

Town of Hubbardston
Board of Library Trustees

Meeting Minutes Thursday, March 2, 2023

Meeting Location: Slade Building

Members present: Tom Robinson, Bob Cronin, Morgan Brinker, Krista Goguen, Connie Strittmatter (via zoom). Members Absent: Josephine Amato
Also present: Christine Barbera, Library Director

Meeting called to order by Chair Connie Strittmatter at 7:02 PM

AGENDA:

• **Library Director's report**

Chris Barbera presented the March Library Directors Report
Curbside Pickup 2; Patrons 206; Students 145; New Cards 6
Storytime Attendees Adults 31 Children 41 Total Attendees 72
Volunteers' 2 with a total of 4 visits and a total of 8.5 hours for the month
Face Book/Instagram Totals
Facebook Page Reach Feb 2207 / Jan 444 / Dec 448 / Nov 203 / Oct 855 / Sept 1777 / Aug 183 /
July 658 / June 2110 / May 807 / Apr 5465 / Mar 2912 / Feb 3131
Facebook Total Page Likes Feb 807 / Jan 802 / Dec 787 / Nov 785 / Oct 781 / Sept 768 / Aug
740 / July 735 / June 735 / May 725 / Apr 721 / Mar 713 / Feb 695 / Jan 687
Page followers Feb 883 / Jan 878 / Dec 880 / Nov 878 / Oct 874 / Sept 860 / Aug 833 / July 825 /
June ? / May 810 / Apr 805 / Mar 797 / Feb 775
Facebook Page & Profile Visits (formerly Check in to our location) Feb 321 / Jan no info / Dec
177 / Nov 180 / Oct 181 / Sept 181 / Aug 178 / July 178 / June 177 / May 173 / Apr 173 / Mar
173 / Feb 173
Instagram Page Reach Feb 40 / Jan 3 / Dec 26 / Nov 1 / Oct 1 / Sept 0 / Aug 2 / July 16
Instagram followers Feb 58 / Jan 39 / Dec 38 / Nov 35 / Oct 32 / Sept 27 / Aug 26 / July 26 /
June ? / May 18 / Apr 16 / Mar 12. Instagram Profile Visits Feb 21
Most popular posts #1 Storytime "Hugs with Pearl" 1148 / #2 Library open late due to extreme
cold 1003
Wifi connections Feb 89 / Jan 95 / Dec 78 / Nov 136 / Oct 142 / Sept 142 / Aug 93 / July 71 /
June 134 / May 128 / Apr 101 / Mar 124 / Feb 105 / Jan 81

Library Numbers:

Hubbardston Items Circulated (Regardless of location) Feb 1358 / Jan 1504 / Dec 1097 / Nov
1247 / Oct 1308 / Sept 820 / Aug 1218 / July 1232 / June 1138 / May 1569 / Apr 1607 / Mar 1404
/ Feb 1030
All Items Circulated at Hubbardston (Regardless of ownership) Feb 1446 / Jan 1546 / Dec 1143 /
Nov 3058 / Oct 1247 / Sept 735 / Aug 1068 / July 1211 / June 1076 / May 1477 / Apr 3997 / Mar
3652 / Feb 955
Requested Holds Feb 218 / Jan 273 / Dec 187 / Nov 252 / Oct 199 / Sept 246 / Aug 256 / July
269 / June 219 / May 104 / Apr 132 / Mar 213 / Feb 228

Total Number of Patrons registered at Hubbardston 1450

Total Number of Items February 12,117

Overdrive Total Checkouts from Hubbardston Patrons FY2022 4892. For Feb 426 / Jan 491 / Dec 364 / Nov 473 / Oct 456 / Sept 447 / Aug 524 / July 483 / June 437 / May 449 / Apr 381

The library was closed Saturday February 4th due to the extreme cold, Monday February 20th for Presidents Day and Tuesday February 28th due to a snowstorm. The Senior Book Club met on February 22nd and discussed “Crossfire” by Dick Francis. There were 2 in attendance. The “Not Just Knitting” program was scheduled for February 28th, but due to the storm, was canceled. This program will be held twice in March. The display in the Adult Reading Room for February celebrated Black History Month. The Children’s reading room also celebrated Black History Month, as well as President’s Day and Valentine’s Day Storytime is back as the Library. Miss Patricia has organized books and crafts each Wednesday. Parents are requesting a second story time for those children who cannot attend on Wednesday. We are looking at either Monday or Thursday at 1:00 pm. I believe that our current budget can accommodate this addition. Year to date expenses and income for the library accounts as of 1/31/23 were also included. Trustees noted an increase in Instagram Reach and high student visit count and increasing storytime attendance. Trustees support expanding the storytime offerings.

- **Meeting minutes for [February 2023](#)**

Morgan motioned to approve with the CIPC and CPC clarification, 2nd Bob. All Approve.

- **Library scholarship info, rubric, advertising**

- Posters [.docx](#) [.pdf](#). [Application](#)

Trustees reviewed the scholarship materials. The application information will be added to the posters and promotional materials will be posted on the library website and distributed to area high schools. The deadline is June 30.

- **[MBLC Construction Grant](#) (Next steps if we want to apply)**

- Letter of Intent due April 28, 2023
- Formal application due -May 31, 2024

Krista attended the “Letter of Intent” information session which included an overview of the grant program. Connie attended the “Letter of Intent” application training.

