

Approved February 15, 2022

BLAKE MEMORIAL LIBRARY TRUSTEES MEETING

6:30 PM, December 8, 2021

On Zoom

Trustees present: Shirley Montage, Rob Rinaldi, Dina Dubois, Nick Kramer, Carl Demrow. Not attending: Tania Aebi, Kathryn Price. Staff: Jen Spanier, Director

Shirley brought the meeting to order at 6:38 PM.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved with one abstention (Demrow) who was not at the last meeting.

Shirley reviewed the treasurer's report. She said the appeal had been mailed and some returns were beginning to come in. Dina noted she hadn't received hers yet, Carl noted he had.

Nick asked about the budget and the deficit. We are about 8% over budget, and Nick asked how we will make that up. Part of the roof job was related to the construction project (the airlock), but the rest, including the painting, was repair and maintenance.

The treasurer's report was unanimously approved.

Jen began to review the directors report. We needed to cut back on collections since the collections budget line for 2021 has already been exhausted, but she will be starting up again in January and about \$2000 of ARPA money has been targeted for the collection. Jen has just begun to use those funds.

Shirley asked about classics based on some feedback from the public planning meeting this summer. Dina asked about collections numbers and Jen explained how those numbers break down. Dina asked about the book selection committee that is noted in the trustee handbook. Jen explained how new books are chosen and the role that Jane Connor and the director play in that. Jane submits a list for approval to Jen. Jen says that she pays close attention to what types of books our patrons like to take out and that the additions to the collection are closely aligned with what people are looking to read.

Rob made a motion that we remove the language regarding the book selection committee from the trustee handbook. Shirley said she remembered a problem 30 years ago, but the selection of books is part of the job description of the director. The governance committee will look at removing that language from the handbook since that has been part of the director's job description for years.

Programs continue with story hour in person and a whole series of programming on end of life issues has just wrapped up. Lots of kids came by on Halloween for candy and free books. The library also had a Day of the Dead celebration with a green burial talk. Jen said things are slowing down a bit with the holidays and she and Kimberly are busy planning programs for the new year.

We Contain Multitudes, the next Vermont Reads book, is in. The Bradford librarian has graciously provided BML with additional books for the program. BML is continuing to partner with the Corinth Conservation Commission on a display and trail maps. Jen is still kicking around the possibility of a tool library with Jeff Speigel and the Corinth Community Coalition, but the issue will be insurance.

The ARPA grant came in and has been used for air purifiers and a meeting owl. Nick will be helping Ken Arkind set up the owl for a Corinth Conservation Commission program.

We had a brief discussion about the loaner laptops. Scott Welch has still not provided them to us but he has been paid. Shirley will write him a letter telling him we need the laptops or the money back within a week.

BML now has fiber! But it is not as fast as it could be. Jen has been considering getting in touch with All Access in Fairlee to help us get the fiber connection up to full speed. Then issue is our old network hardware coming off of the modem.

Two girls, 9 and 12 years old, have been coming to volunteer at the library. They are VERY enthusiastic and love the library!

The director's report was unanimously approved.

Anne Peck and Anne McKinsey have said they would like to be involved in a fundraising committee. Ann Peck will be coming to the library this week to pitch an idea to Jen and Shirley. Rob suggested that we have a board meeting to just discuss a fundraising strategy moving forward. Dina will ask Judy Tharinger if she is interested being involved.

The personnel committee met and recommends a 5% increase in salaries for both staff. Rob moved the 5% increase, Carl seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Rob moved to adopt the strategic plan as written. Nick seconded, and the strategic plan was adopted by the board unanimously.

We then discussed the next association meeting. With covid and all, we decided to do it in June under the tent rather than the tradition April meeting.

Nick moved to adjourn and Rob seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:43.

Respectfully submitted,
Carl Demrow, secretary