a few new enthusiastic people on board at this time will help lift the mood of others and I am looking forward to getting them on board before the busy summer season starts.

I am more than grateful to the Trustees for all your hard work to create this new Deputy Director position! I will bring all my years of experience and knowledge into this role and will strive to excel in the duties of the position to the best of my ability.

We had a positive, happy, retirement party for staff librarian Suzanne Martell on April 12, her last day of work. Executive Assistant, Carey Sims did much of the planning for this event and I put out the invitations to all and was happy to see past coworkers and friends coming in to wish her well.

Programs:

The Eclipse viewing program was a great experience for the entire community and between the 190 pairs of glasses and the 2 solar scopes, everyone had a chance to view the event safely. Larry Brookhart and Tom Leach were so patient and kind with everyone and I was glad I didn't add unnecessary activities to the event. Carey, Suzanne, and myself all wore our library (Covid time) aprons and enjoyed the opportunity to interact with the grateful crowd.

Our monthly Poetry Series will be starting next week with different expert presenters and themes each month on the first Friday at 1:30pm for the next 6 months. I am grateful to Marietta Nilson who is helping us put this program together. Poet David Surette is our first guest lecturer.

We are one of several libraries hosting a virtual event on April 25th with the News Literacy Project titled "Productive conversations without confrontation". This event, like our Books and More discussion group, encourages members of the community to share ideas and communicate directly and civilly with each other, despite our often different views.

Youth Services Report
April 25, 2024

April Vacation

I was away on vacation during the school's April Vacation but library staff stepped up to help make the week as smooth as possible. Senior Library Tech Shanaz Petty ran several programs, including a Costume Creation Day and a Lego day. She also ran a highly successful Tea Party program, for which I have had patrons approach me to tell me how much they enjoyed it. Library Assistant Olivia Appleton ensured that the Science Storyteller program ran smoothly in my absence.

School Visits

In addition to my visiting the Harwich Elementary School each week, student also come to visit us at the library. I have scheduled two visits from the HES preschool in May, and am in the process of setting up visits from the second grade classes. The middle school has also approached me to see if we can set up a time to visit the middle school to talk about e-resources with the seventh graders.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Carpenter
Youth Services Librarian

Staff Librarian - Technology
May 2024
Report to the Trustees of Brooks Free Library

Technology

I attended and watched recordings of Library 2.0's "AI and Libraries" virtual Mini-Conference which took place on March 21st. I also plan to watch the recordings of their second mini conference, which took place on April 18th. Speakers discussed a framework for AI literacy in libraries, privacy and confidentiality in the era of generative AI, and harnessing the potential of AI.

Reference

I continue to spend much of my work time on the Reference desk. The past month involved many inquiries about tax forms and solar eclipse information. We will go through a lull where I can get other work done for a short period then suddenly have questions back-to-back lasting for hours. For example, on Monday 4/22 I assisted a user with sending library books to his Kindle, while jumping to help another user print wirelessly, and another user to format a resume, to answering reference questions over the phone on inquiries such as travel guidelines for Finland, access to the Harwich Oracle, Harvard Health publication access, and how to browse the internet securely. In the end, all questions were answered and the user walked away happy to be able to borrow library books to read his kindle.

I added Town of Harwich annual reports to our internet archive site, where we now have digital versions of town reports from 1866-2023. These can be accessed on our website under eLibrary > Local Research & Historical Newspapers

Programming

I organized and ran the Books & More discussion group on generative artificial intelligence on April 16th. This involved selecting a number of possible titles and freely accessible videos online, and discussing attendees thoughts on generative AI. We had a lively discussion on what our future may hold, and a necessary discussion on AI awareness in an election year.

Collection Development

In March, I selected and purchased 37 ebooks and 17 e-audiobooks. Through my Cost per Circ title selections on OverDrive/Libby, we had 53 checkouts of ebooks and 43 checkouts of e-audiobooks.

