



## Brunswick Community Library

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

November 21, 2023 - 6:00 pm

**Attendees:** Alix Duggan, Jennifer Gordon, Sara Hopkins, Therese Goyette, Matt Perfetti, Jennifer Shatz, Virginia Anderson, Grace Kosinski

**Excused:** Andrea Wedler, Kevin Mainello, Jen Mainello, Fred Wobrock

**Guests:** Annie Metzger, Yusuf Silk, Debra Zaffuts

Call to order 6:01 pm

#### **Approval of October 2023 minutes**

Alix Duggan motioned to approve the October 2023 minutes; seconded by Matt Perfetti. All in favor; motion carried unanimously.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Andrea Wedler excused from this meeting. The Finance Committee has reviewed the October financials and approved them. The library is in good standing; donations are coming in. The credit card issue has been settled. The Finance Committee motioned to approve the report; seconded by Therese Goyette. All in favor; motion carried unanimously.

2024 budget: The draft of the 2024 budget was circulated to board members. An extra \$24,000 is in the 2024 budget, as the town granted our requested budget increase. The extra funding appears throughout the budget, with largest amounts going towards staffing, programs, and operations. At the last Executive Committee meeting, the group discussed library needs, including the ability to pay and recruit more staff and to boost digital resources. Jennifer Shatz noted that in a comparison of other local libraries, figures showed our librarians were underpaid (at \$16/capita versus others showing \$30/capita and up). BCL is one of the only midsize libraries in the systems, so it's hard to form evaluative comparisons. North Greenbush (another UHLS midsize library) is comparable, although they are \$45/capita due to funding received from the town. We are funded independently as an association library, which allows us greater ability to self-govern (e.g., autonomy for collections, board seats), but does not provide guaranteed funding sources. Marilyn, our bookkeeper will review before the budget is finalized. Overall the budget target is \$263,845 (up from \$226,373 last year). Alix Duggan motioned to approve the budget for 2024 subject to Marilyn's review; seconded by Jennifer Shatz. All in favor; motion carried unanimously.

#### **Director's Report**

The full statistics were distributed via email. Programs have been successful. Indian Music Workshop (October 21, 28; November 7 and 14), Forest Friends with artist Ellen Graf (November 4), and Chinese Brush Painting (November 8) were all funded by grants. Upcoming is the Polar Express Party (December 12). This event is getting a huge response and a large

crowd is expected; the library may need to move shelving and suspend afternoon service. Sara needs volunteers to help at the arts and crafts stations and the food station.

UHLS has worked with school libraries to have a connection between Libby and Sora to provide age appropriate digital resources for students. The connection needs to be signed off by school superintendents, but Brittonkill has expressed interest in discussing the matter. This connection would allow Brittonkill students access to the library digital catalog, and would consequently give BCL a bigger presence in the daily lives of these students and faculty. The connection would also open the door to further collaboration between BCL and the school district. We would receive checkout information for our reports, but student info is encoded and private. A community visitor to the meeting questioned whether this would create greater strain on limited BCL digital resources. Sara Hopkins advised that because it is the UHLS overall that is being accessed we would not experience any negative consequences from the increased use. Further, we do receive some of our budget from the Brittonkill School District, so its students are part of our serving population. The connection would provide greater access for students who are not able to visit the physical library. The youth items in the digital collection are also not accessed as much overall as popular adult content, so the increased use could be a positive development. A consortium like UHLS can offer much wider resources than individual school districts may be able to do. Matt Perfetti inquired whether this is up for a vote with the school board; Sara advised it only in discussion, not yet up for a vote.

## **Committee Reports**

### *Buildings & Grounds:*

**Wintertime garden and tree preparation:** Matt Perfetti and Kevin Mainello have been in discussion about what steps are needed. They plan to tarp the greenhouse so that the panels do not blow off. The fruit trees will likely be winterized with fresh compost and top mulch.

**2024 Projects: Honor Garden & Siding/Insulation Construction Grant:** There are budget allocations for the upcoming projects (Honor Garden and Siding/Insulation). No updates at this time.

