

## **DOROTHY ALLING MEMORIAL LIBRARY**

TRUSTEE MINUTES DECEMBER 18, 2023

UNAPPROVED

**Present:** Shari Westman, Karla Karstens, Charity Clark, Steve Perkins, Brian Goodwin, Barbara Mieder; Librarians: Jane Kearns and Bonnie Lord

**Absent:** Diane Downer

**Secretary's report:** The secretary's report was approved without corrections.

**Treasurer's report:** No transactions

**Friends of the Library report:** The Friends decorated the library on December 2 and then the Gingerbread House Decorating was the following week on December 9. The Gingerbread House decorating had two waves and things ran pretty smoothly. The Friends ordered 500 solar glasses to have on hand for the eclipse next year. They also hope to fund a program put on by the Southern Vermont Natural History Museum called Wildlife Tales. The next meeting of the Friends will be in March.

**Current budget report:** The October Budget Report was presented. Target spending is 33%. The Furniture/Small Equipment line was a bit over because of the Patron Counter that was installed. There is a sense that the phone and fax line could be reduced and cost-saving measures are being explored.

### **Librarian's Report:**

#### November Library Statistics

- There were 43 new patrons. Patron visits are up 56% (using the new People Counter – up 32% using manual counting) and electronic Patron Counter has made things easier. With the Patron Counter, if you leave the library and return you are counted again, which slightly inflates the number of visits, however, this is what other libraries use, so our data will be in keeping with their counting methods. Reference assistance is down 16% but Phone calls are up 23%. The Intergen program has reclassified participants, the numbers remain the same, though now labeled differently (adults vs. youth).
- In May 2021, the Vermont State Legislature passed Act 66 (S.115) which created the Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont and charged that body with studying the statewide status of libraries. The Working Group submitted its report to the House and Senate Committees on Education on November 1, 2023. Equity among Libraries, intellectual freedom, budget challenges due to eBook/audio pricing structure, ADA accessibility, shared collections, and concerns for personal safety. Very thorough and helpful report is available here: <https://libraries.vermont.gov/services/initiatives-and-projects/working-group-status-libraries-vermont>

### General Updates:

- FY25 budget presentation to Selectboard went well on Dec 9. The Selectboard
  - No longer room for Bookmobile parking indoor at Town garage due to new equipment. For this winter, we will be parking behind Town garage under an overhang. Public Works staff bring the Bookmobile in the night before it's needed and clean it off. Working with Town on a longer term solution.
  - Basement flooding: keeping an eye on hole in furnace room floor which is filled with water.

### **Staff Report:** Bonnie Lord Youth Services Librarian and Assistant Director

Bonnie presented a powerpoint that captured the highlights of a very busy year. These included the many activities for the Summer Reading program, "All Together Now" (Big Blue Trunk Kick-Off, Lyric Theater and Very Merry Theater and a Character Party), the ever-popular Beanstack reading challenge, Youth Outreach visits at WCS in the Spring and Fall, ABS in the Spring, and CVU in the Spring and Fall Open House, Outdoor Preschool Music, Pumpkin Carving, Read to a Dog with Rocko and Lola, and Gingerbread House decorating.

Ongoing and upcoming projects include a Diversity Audit, planning for Summer Reading 2024 (Adventure Begins at the Library), more frequent outreach – especially for the upper grades, Pop-up afterschool programming for busy days, a potential graphic novels grant for programming and collection development, all ages sewing workshop, Skype a Scientist, and a retired female scientist to talk about Black holes before the eclipse. Lots of exciting things in store!

As Assistant Director, Bonnie is supervising and scheduling the student assistants. She is also dealing with the Safety Data Sheets.

### **Scoping Study Report**

Karla and Jane were both in attendance for the December 5<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting to answer any questions the Selectboard might have about the library expansion. The Selectboard seemed positive about the proposals for the Library Expansion and Community/Recreation Center. When asked for comments, Karla said how pleased she was with the process and the proposal that came out of the Scoping Study with the input from Black River Design. She also said the hope is that the momentum that has been generated so far can continue and we can have something to vote on in March 2025.

### **New Business:**

- Strategic Plan Status Review: There was a motion made and approved to move the discussion of the Strategic Plan to January's meeting.

- **Board Self-Evaluation:** The results of the Board Self-Evaluation were compiled and most of the responses showed an active and involved Board that finds serving to be a rewarding and satisfying experience. Many Board members ranked professional development/attendance at conferences as a place where they could improve. Jane is going to help in that regard by letting us know when those types of events are scheduled.

**Old Business:** None

**Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

**Next meeting:** January 22, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.