

## **Blaisdell Memorial Library Board of Trustees Meeting**

**November 3, 2014**

**Present:** Eric Stern, Susan Medeiros, Chris Thompson, Pat Vachon, Cheyanne Thompson, Kathleen Matthews; Guest: Janet Hall

**Meeting** was called to order at 6:03 pm.

**Policy Update/Current Task:** Policy topics were briefly reviewed and tabled until work on the 2015 budget process is complete. New topics added to the list for future discussion included: lending equipment, raffles and fundraisers, and use of the meeting room. Persistent concerns pertaining to the Board's oversight of the Nottingham Farmers' Market prompted considerable discussion with the following results. It was decided to dissolve the small account the Board is currently managing on the market's behalf. Susan has spoken to the market-master, Brieghan Gardner, who agrees there is no longer a need to continue the account. The few remaining funds will be absorbed by this season's expenses, so Chris will close the account this month. Second, although the Board strongly supports the Nottingham Farmers' Market, it voted to terminate its continued management of the market and to request that the market establish itself as a separate, self-governing entity. The Market may still use the library grounds but will need to work through the Town Office, rather than the Library after the current season. Susan will talk to Brieghan and Eric will draft a letter of explanation for her to share with the market's vendors.

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

**Treasurer's Report:** The financial report for October was reviewed. Discussion about line items that are above or below expenditures yielded these results: Overages in Furniture (due to cost of new bookcases) and Professional Dues (extra costs for new staff) will be absorbed by shifting funds from under-budget lines such as Magazines and Continuing Education. Landscaping funds will be spent later in the month when scheduled pruning is done. Funds in Technology and Technology Support will be combined and used to purchase software upgrades and/or an LED screen for public programs and presentations. Eric reported that the library and town's Salaries lines are well above their respective limits due to the retirement this year of the library director and other long-time town employees. Susan moved to file the report. Pat seconded. All voted in favor.

The draft of the 2015 Budget was reviewed and amended to include the following changes: Eric combined the former lines Books, Magazines & Newspapers, and Movies into one line labeled Materials; Continuing Education and Professional Dues were combined into one line; Technology and Technology Support will now be just Technology. It was also decided to increase this line by \$500.00 to help with the cost of upgrading equipment. In the category of Salaries, the Summer Reading Director position was eliminated as a separate entity and is now the responsibility of the Children's Librarian. The latter position was increased by 5 hours a week to accommodate this change and the need for additional children's programs. The total 2015 Appropriations Request reflects an increase of \$1,050 above the current year.

**Library Director's Report:** The Circulation Statistics for October showed the usual increase in total circulation for this time of year as well as a significant increase over the previous month. Eric added new categories to the statistics spreadsheet in order to more accurately monitor computer usage and reference materials; additionally, a gate counter was purchased and is now being used to track the number of people entering the library. Interesting trends and patterns from this are already emerging and will be useful for future planning and decision-making. October's adult programs on Coyotes and writing personal histories were well-received by the public. On November 19th the Friends of the Library will sponsor Kevin Gardner's program on New England stonewalls. Children's programs continued to be enthusiastically received, especially the story hours which, with 146 children enrolled, broke all attendance records. The afternoon story time for older children, in particular, was a major success. Amy will continue to offer popular programs like the pajama drop-in time and, on December 1st, will be hosting a special program highlighting the newly-acquired telescope. The Teen group is currently in flux but plans are afoot for the month of January that will capture the interest and attention of our young patrons.

Eric raised the idea of making some moderate changes to the existing library hours. One concept would be to shorten the late evening hours from 9:00 to 8:30; another or additional possibility would be to be open only on one weekend day but for a longer period of time. Additional data will be gathered and a more formal proposal made at a future meeting.

Recently an immense amount of time was required to trouble-shoot computer and internet problems that were seriously disruptive to both patrons and staff. Dick Blouin volunteered an exceptional number of hours to help resolve, and ultimately solve, these troublesome issues. The serious nature of the issue prompted discussion about the necessity of crafting and implementing a life cycle replacement plan for the library's computers and software. Chris, Eric, and Dick will review the situation and compose a set of recommendations, including the possibility of purchasing Apple computers as well as new pc's, to be presented at the next meeting. Eric proposed purchasing an LED screen to be used for public programs and presentations and was given approval to research costs, sizes, and models.

**Committee Report:** Lee Gilman completed the autumn spraying of Poison Ivy. Eric helped to resolve the confusions surrounding who would pay for this work; as before, the Town assumed this particular financial responsibility. Kathleen reported that the landscaper she'd hired to do tree and shrub-pruning around the building and in the front gardens would be undertaking that work near the end of the month. If any funds remain in the Landscaping line she will try to find someone to undertake some of the extensive brush-cutting and clean-up that remains to be done. The only other projects left from the original plans for the front grounds will be the restoration of the Memorial Garden and some shrub-planting and mulching along the wood edges to help keep the invasive plants at bay. The Landscape Committee original goals of developing a maintenance plan/policy and installing signage have yet to be realized but will be given consideration over the winter.

**Old Business:** The updating of the alarm system is still impending. The issue of account signors was again addressed. The Board will revert to its previous policy of having two signors on all accounts — the Chair and the Treasurer. Considerable discussion occurred about the role of the Treasurer and the current number of library bank accounts. Chris recommended the number of accounts be reduced so that it is no longer necessary to move funds from one account to another. Eric recommended that the Landscape Fund be eliminated and its money integrated into the general Donations account. Questions

were raised about the legal requirements of adhering to donors' intentions, keeping interior and exterior library expenses and donations separate, which monies can co-mingled and which cannot, as well as the practicalities of using savings versus checking accounts. Chris and Janet will meet to discuss these issues and present a proposal to the Board at the December meeting.

Melanie Metz officially resigned as Alternate Trustee.

**New Business:** The Board's annual Pie Social for volunteers will take place Sunday, November 9th at 4:00 pm. Susan reported on the meeting with the Board of Selectmen regarding our request for a warrant article to increase the number of trustees from three to five. The Selectmen agreed to our proposal and will take responsibility for composing the warrant article. All Monthly Tasks have been addressed. Susan moved to accept all donations. Chris seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

**Next Meeting:** Monday, December 1st at 6:00 pm.

**Meeting adjourned** at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathleen Matthews