### *Annual Appeal/Fundraising:*

**Jeff Snow Concert Fundraiser on December 1st at 6:30pm:** Chairs are being sourced; thank you to Virginia Andreson for arranging the loan of chairs. 27 tickets have been sold to date. Thank you to those who donated baskets; some raffle tickets have also been sold. Therese Goyette asked for an overview of what to expect for the event. Jeff Snow will set up in front of the central window. Bookcases will go flat to the walls; chairs will be placed with a central aisle in the middle. Raffles will be drawn at the end of the night; everyone gets a free raffle ticket at the door, but can purchase extras. Volunteers needed to move furniture and set up chairs. Sara Hopkins recommended shutting the library down early (at 5 pm) to set up. Volunteers should arrive at that time.

**Annual Appeal Mailing recap and current donations:** The library sent 5000 pieces of mail. Thank you to board members Alix Duggan, Andrea Wedler, Fred Wobrock, Grace Kosinski, Matt Perfetti, Virginia Anderson, Therese Goyette, and other friends and community members. It took two days to prepare the mailings. If we send the appeal to the entire town again in the future, we will use postcards that can be handled by the printer or pre-stamped envelopes. We have had some returned to sender, but the list was from the town, rather than from a list maintained by the library. We have had about \$2000 in donations so far (from about 40 donors). This mailing was done to test whether we get a return from doing a mailing to the full town (whether in money, boost in circulation, etc.).

Human Resources:

No report.

Nominating:

**Welcome New Candidates for 2024:** Welcome to Annie Metzger, Yusuf Silk, and Debra Zaffuts. Official vote for these seats will be conducted in January. New board members will receive the handbook and will be expected to attend the trustee training scheduled for April. The three new candidates will start fresh terms (2024-2026). Virginia Anderson is the only one taking over an existing seat (from Kelley Triscari).

Technology:

No report.

**Old Business**

**Memorial bench for Tom Mahoney:** The new bench has arrived, and it is much better than the previous one. Jennifer Shatz ordered a plaque, which is scheduled to arrive soon. Depending on the weather and Carol Mahoney's schedule, we'll hold a reception in the fall or spring. Matt Perfetti inquired whether we should store it for the winter. Alix Duggan advised that it is made of polywood and can be left out.

**Town budget:** Alix Duggan and several board members attended the town meeting. Alix thanked them for approving the budget and wrote a letter on behalf of the board.

**Trees planted by Nancy Farrell:** The donor of the trees will take care of plaque for the trees and will maintain them. Annie Metzger noted that fruit trees require a lot of maintenance.

**Assembly funding request:** Matt Perfetti inquired about the request made by Scott Bennett to the NYS assembly for \$100,000 on our behalf. We are grateful for his support on our behalf and for libraries in general, but we will not receive funding from the state in this manner. Changes to our funding structure usually happen through UHLS, rather than at the state assembly level. State funds in the past have facilitated access (through UHLS) to things like our catalog system and the Libby service.

## **New Business**

**Report from Library Executive Committee meeting:** The Executive Committee meets a couple of times per year to review umbrella operations. This month's meeting was productive. Among the items discussed were the budget, fundraising goals (for siding/insulation), expanding the garden bed, creating a family play and picnic area in the back, and creating a storywalk. By the next EC meeting in the spring, we'll have hard numbers for all financial goals.

**Committee rosters for 2024:** We are losing some committee chairs (fundraising, nominating, and buildings and grounds) with expiring terms in 2024. Jennifer Shatz will stay on as chair of Human Resources and Matt Perfetti will remain chair for technology, but both of their terms are up after 2024, and Alix Duggan urged them to think about their successors. The board membership is expanding because the library's friends group was disbanded; if someone wanted to take on the friends group, it could be reinstated. We can have more discussion on this matter next year.

**Library website:** The library website has a new header and banner.

**Next Town Council meeting:** December 14, 2023 at 7:00 pm - Fred Wobrock attending

**Next Board of Trustees meeting:** December 19, 2023 at 6:00 pm (*A holiday gathering potluck at the library; new candidates please attend.*)

**Looking ahead:** January 16, 2024 at 6pm - Annual Meeting followed by Monthly January Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 7:08 pm as moved by Jennifer Shatz; seconded by Matt Perfetti. All in favor; motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Gordon