

## MINUTES OF BLAISDELL MEMORIAL LIBRARY TRUSTEES MEETING

April 13, 2015

**Present:** Eric Stern, Susan Medeiros, Chris Thompson, Kathleen Matthews, Laura Cottrell, Allison Friend-Gray

**Meeting** was called to order at 6:10 pm.

**Policy Update/Current Task:** Eric presented a draft of proposed language and formatting adjustments to the Circulation, Internet Use, Meeting Room, and Bulletin Board policies. In addition to these minor changes, the board decided the Circulation Policy should include a provision that allows patrons who have lost or forgotten their library card to use another form of photo identification while checking-out materials. However, it was also agreed that only two consecutive check-outs with an alternative form of identification will be allowed; after that the patron will be required to purchase a new library card. During consideration of language revisions to the Meeting Room Policy there was discussion about whether or not to eliminate the provision which allows for-profit commercial organizations to use the room. It was decided to keep the provision but to raise the rent to \$100.00 per use. The “Cancellation of Meetings” component of the policy was also changed to include a statement that the fee is non-refundable if a meeting is cancelled with less than 24-hours notice. The Safety Policy will be the next policy to be addressed at a monthly meeting.

**Secretary’s Report:** The minutes of the March meeting were reviewed. Susan moved to accept the report. Chris seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Chris presented the financial report for April. Expenditures in Maintenance, Continuing Education, and Technology were discussed in some detail as the percentages of these lines are higher than normal for this point in the year. The Technology percentage is due to the purchase of new services and equipment, as budgeted. The Continuing Education number is an error. It no longer exists as a separate line but, instead, is part of Professional Dues and, as such, is right on target for the year. Chris will speak to Janet to make certain this is changed and will continue to make an effort to work with her to streamline and consolidate the monthly reports. The considerable expenditure in the Maintenance line is due to the unexpected, high cost of having snow and ice removed from the roof after a leak occurred in the Reference area late in the winter. Considerable discussion ensued about whether or not the Town should have paid for the snow removal from the building maintenance portion of the Town Budget instead of insisting it be taken from the Library Budget.

### **Library Director’s Report:**

*Circulation:* Eric reported that this year’s circulation statistics have been under-reported due to a glitch with Overdrive; the numbers for January, February, and March have actually been similar to those of 2014, despite the fact that this year the library was closed more days than last year due to winter weather.

*Programs:* Both of the March programs for adults — “The Fiddling Thomsons” and “Who’s In Your Backyard?” which was sponsored by the Conservation Commission — were exceptionally well-attended and received. Professor (Ret.) Jean Zipke continues to meet with her group on “Writing Personal Histories” and will do so through the rest of the month. The Teen Advisory Group showed the film “Into The Woods” for its monthly movie presentation. Attendance continues to be low but Eric is optimistic this may change, particularly if there’s an opportunity to do more publicity at the school. Coe-Brown Academy did its annual art exhibit from March 25 – April 8. The fourth session of Story Hour began on March 10th. Both Craft Day and Lego Day continue to be popular programs.

*Upcoming Programs:* On April 15th, Becky Rule and Jim Kelly will present the first of a two-part series entitled "Writers' Night Out." The second part of the series will be held at the Northwood Library in the fall. The Recreation Department's Senior Group will also be at the library on April 15th for lunch and a matinee movie. A program of traditional Celtic music will be presented on April 22nd and on May 13th, the Library and Historical Society will co-sponsor a program about World War II. Planning is ongoing for the annual Summer Reads program. Eric and Janet Horvath have also agreed that the "Friday Campers" program may use the library again this year as part of the Recreation Department's summer program; however, due to past issues with retrieving materials from out-of-town campers, there will be two significant changes: first, the campers will only be allowed to select from a cart of pre-checked-out books; second, the Recreation Department will be financially responsible for any and all unreturned materials. The board discussed several issues pertaining to the "Friday Campers" program, including concerns about any group using the library when it is not open to the public and the fact that policy requires two staff members to be present at all times. Eric discussed the latter concern with Chris Sterndale who said that the Town will allow the program's camp counselors to be considered staff for this circumstance. The board decided that the Recreation Department's use of the library for its summer program may remain the same for this year but in the future may need to be changed to fit within normal library hours.

*Banking/Finances:* The 2015 Budget was approved at Town Meeting on March 14th. Janet has requested that receipts be printed for any transfers that are made from one place to another so there is a clear record of what and why funds were moved. QuickBooks Pro 2015 was acquired to facilitate the banking and book-keeping processes and to coordinate with Janet's work; since two licenses were included with this acquisition, one will be used by the Treasurer.

*Technology:* Thanks to the untiring, volunteer efforts of Dick Blouin there is now a research computer in the back of the library, the Children's Room computer has been replaced, and Vista has been removed from all library computers except the catalog PC (this will be cleared by the end of the year). All components of the research PC, with the exception of the machine itself, were donated. In cooperation with the Historical Society, all microfilms are now being digitized by Morgan Records Management, LLC in Manchester. The Historical Society shared this expense and will also assume physical custody of all the microfilms, which by New Hampshire law must be retained, as they are considered official documents. The Library will post the microfilm scans on its website, which means everyone will now have complete access to these records.

