

Brownell Library Trustees Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 20, 2015

Trustees in Attendance: Christine Packard, Dottie Bergendahl, Linda Costello, Todd Logan, Andy Kolovos, Nina Curtiss, Nicole Yandow, Carmelle Terborgh, Daisy Benson, & Erin Egan

Brownell Staff in Attendance: Wendy Hysko & Hannah Tracy

Absent: Sheila Porter, Marc St. Pierre

Meeting called to order: At 7:09 by Christine Packard

Minutes from 9/22/15: Dottie B. moved to accept minutes as is. Andy seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously accepted as is.

Financial Report:

CD = \$2,689

Trustee Fund = \$1,789

Dottie reported that, as we are 2 months into our budget year, we are on target so far. Dottie moved to acknowledge the financial report. Nicky seconded. Financial report unanimously acknowledged.

General Announcements:

The Trustees were happy to have our new Assistant Director in attendance, Hannah Tracy. Trustees introduced themselves around the table.

Linda wanted to share with us that she recently took a cab ride in which the driver paid the Brownell a high compliment, not knowing of Linda's relationship to the library. We are always happy to hear warm acknowledgement of the Brownell!

The 6th Annual Train Hop will be held on Friday, December 11th, from 6-9pm. Wendy will be letting us know next meeting what we might be able to bring to the Brownell to support the happy mob of people who are expected to visit the Brownell during this event. Last year we believe we had approx.. 1,000 visitors during the 3 hour train hop. Our door counters were acting up at the time, so we aren't sure of the exact number. We would expect at least as many visitors this year.

It was announced that one of our librarians, Viki Kramer will soon be getting married! Her wedding will be held on Halloween, in Las Vegas at the Graceland Chapel. Erin Egan brightly whipped up a homemade wedding card for Viki, and the Trustees passed it around to wish Viki and her future partner well.

Library Director & Staff Announcements:

Andy had wondered how exactly Paige, our dragonfly was recently cleaned. Answer: very carefully with swiffers and TLC.

Discussion ensued of a recent happening on Front Porch Forum, revolving around the Brownell's annual display of banned books in the last week of September. Apparently, one parent posted on FPF her concerns about the display, complaining that we were enticing kids to read bad things. Almost immediately after her post a throng of community members posted back in support of the banned books display. Happily, all posts were thoughtful and carefully worded in support of the banned books list, applauding the spirit behind list and it's support of our 1st amendment rights. Wendy offered to compile the list of postings for those Trustees who missed the FPF thread of community support for the Brownell.

Committee Reports:

Brownell Foundation Report:

Dottie reported that 77 people were in attendance at the Brownell for our first, 1st Wednesday presentation on The costume designs for Downton Abbey.

Friends of the Brownell Report:

Wendy met with Christine Baker of the Friends of Brownell as well as Cathy Shearer of the Brownell Foundation and Brownell Library Trustee Board Chair Christine Packard to discuss the possible merger of the 2 entities, in light of the fact that both are shrinking in size. The move would be for the envelopment of the Friends into the Foundation. This meeting took place on October 19th. Tentative support for the merger was expressed. Cathy had hoped for the merger to be completed by the end of 2015. Dottie expressed doubt that this would happen as quickly as that. There may very well be legal ramifications of such a merger as both are 501C3s, but one is public and other is not. More consideration will need to be done on the matter.

Old Business Report:

Essex Reporter Digitization: This has been a vexing issue for the Trustees on a number of different levels. Wendy has since asked the Brownell Library staff if anyone had any heart to take on the project. While all were in support of the endeavor, no one employee felt that had the time or the expertise to devote themselves to the task.

Christine posed that at this stage we have 2 options: One is to leave the money collected for the digitization where it is, let it earn interest and wait to see if the future provides us with an opportunity to better utilize the money. Option 2 would be to report to Penny the many tangled road blocks we've encountered up to now in the process of researching the digitization of the Essex Reporter, and to offer up some alternatives to utilize the funds we've collected so far.

Andy wrote up the following statement to summarize our predicament:

“At this time, nor into the foreseeable future, board and staff do not feel that Brownell has the staff capacity or adequate funds to pursue the digitization of the Essex Reporter. Essex Reporter Digitization Working group will meet with Brownell Staff to develop alternative proposals for Digitization Funds.”

Farmers Market: Trustees were in attendance for the last 2 open-air farmers markets, to maintain a presence for the Brownell and to give away free books.

We discussed the idea of being in attendance of the farmers market once a month.

Dottie brought up the idea that if this is not possible, that at the very least we should be in attendance at the market when there is an important community event in the near future such as Village Meeting, Town Meeting or Budget voting to help educate and answer questions about the Library, or seasonal library programming to promote.

Dinner Party to celebrate the Brownell Staff: Sheila, Carmelle and Nina have reached out to various restaurants and eateries for estimates for a staff dinner event. Currently they have contacted the Jericho Tavern & Café, Juniors, The Lighthouse, The Windjammer, and it was suggested we might want to look into The Essex, American Flatbread & the Tap House.

Someone mentioned that we might be able to cater a dinner at the home of a Trustee, but it was pointed out that the library staff have expressed their wish to go out to a dining establishment, so we will continue to look for a venue.

New Business Report:

Christine asked that we all consider being in attendance at different community events throughout the year to be a face of the Brownell and represent the Library and all it has to offer. She reminded us that we should try to do more than simply attend the monthly meetings.

The Vermont Library Trustee Conference will be held on Saturday, November 7th. Christine, Linda, Dottie are going to attend and Andy is currently checking on this availability.

Motion to adjourn the meeting:

Nicky motioned to adjourn the meeting. Andy seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:36 pm. All were in favor.

Minutes submitted by Todd Logan.