

**Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees**  
**Wed. Nov.3, 2021 at 7 pm**  
**739 Main St., Harwich MA 02645**

**Agenda - revised 11.3.21**

1. Call to Order/Attendance
2. ~~**CANCELLED -EXECUTIVE SESSION**~~ Pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A, § 21(3), to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares—HEA Grievance
3. Vote to Approve Minutes of October 6, 2021
4. Public Comment
5. Reports:
  - A. Chair
  - B. Library Director
  - C. Assistant Director
  - D. Review of Other Staff Reports or Information in Meeting Packet
  - E. Building & Grounds Committee
  - F. Liaison from Board of Selectmen
6. Correspondence
7. Old Business:
  - A.
8. New Business
  - A. Confirm Prior Vote to Continue to Display Rogers Groups in Public Areas
  - B. Vote to Accept Monetary Donations
8. Trustee Reports and Requests for Next Meeting's Agenda
9. Upcoming Meetings/Events
  - A. Library Board of Trustees – 7 pm on Dec. 1, 2021 and Jan. 5, 2021
  - B. Friends of Brooks Free Library - Nov. 18 at 10 AM
10. Adjournment

Authorized posting officer

Virginia A. Hewitt

Brooks Free Library

Posted by

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Town Clerk's Office

Agenda submitted electronically to Town for posting. The full packet - Agenda, Minutes & Reports – will be posted on the Town website, [www.harwich-ma.gov/brooks-free-library-board-of-trustees](http://www.harwich-ma.gov/brooks-free-library-board-of-trustees), and Library website, [www.brooksfreeibrary.org/brooks-free-library-board-of-trustees](http://www.brooksfreeibrary.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 [brooksfreeibrary@clamsnet.org](mailto:brooksfreeibrary@clamsnet.org).*

**Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees**  
**Wed. Oct. 6, 2021 at 7 pm**  
**739 Main St., Harwich MA 02645**

**DRAFT Minutes**

1. Call to Order/Attendance: Called to order at 7p.m.
  - A. Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. Present were L. Cebula, J. McCarty, K. Remillard, W. Crowell, J. Wheeler, and B. Waystack. Selectmen Ballantine, Library Director Hewitt and Assistant Director Milan were also present. Barbara Howard, Relationship Manager and Brian Callow, Portfolio Manager from Rockland Trust were in attendance as well.
  
2. Board of Health's Sept. 10, 2021 Face Covering Order for Meetings of Town Boards and Committees- Director Hewitt reviewed the recent order from the Board of Health which requires msk to be worn in public meetings. Having discussed the order with the Health Director and having learned that the order does not apply to library groups, only public meetings of boards, committees and commissions, Hewitt shared staff confusion and concern over the order. Staff are concerned that the virus cannot differentiate between the various reasons for a gathering and were seeking reassurance that in-person meetings without a mask requirement were safe.
  
3. Report from Rockland Trust on Library trust funds- This item was moved to the top of the agenda to accommodate the presenters from Rockland Trust. Howard and Callow reviewed the current and past history of library trust funds, the legal list of investments, asset allocation and fund performance. The fund currently uses a 60-40 investment profile, and has remained fairly stable throughout the year.
  
4. Vote to Approve Minutes of September 1, 2021- Passed with one abstention (J. Brown)  
Motion: B. Waystack Second: J. McCarty
  
5. Public Comment- none
  
6. Reports:
  - A. Chair-
    - I. Report on Discussion With Select Board re Management of Facilities Projects- J. Brown and L. Cebula attended a recent Board of Selectmen meeting where the Trustee's August 31, 2021 letter to the Selectmen regarding the procurement process was addressed. Brown noted that Town Administrator Joe Powers indicated that there was a misinterpretation of the direction provided and that department heads would indeed be provided backup during the procurement process. The Town Administrator's intention is that department heads be the primary advocate for projects related to their departments, not the technical experts. Brown also reported having located and reviewed an inventory of ongoing projects from 2010. She noted that progress had been made. Cebula indicated uncertainty that the procurement versus project management issue has been resolved, and noted that she intends to remain vigilant in following the progress. She further noted frustration that the Trustees' chair had not been notified that the issue was being placed on the Selectmen's agenda.

