

Town of Hubbardston

Board of Library Trustees

Meeting Minutes Thursday, March 7, 2024 at 7:00PM

Trustees present: Morgan Brinker, Connie Strittmatter, Krista Goguen, Lucinda Oates, Tom Robinson. **Others present:** Christine Barbera, Library Director, Patricia Lowe, library staff, Alexander Bedard, Quabbin HS student.

Connie Strittmatter called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm at the Senior Center.
Meeting is recorded for posting on Hubbardston website.

Guest: Morgan introduced Quabbin HS Junior Alex Bedard who is attending the meeting for a political engagement activity for his Global Politics class. Trustees and library staff introduced themselves and Connie presented an overview of the Trustees role and duties. Unlike most Town committees, the Library Trustees operate independently of the town administrator to provide oversight of library finances, library policies, strategic planning and maintaining the library building. The Library Director manages the library and reports to the trustees. Alex explained he is investigating the effects of book banning in schools, the effect of limitations on access to information on students, and community responses to library books. Alex asked these questions related to banning books from public libraries. Do you think censoring books can only be beneficial or can it also hurt a community? Do you think people should start pushing for banning due to religious reasons or does this conflict with the First amendment? Do you think having or giving more awareness to parents and how they can help with understanding would lead to less censorship? Library staff and Trustees responded to the questions. Chris explained the library's collection development and book selection policy and procedure if a patron has concerns about a book in the library. The library's goal is to provide access to materials on a wide range of points of view.

AGENDA:

- **Library Director's Report**

Chris Barbera presented the [Library Director's Report for March 2024](#).

Later in the meeting Patricia provided more details about the Storytime Spring Bunny Fundraiser on Wednesday March 20, 2024 at 10:00 am. Parents can take pictures of their children with a bunny for a suggested donation of \$15 and the proceeds will supplement the library budget to provide additional funds for storytime materials. Patricia announced the library received a free Dungeon and Dragons starter kit from Wizards of the Coast. The starter kit includes Digital content, 5 year subscription to the D&D beyond online library and support, and access to the characters sheets, game pieces and books. She will start running one-off (one day) D&D campaigns later this year.

- **Approval of Meeting minutes for [February 1, 2024](#)**

Motion to approve the February 1, 2024 made by Morgan, Tom 2nd. 4-0-1

- **Review Scholarship Rubric**

- [2024 Draft Rubric](#) [Scholarship Form](#) [Scholarship Application](#)

Morgan presented an updated scholarship rubric for multiple applicants. Trustees decided to keep the 5/3/0 weighted scores. Optional interview for tiebreaker will be added to the rubric. Proof of acceptance may be requested before the award is finalized. Trustees discussed whether the scholarship should be open only to current year graduating high school seniors or if others can apply? Such as: people who previously applied, are already in college, or are first time college students who are older (i.e. not just graduating from high school), graduate students? Change the instructions to broaden who can apply for the scholarship: Hubbardston residents who are accepted or continuing their education in an undergraduate, graduate, trade or technical school program. Morgan set up the application in a Google Form so applicants can submit it online. Application deadline will be June 30.

Action item: Morgan will finalize the scholarship documents and advertise the scholarship to the high schools that have Hubbardston residents. We will also market the scholarship with flyers in the library and around town.

- **Resignations**

Bob Cronin has resigned from the Trustees so there are now two 3 year positions open on the Trustees: 2 three-year terms and 1 one year-term positions are. Connie and Tom plan to run for one more 3-year term.

Action item: Trustees are working to identify candidate(s) for the 1-year term.

- **Boiler Payment**

Chris shared the boiler replacement payment of \$23,770 to be paid from the Freetown Trust. There will be an additional invoice to upgrade the connections to accommodate the larger furnace that will also be paid with the balance of the Freetown \$2,700 with any remaining from the State account.

- **Strategic Planning**

- Draft Strategic Planning [Timeline](#)
- [Community Survey](#)
- Marketing the Survey

Connie announced the online community library survey is now open and we have 50 responses already. Paper copies are available in the library (and at the recent election) and 3 have been returned to the library. Chris printed the flier and bookmarks with the link and the QR code and is distributing them to the Town offices, Senior Center, and to the businesses along Main Street. The announcement will be posted on the library social media, library website, and it went out as a town email announcement. The survey will be open until March 31. Josephine Amato will help facilitate focus groups in April. **Action item:** Trustees encourage all residents to complete the survey, whether they use the library or not.

- **Green Energy Grant for Heat Pumps - Next steps**

- Historical Commission [documents](#)

Chris found out the reporting requirements to alert the Historical Commission about the installation of heat pumps and forwarded it to the Town Administrator. The Commission recommends heat pump units be placed as floor units or low on the wall as possible.

Action item: We will need to get the specifics of the heat pump projects and find out if this conflicts with the heat pump installation best practices.

Chris also found out the Mass Preservation Commission has funding available for preservation projects and CPA funds can be used for matching grants.

Action item: Investigate this opportunity for next year.

- **Standing Items:**

- [Review calendar for the Trustees, financial and other activities](#)
- Library Policies Subcommittee
- Town awarded funds for repairs - Next Steps
 - 1st floor rehab
 - Foundation repair
 - [Quote](#)
 - [Email exchange with Belle Masonry](#)
 - [Fence quote](#)
 - Brick Repair

Tom provided an overview of the Quote from Bella Masonry. The quote is for sandbag fencing, brick pointing up to the 6 foot height (to eliminate the need for scaffolding), and building foundation work for a total of \$23,400. Connie explained the Library has two CPC grants for building foundation repair from 2019 and 2020 totalling \$13,000, and a grant for brick repair and pointing for \$20,000. The Foundation repair grants can only be used for that purpose. Connie will find out if the brick pointing fund could be used for foundation repairs. Trustee discussed and agreed with Tom's recommendations that the project be separated into smaller parts by grant amount, location and type of work with the priority of working on the building foundation first. Allocating project components to specific fund accounts is a best practice and will keep the projects under the biddable threshold. The foundation is the priority, then the brick repair work on the right side of the building, both interior and exterior. If we run out of funds, the left side can be repaired at a later time. Tom will also itemize the brick repair/pointing part of the work and find out whether the replacement of 2 window sills are part of this estimate. The cost of the Fence can be paid as part of the grant because it is required for safety. **Action item:** Tom will coordinate with the Building Inspector and the Town Administrator to communicate to the company the project priorities and assign work to the specific grant funds available.

Motion to adjourn made by Connie, 2nd Morgan. Meeting adjourned 8:53

Respectfully submitted by Krista Goguen

Next meeting: Thursday April 4, 2024 at 7 p.m. in the Slade Building.