In April, I selected and purchased 44 ebooks and 19 e-audiobooks.

Future Work

I am considering technology purchases for the next couple months as we get toward the end of the fiscal year, such as replacing youth services stations, public computer clients, and staff

laptops. I am also looking into possible future speakers to discuss generative AI. As of Staff Librarian Suzanne's retirement I will also be temporarily selecting Adult DVDs and physical audiobooks.

Personal Development

As of April 15th I have completed all of the necessary classwork and projects for my degree. I will be graduating in May with a Masters of Library and Information Science from San Jose State University. I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to study this degree with minimal financial burden through the Lois A. Brooks Scholarship granted to me by the Friends of Brooks Free Library.

Respectfully submitted,
Jamie Thornton
Staff Librarian

Staff Librarian - Circulation
April 2024 Report for
May 1st, 2024 Trustees of Brooks Free Library Meeting

Circulation

Due to personal time off during the April school vacation, my report is shortened. Circulation activities in April continued to include clean up and patron record management. There were approximately 12,000 checkouts and renewals of items in April. We have continued to send "long overdue/lost" bill notices to patrons, limiting the notices to patrons who were recently listed as having long overdue items (i.e., 42 days or more past the due date). We have sent approximately 40 notices in April.

Patron Services

I continue to monitor new e-card registrations to check on non-Massachusetts registrants applying for cards, however, in April there continue to only be local Harwich (and one neighboring town) residents successfully registering.

Circulation/Library Communication

The week of April 21-27 was National Volunteer Week and to show our appreciation of our almost 80 volunteers, library staff put together a bag of appreciation gifts and presented them to volunteers during the week. Signs and social media postings were also used to highlight our volunteers. The volunteers include those providing Circulation support, in addition to volunteers with the Friends (Book Sale and Books on Wheels), VITAL program, and Community Connections.

Future Work

We are carrying out ongoing work on patron account clean up, including updating incorrect contact information, duplicated accounts, etc. I continue to learn more about processing Commonwealth Catalog (ComCat) items, conduct in transit claims, and order books (via McNaughton) as part of a transition to carrying out these, and other, tasks. Planning is underway for the upcoming summer season, including a review and update of training materials for new staff.

Personal Development

I am close to finishing my current course (Information System Retrieval Design) for my online MLIS program at San Jose State University and continue to plan on taking advantage of any other relevant online trainings offered by CLAMS, MBLC and other organizations, as time permits.

Respectfully submitted,
Gavin Williams, Staff Librarian - Circulation

FY24 Budget Balances

As of 4.25.24

AREA OF EXPENDITURE	Appropriated Amt	Spent	Remaining Balance	Percent Spent
Advertising	\$180.00	\$120.00	\$60.00	67%
Dues, Subs & Travel	\$3,600.00	\$1,792.46	\$1,807.54	50%
Library Materials	\$173,019.00	\$131,373.99	\$41,645.01	76%
Electric	\$31,000.00	\$24,907.17	\$6,092.83	80%
Employee Fringe Benefits	\$600.00	\$0.00	\$600.00	0%
Gas	\$9,445.00	\$7,389.19	\$2,055.81	78%
Library Supplies	\$13,200.00	\$9,596.20	\$5,488.21	73%
Programming	\$4,800.00	4,444.53	\$355.47	93%
Maintenance & Repair	\$5,907.00	\$1,742.86	\$4,164.14	30%
Office Supplies	\$5,850.00	\$4,186.84	\$1,663.16	72%
Professional & Tech	\$51,397.00	\$47,260.02	\$4,136.98	92%
Water	\$1,402.00	\$952.29	\$449.71	68%
Total Library Expenses	\$300,400.00	\$233,765.55	\$66,634.45	78%
Wages & Salaries	\$819,809.00	\$625,898.84	\$193,910.16	76%
TOTAL	\$1,120,209.00	\$859,664.39	\$260,544.61	77%