- B. Library Director- Hewitt reported that department heads have not yet received a FY23 budget or capital plan message, likely due to the upcoming Special Town Meeting. Hewitt reminded the board that the current interior modification project is listed on the Capital Plan but will likely be pushed back. Many of the planned changes included in the request for interior modifications were accomplished using Cares Act funds in 2020. Before additional changes can be made we need to evaluate how the library space is being used post-pandemic. Hewitt also reported that the State Aid report was complete and library certification is secure. For next year, wage increases as a result of negotiations will change the municipal appropriation requirement
- C. Assistant Director- In addition to her written report, Milan noted that she would be attending a Cybersecurity summit. She also indicated that, in preparation for the Special Town meeting, she was recording a Wastewater podcast with Water/Wastewater Superintendent Dan Pelletier as well as a Warrant review program for Channel 18 with Town Administrator Jow Powers.
- D. Review of Other Staff Reports or Information in Meeting Packet
- E. Building & Grounds Committee- Wheeler indicated that there are several maintenance issues still on the table, indicating that a meeting is planned to review the list and to set priorities. She also informally polled the board to determine if there was interest in pursuing Christmas wreaths for the building. The general consensus was to pursue the wreaths.
- F. Liaison from Board of Selectmen- Ballantine responded to the prior conversation on department head involvement in procurement and project management indicating that he believes the intended goal is for department heads to help rank, prioritize, and initiate projects before handing the project over to the appropriate procurement authority. Ballantine also indicated that his goal as liaison is to provide input to the group when appropriate and facilitate discussions between the Trustees and other town entities. He noted that he would raise the staff's concerns and confusion regarding the mask mandate with the Health Director.

## 7. Correspondence

- A. Memo from Town Administrator re: Approval Process and Submission Procedure for Community Preservation Act Funding Requests dated Sept. 14, 2021

## 8. Old Business:

- A. None.

## 9. New Business

- A. Vote to Accept Monetary Donations- The board unanimously accepted donations totaling \$150 including \$100 from Jill and Kenneth River and \$50 from Bob and Mary Finke in memory of Thomas P. Johnson.

Motion: J McCarty    Second: J. Wheeler

## 8. Trustee Reports and Requests for Next Meeting's Agenda

## 9. Upcoming Meetings/Events

- A. Library Board of Trustees – 7 pm on Nov. 3, 2021, and Dec. 1, 2021
- B. Friends of Brooks Free Library - Oct. 21 at 10 AM
- C. Special Town Meeting - Oct. 18, 2021 at 6:30

10. Adjournment: The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Motion: J. McCarty second: J. Wheeler

Respectfully Submitted,

Emily Milan

**Library Director's Report for  
Nov. 3, 2021 Board of Trustees Meeting**

10.29.21

**Pandemic Related Items:**

Fall Operations

Much of my focus this month has been on pandemic related matters, dealing with concerns expressed by staff members and patrons about the lack of a mask mandate, which was exacerbated as we returned to indoor programming. I had a number of very reassuring discussions with the Health Director and then documented a lot of this information in a memo to staff members. I have also kept the Assistant Town Administrator informed of these concerns so she is aware of the issues.

Some participants in our on-going groups expressed concern about the lack of a vaccine or mask requirement for attendance at indoor programs. On the whole the resumption of in-person programming has gone well, with all participants in some groups wearing masks as a courtesy to other members when they wouldn't have worn them otherwise, and other groups where mask-wearing was not a concern and some or all of the participants did not wear masks. One group has struggled with this more than the groups and the issue has caused some divisiveness and hard feelings. Some members are no longer attending because others are not wearing face coverings. This mix of reactions is likely to continue to be an issue over the next 6 months, until warmer weather arrives in the spring and the normal flu season ends.

CDC Guidance on Quarantining

Current CDC guidance is that vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine if a close contact, including a household member, tests positive. They are instructed to wear a mask when in indoor public settings or workplaces, but they can continue to come to work, attend events, etc., as long as they are not symptomatic. If they are or become symptomatic, then the individual is told to quarantine, isolate within the household if possible, and get tested. I have spent a lot of time this month reviewing these guidelines and applying them to various situations. The Health Director has been extremely helpful in this regard. They are now able to provide a rapid test for employees so they can remain at or return to work, and that has been very helpful as it eliminates the delay in getting tested that occurs if employees had to arrange to get tested elsewhere and wait for results, and it's been reassuring for staff members.

