

## Blaisdell Memorial Library Board of Trustees Meeting

January 12, 2015

**Present:** Eric Stern, Chris Thompson, Kathleen Matthews

**Meeting** was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

**Policy Update/Current Task:** Policy reviews will resume next month beginning with discussions about the distribution of keys to the building, usage of the meeting room, and use of the building for purposes not specifically-related to the library.

**Secretary's Report:** The minutes of the December 2014 meeting were read. Chris moved to accept the report. Eric seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

**Treasurer's Report:** Chris reported that he is in the process of moving all TD Bank accounts to on-line banking and expects the process to be finished by the end of the month. This change should expedite all banking activity and make our financial information more immediate, accessible, and transparent. The Farmers' Market account is now closed. The financial report for 2014 was reviewed. The total expenses of 98% is accurate. The higher total percentages of some lines reflects previous Board decisions to move funds between lines due to unexpected expenses, new staff professional memberships, and the need to refurbish older PCs and acquire new technology equipment. The significant overage in the Alarm line is due to the emergency repair of the alarm system wiring. The Landscape line total does not appear to reflect the actual total expenditures. There was considerable discussion about the relationship between the expenditures in the Landscape line and those from the Landscape Fund savings account but it remained unclear as to how these figures were obtained. Eric will try to reconcile the numbers with Janet. Kathleen moved to file the report. Eric seconded. All voted in favor.

**Library Director's Report:** *Circulation:* Despite holidays, weather events, and an unexpected closure the statistics for December were unusually strong and showed an increase over November's numbers. The 2014 totals were down from last year because of the shift in the check-out period from two to three weeks, but these still remained well above the numbers from five years ago.

*Programs:* All events for December were well-attended. Professor Jean Zipke's "Writing Personal Histories" series was extended by popular demand. Eric hopes to bring her back for a second session in Spring. The Teen Advisory Group's "Gingerbread House" event was successful, with the winning team receiving two passes to O'Neil's Cinemas. The second session of Story Hour concluded on December 18th with a record of 102 attendees for the month. The Cookie-Decorating Event had high attendance as well with 28 participants on December 24th. The drop-in PJ Story Time is on hold until April due to winter weather.

*Upcoming Programs* for 2015 include: a seminar on January 14th about the Affordable Care Act; a night of contemporary Irish music on February 18th; and, a children's Yoga class with Beth Benham on January 28th. Children's Craft Days will continue on the second Wednesday of each month and Lego Day will continue on the third Sunday of every month. Eric is in the process of applying to the NH Humanities Council for two programs later in the year. In May the library will co-sponsor a WWII program with the Nottingham Historical Society. A monthly "Teen Movie Night" will begin soon and

will feature book-to-movie selections. The staff is now using Instagram, a photo-based social network, to promote teen events like these in an effort to generate new interest.

*Technology:* Eric reported that the new LED television is now set up in the meeting room. He would like to purchase a media cart so the TV can be safely transported within the building. The catalog PC has been moved back into the stacks and is now wirelessly connected to the internet. National Geographic DVDs have been loaded onto two of the public-use PCs.

*Building & Maintenance:* The library was forced to close early on December 15th due to an alarm system malfunction. The Fire Department was unable to reset the system and the owner of the alarm maintenance company, John Gagliardi, was unavailable until the next day. A shorted wire between the fire-alarm pull by the side exit door and the smoke-detector in the lift was replaced by a new wire that now runs on the wall's exterior. In the process of resolving this situation a separate problem was uncovered in regards to funds budgeted for the alarm: It appears that there are actually two annual bills for the alarm: \$240 to Omni Systems Monitoring and \$400+ to Alarm Systems Plus for a town-wide, annual inspection, but, for some reason, only \$250 has been budgeted in the Alarm line. There was extensive discussion about this problem and numerous questions arose about the purpose, cost, and funding of a second inspection. It is the Town that contracts with Alarm Systems Plus for the purpose of inspecting its municipal buildings; therefore, the Board believes the cost of this inspection should be covered by the Town, as are other municipal utility costs like electricity and telephone. Eric will speak to Chris Sterndale about these issues. A leak in one of the boilers in the Children's Room was caught before too much damage was done. However, it generated an unexpected expense of \$450.00 because, during its repair, the other boilers were found to have similar problems. All of the boilers/humidifiers have now been fully serviced and are working well.

*General:* The library now closes at 8:30 pm on Mondays and Wednesdays. Discussion about increasing library hours on other days has been put on hold until later in the year. Eric and Susan met with the Budget Committee on December 11th; no concerns or questions were raised about the proposed 2015 budget, including our recommendations that the Children's Librarian position be increased by 5 hours/week and that an additional 36 hours of annual substitute coverage be provided for staffing. The meeting room is undergoing a thorough cleaning and reorganization; Amy and Robin have been instrumental in this process. Discussion ensued about the limited storage space in the building. It was suggested that an outdoor storage shed to house larger or infrequently/seasonally-used items might resolve the problem. All agreed this is a possibility that should be explored before the next budget cycle. In mid-late January the staff will begin several large-scale deselection projects in both the Adult and Juvenile collections to make room for newer fiction and nonfiction materials. Discards will be placed in the new, on-going Friends of the Library book sale.

**Committee Report:** Kathleen reported that the last of the fall pruning in the front and side gardens had been completed. She, Michelle Fischer, and Chris marked a number of trees and shrubs along the perimeter of the landscaped areas that need to be removed due to storm damage, disease, or crowding. Chris has volunteered to do the work and hopes to get to it soon. Kathleen will contact John Fernald to inquire about a location for the considerable brush that will be generated from the cutting. She will also talk to John about the damage being done to the lawn and gardens by the snowplows. Three new lanterns have been purchased to replace the old ones along the front walkway; a new digital timer was also acquired to replace the mechanical one that requires resetting every time the power cuts out. The electrician will install these as soon as the weather and his schedule permits. Michelle Fischer and Kathleen will soon begin to draft a maintenance guide and schedule for all future landscape work and

projects. Michelle will do the maintenance work for 2015. The decision was made to proceed with the annual late winter seed and vegetable plant sales in order to raise funds for the next major landscape project: the refurbishment of the Memorial Garden. Chris will investigate military-related groups that might assist with funding this project. Kathleen is also researching the cost of educational signage for both the natural and landscaped areas.

**Old Business:** Both agenda items — the Farmers' Market and banking accounts — were addressed during discussion of the Treasurer's Report.

**New Business:** Kathleen proposed that the board conduct a work session to review and discuss the roles and responsibilities of library trustees as specified in the NHLTA Guidebook. If possible, a meeting date will be set within the next month. January 21 – 29 are the dates for filing candidacies for trustees in this year's election. A question was raised about whether or not to proceed, at this time, with the warrant article to increase the board to five members. Eric will contact Chris Sterndale to inquire if it is possible to postpone the article. The list of Monthly tasks was not available for review but Eric believes everything has been done in a timely manner. The topic of donations was discussed at some length, particularly the manner in which donations might be recorded in regards to donors' names, the purposes of their donations, and the ways in which the board accepts donations. It may be that in the future the board should discuss each donation before voting to accept it. Eric will review the statutes governing donations and will report back to the board at the next meeting. Kathleen moved to accept all donations. Chris seconded. All voted in favor.

**Next Meeting:** Monday, February 16th at 6:00 pm.

**Meeting adjourned** at 7:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathleen Matthews

**Addendum (January 20th):** The next meeting cannot occur on February 16th as the library will be closed for Presidents' Day. A definite meeting date has not been established at this time but will likely be the during the last two weeks of February. A notice of the date will be posted.