*Staffing:* Allison Forte will be assuming her duties as the new Assistant Director on May 8th. On that same date Leanne Gast and Annette Lombardo will become Library Assistants with responsibilities, respectively, for "Circulation & Interlibrary Loan" and "Circulation & Technical Services." Amy Covell's position has now increased to 21 hours per week. Eric re-named the "Substitute" position as "Per Diem Library Aide" and hired two additional staff, Wendy Carlson and Cheyanne Thomson, to fill these roles. Eric will make certain these new staff members have background checks completed as soon as possible. It was recommended that we make certain to include additional funds for background checks in the 2016 budget in anticipation of future personnel and the addition of new trustees.

*Collection:* The de-selection of Adult Fiction is nearly done, with all of the books being passed on to the Friends of the Library for their upcoming book sale on May 8th & May 9th. Licenses have been acquired for "Credo Reference", an online reference resource, and "Heritage Quest," a genealogical resource available through the State Library. NH Downloadable Books now loans magazines for Nook apps; these are covered by our subscription.

*Building & Maintenance:* Thanks to Chris Sterndale the library now has a locked storage room across the road in the old town hall. The Friends of the Library have purchased a dehumidifier for this room and, in the months ahead, the downstairs closets will be decluttered and their contents moved to the new storage space. The seasonal HVAC maintenance that the Town schedules was performed today. It appears that the temperature sensors for the boilers are not only poorly placed but inaccurate in reporting the actual temperatures in various spaces in the building. Eric will be investigating options in the months ahead. There is still a slight leak in the Meeting Room closet which Eric intends to repair. At the start of snow-melt a roof leak developed over the Reference shelves. Thanks to the quick reporting of the leak by Gina, the facility cleaner, and the efforts of Allison, Leanne, and Wendy there was no serious damage to either the collection or the interior of the building. There has been no re-occurrence of the leak, even

during recent rain; however, board members believe the roof should be assessed for damage caused by ice dams and/or the snow-removal crew as soon as possible. Eric will talk to Chris Sterndale about this matter.

**Landscape Committee Report:** Kathleen reported that despite a slow start the vegetable plant fundraiser was a strong success, far exceeding the profits made in other years. The seed sales have been much slower than before, probably due to the slow start of Spring. There is a potential for doing a new fundraiser – selling hanging baskets of flowers – during the month of May that would help raise funds for the War Memorial Garden but Kathleen has put that on hold for the moment due to her concerns about the damage done to the new and existing gardens by the town plows this past winter. Snow was unnecessarily pushed far across the lawn areas, digging up the sod, damaging shrubs and trees, and depositing thick amounts of salt and sand on the grass and gardens. The excessive plowing is destructive to the plants and an affront to the many people who have donated thousands of dollars of their own money to improve the library’s landscape. Kathleen believes that until the matter of over-plowing is resolved it makes little sense to proceed with the restoration of the War Memorial Garden because this area, in particular, has experienced serious plow damage the past two winters. She would like to meet with John Fernald and Chris Sterndale to discuss ways to prevent such damage in the future. The board revisited the idea of asking the Town to allow us to combine the Winter and Summer maintenance (i.e., plowing & lawn-mowing) jobs into one position under the supervision of the Library Director and Board of Trustees, as a solution to put forth in such a meeting. There is considerable yard clean-up to be done due to winter storm damage and the need for quite a number of trees to be cut. A “Landscape Clean-Up Day” was set for May 9th. Chris and Kathleen will meet Saturday, April 18th to review which trees will be cut prior to that date. Kathleen will meet with Michelle Fischer to assess the snow and plow damage to shrubs, and she will talk with John Fernald about his offer to remove brush piles once these are created.

**Old Business:** Regrettably, no one will be able to attend this year’s NHLTA Annual Conference. The annual Staff Appreciation Dinner put on by the board will be this Saturday, April 18th at Chris and Cheyanne Thompson’s house.

**New Business:** Kathleen moved to recommend the appointments of Laura Cottrell and Alison Friend-Gray as Alternate Trustees. Susan seconded. All voted in favor. Susan will compose and send a letter to this effect to the Selectmen and Eric will arrange for background checks to be conducted. Due to the length of tonight’s meeting, discussion of the NHLTA Trustee Guidelines was again postponed. Kathleen proposed that instead of trying to discuss the handbook all at once a separate section be reviewed each month as a part of New Business. All agreed. The first section (to page 10) will be discussed at next month’s board meeting. The review of Monthly Tasks was conducted. Eric will investigate whether or not the alarm system needs to be checked again. It was decided to only submit a letter about the library’s events to the Selectmen twice a year rather than three or four times. Eric reported that he and Chris Sterndale are in the process of integrating the Library and Town calendars so that all information about events will be in a central location. The item “Typical Week Survey” was permanently removed from the Monthly Tasks as it is no longer necessary because of the gate counter. Susan moved to accept all donations. Chris seconded. All voted in favor.

**Meeting adjourned** at 8:40 pm.

**Next Meeting:** Monday, May 18th at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathleen Matthews, Secretary