COVID Sick Time

I recently learned the state created a mandatory COVID sick leave benefit for all employees, effective May 28, 2021 and recently extended to April 2022 or earlier if the state funds for reimbursement are exhausted before then. The rules are somewhat complex but it provides the equivalent of one weeks hours of leave for when an employee is symptomatic, awaiting test results, tests positive, to be vaccinated or recover from the vaccine side effects, or is caring for someone for a COVID related reason. There is a cap of \$850 per employee which includes benefits, so for our full-time staff members this means somewhat less than 35 hours of this COVID leave (perhaps 3.5 to 4 days? of COVID sick leave.) Part-time employees also qualify for this leave, when they do not ordinarily accrue benefits, and

employees who are new to the employer also qualify. I distributed the required notification to employees from the state website so Library staff members are all aware of this leave.

### **Other Administrative and Operational Matters**

#### **Rogers Groups**

The conservation work on the 23 Rogers Groups statues was completed this month and the collection was returned to the Library on October 13<sup>th</sup>. Skylight Studios did a wonderful job and the statues look fabulous. Many residents have been in to see the statues since they've been returned. This work was funded by the Community Preservation Act funds so I will be sending a notification to the Community Preservation Committee that the work is now complete and expressing our appreciation for their next meeting.

Years ago the Trustees voted to leave the Rogers Groups on display in public areas since they are protected by a modern security alarm system. Now that the statues have been returned I thought it would be a good idea to reaffirm this vote and have added it to the Agenda.

#### **Response to the October 27<sup>th</sup> Nor'easter**

All Town buildings were closed on Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup> during the nor'easter. The Library re-opened on Thurs. Oct. 28<sup>th</sup>. 75% of the Town was still without power at the start of the day so the Library was very busy with community members coming in to get warm, charge devices, read the newspapers, connect to the Internet using our public computers or Wi-Fi, and check items out to take home. We brought additional tables and chairs up from the basement and put out many additional power strips prior to opening since we knew we'd be a popular spot for residents to come. We didn't need the generator by Thursday morning but it was wonderful to be able to plan to be open because we knew even if power wasn't restored in time we could be a warming and charging spot for the community. OpenCape wasn't immune from outages in this storm because it was so widespread, but our connection was back by Wednesday afternoon. It is wonderful to have such a fast and reliable connection, both for our staff needs and every day operations as well as for the public network and Wi-Fi.

The building suffered only minor damage during the storm, caused by the Brooks Free Library shield sign hitting the building when the eye bolt holding the chain came loose on one side. The sign later fell down completely. One corner of the sign is damaged and there are a few fairly small areas of splintered wood and gouges on the clapboards of the building. DPW has been notified and will take whatever action is necessary.

#### **Programming**

Assistant Director Emily Milan and I met with community Center Director Carolyn Carey and Council on Aging Director Emily Mitchell on October 25<sup>th</sup> to share information on the resumption of in-person services and programs, current operations and programs. We suggested re-activating the HEART group that was active some years ago and brought together representatives from the School enrichment programs, Harwich Junior Theatre, Library, Recreation and Youth, the Youth Counselor, Cultural Council, etc., periodically to share information on our activities and initiatives, and they were receptive to that. Emily and I will take the lead on that effort.

Upcoming Holidays

Thurs Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> – closed for Veterans Day

Thurs Nov 25 Thanksgiving and Fri Nov 26<sup>th</sup> (day after Thanksgiving is a Town holiday)

Fri Dec 24 Christmas Eve is a Town holiday, and Sat. Dec 25 Christmas

Fri. Dec. 31 New Year's Eve is a Town Holiday, and Sat Jan 1<sup>st</sup> New Year's Day

If the Town declares additional days holidays or early release days, such as the day before Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve, the Library will plan to be open to the public, absorbing the cost of the overtime pay and compensatory day off staff members will earn.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Hewitt  
Library Director