<https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/construction/2023-general-info.php>

Eligible Projects for this construction grant include: New construction, addition/renovation of an existing library, or conversion of another building type into a public library, including for a portion of a shared building. The grant funds only pay for a percentage of eligible costs based on a funding formula. Eligible costs include: acquisition of land, planning, design, and engineering services, project management services, site preparation, installation of utilities, construction, fixed capital equipment, mobile shelving, mobile/modular service desks.

Trustees discussed the need for physical accessibility for strollers and others library users. Our current building makes accessibility challenging. The MBLC grant could also be used to build a new building or renovate another building to become the library. Krista contacted the MBLC Library Building Specialists to ask about our specific situation, i.e. that we are primarily seeking funding to make the building more accessible. The Building Specialist indicated we would not

qualify for this grant only for accessibility without a larger building project. We could consider a larger-scale building project, but the timeframe for this grant is short and it would require time and effort of the Library Director and Town Manager which may not be available. Also, Town Meeting approval is required to pay a portion of the construction cost as well as increased on-going staffing and maintenance costs for a larger building.

In 2011, the Library Trustees commissioned an architectural study with addition/renovation plans to enlarge the library and add an elevator and second set of stairs which would also make the 3rd floor accessible. A smaller-scale addition is mentioned in the report but not included in the documentation. Krista will contact the Hale Architectural firm to request those plans. These documents will be shared at a future meeting.

The process to apply for the MBLC Construction grant is to submit a letter of intent by April 28, 2023. The Letter describes the need in terms of the library's services and goals. For example: updating/replacing wiring because the current wiring limits services to the community. A letter of support from the Town Administrator, Planning Dept and Town Treasurer are also required. If accepted to the next level, the library has a year to hire an OPM to develop a plan and submit a final plan for approval. The MBLC grant would be limited to the library portion of the building.

Trustees discussed whether to pursue the MBLC Construction grant for this cycle. We decided we are not in the position to pursue this grant for this cycle. Trustees will consider forming a subcommittee to investigate other types of grants that might better meet our needs, such as those focused on accessibility, such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). [Amherst Public Library](#) got a \$100,000 grant for the creation of accessible parking and entry. The Town Administrator suggested we may be able to be included in the town-wide accessibility grant.

Trustees also discussed reviewing the accessibility of the library website.

- **Policies Review - [Public Services](#)**

Motion to approve revised Public Services policy Morgan, 2nd Bob. All approve.

Policies will be printed and made available in the library and posted on the new library website.

- **Town awarded funds for repairs - Next Steps**

Connie provided updates on these funds:

CIPC – CIPC committee recommended \$6K for a project manager pending approval at ATM. The project manager will make recommendations on how to best organize the sequence and accomplish the range of already funded projects as well as other anticipated projects such as replacing the boiler, Heat pump, window replacement, etc.

CPC Funds & Update Connie attended the Feb CPC meeting and reported:

CPC granted a one year extension for the 2019 Foundation Repair (\$8K) through Dec 2024.

The work on these CPC funded projects needs to be completed this fiscal year (2023):

- First Floor Rehab (9,362.78), including funding for library office rehab.
- Brick Repointing (\$20,000)
- 2020 foundation repair (\$5,000). [Note: The library has two awards for foundation repair, funded in 2019 and 2020.

Tom will submit a request form to Hubbardston DPW for the foundation repair work this Spring. The work must be completed by Dec. 2023. We can also investigate foundation repair companies to hire.

Trustees discussed whether to submit a new proposal to CPC (due 3/9) for \$4000 for additional project management funding. Connie created a [Draft Proposal](#) for the Trustees if we decide to request additional funds for the project manager. Trustees decided to proceed with only the CIPC funds and then determine if additional funding will be needed. Tom suggested we may be able to use Library trust funds if additional project management funds are needed. Tom will look into hiring someone who could start in June when the CIPC funds are available.

- [Electrical Update](#)

Tom met with G.M. Goldsmith Electric Barre and they provided an estimate of \$2,230 for work, pending item whole building surge protector which will increase the price but will still be within our budget. Tom will schedule the work to be done when the library is not open. Will be a stand alone project. (Woodford Electrical not available)

- [Hubbardston Constituent E-Newsletter](#) - need to designate a person to submit content Chris will be the point person for the library to send news and updates to Nate for the newsletter. Trustees requested Chris consider adding an upcoming section to the Director's report

- **Trustee Elections**

Connie announced that two Trustee positions are up for election at this year's town meeting. Josephine will not be seeking re-election. Trustees thank her for her many years of service. Krista will seek re-election.

- **Library Director Performance Review Process (Executive Session)**

Public Meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm to go into executive session (per Title 3 chapter 30A section 21 of open meeting law).

Connie and Morgan met with Library Director Chris Barbera on February 24, 2023 to complete a performance evaluation. Trustees reviewed and discussed Chris' self reflection, performance evaluation and goals for the coming year with a focus on areas with potential for growth. Trustees appreciate Chris's management of the library! Trustees signed off on the evaluation.

Trustees are investigating options for merit pay raises or bonuses tied to the evaluation. We will check with other MBCL libraries to see how they have set this up. Connie will be attending a meeting of Hubbardston committee chairs meeting and she can ask about this

Meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Krista Goguen

Next meeting Thursday April 6, 2023 in the Slade Building.