## FY22 Budget Balances

11/01/2021

AREA OF EXPENDITURE	Appropriated Amt	Spent	Remaining Balance	Percent Spent
Advertising	\$180.00	\$0.00	\$180.00	0%
Dues, Subs & Travel	\$3,524.00	\$429.00	\$3,095.00	12%
Library Materials	\$157,660.00	\$57,331.42	\$100,328.58	36%
Electric	\$25,741.00	\$12,053.38	\$13,687.62	47%
Employee Fringe Benefits	\$300.00	\$185.00	\$115.00	62%
Gas	\$10,601.00	\$114.50	\$10,486.50	1%
Library Supplies	\$13,000.00	\$2,721.36	\$10,278.64	21%
Maintenance & Repair	\$5,700.00	\$1,459.43	\$4,240.57	26%
Office Supplies	\$5,750.00	\$728.08	\$5,021.92	13%
Professional & Tech	\$50,973.00	\$42,945.33	\$8,027.67	84%
Water	\$1,391.00	\$340.17	\$1,050.83	24%
Total Library Expenses	\$274,820.00	\$118,307.67	\$156,512.33	43%
Wages & Salaries	\$737,977.00	\$234,124.44	\$503,852.56	32%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,012,797.00</b>	<b>\$352,432.11</b>	<b>\$660,364.89</b>	<b>35%</b>



Youth Services Report  
October 29, 2021

Tween Programming

The Escape Room Design Club that I am running at the Monomoy Middle School has been very successful so far. With 15-20 students participating each week, this partnership with the MRMS allows us to provide afterschool activities for this age group without encouraging the students to take extra bus rides to the library. The program has had an unexpected benefit of showcasing library resources, as multiple students were surprised when I casually mentioned various library resources and those students have since come into the library to check out those items.

Preschool Programming

Storytime and Preschool Projects are both continuing to run as outdoor programs. We plan to keep the programs outdoors through November. Most of the parents coming to the programs have approached me either outright stating that they would like to keep the program outdoors as long as possible, or to "joke" that they're looking forward to building snowmen with me which I interpret as a subtler signal that they appreciate that the program is outdoors for now. Our outdoor storytime, even as we enter a period where coats are coming out, is still seeing attendance heads and shoulders above the attendance at our virtual programs last year.

We usually have a Halloween Parade with the Town Hall in October, but this year we limited it to a simpler Halloween Story Time. The program had to be postponed because of the nor'easter, but even with the change in date we still had twenty five participants.

CCYSLR

The Cape Cod Youth Services Librarians' Roundtable is a group of librarians from Cape Cod and the Island that meets quarterly to discuss issues related to youth services, share programming ideas, and advocate for children and teens. I have been elected as President of the group. This will be my second term as President, as I was President six years ago.

Bulletin Board

The bulletin board was moved from the wall across from the children's stacks, where it was difficult to see, to the ramp into the Doane Room earlier this year. If you have not had a reason to visit the picture book room, you may not have seen the change. Senior Library Technician Carey Sims has been decorating the bulletin board with seasonal messages.

Toys in the Doane Room

In September we returned the Imagination Station to the Doane Room, allowing children to have a limited number of toys to play with. Feedback from patrons has been consistently positive as they celebrate a minor return to normal.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Carpenter

Staff Librarian  
November 2021  
Report to the Trustees of Brooks Free Library

Social Media/PR: Attended Cape Media Center's PSA Day training, prepared and recorded a PSA through the Cape Media Center. Involved photographing staff, writing a script, recording video and audio at Cape Media Center.

Technology: Over-the-phone tech assistance. Researched different options to consider the purchase of a Zoom plan, scheduled a meeting with a zoom coordinator to watch a demo and further evaluate the best plan to select. Replaced staff Reference printer due to printing issues.

Staff: Walked management staff through the use of Facebook Business Suite, focusing on the post planner and notifications. Assisted staff in writing a library news section for the Library of Things on our website.

Professional Development: Attended the #SoMuchAbuse - Let's End It Together (virtual) Prevention Conference. Extremely helpful conference that will be useful when interacting with members of the community, and a way to look for signs.

Programming: Hosted the first in-person evening book group on October 5th. Had a total of 6 attendees. While masks were not required, all but one attendee wore masks as they entered the meeting room. The individual who came in without a mask saw that all other attendees were wearing masks, and put one on.

Collection Development: Purchased 53 ebooks and 23 eaudiobooks

*Future work*

Will plan and host a reference staff training on the use of our public computer system, Useful.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jamie Thornton  
Staff Librarian