

Brownell Library Trustees
Meeting Minutes
April 16, 2019

Brownell Trustees in attendance: Christine Packard, Beth Custer, Carrie Egan, Spencer Messier, Andy Kolovos, Sheila Porter, Linda Costello, Dottie Bergendahl, Jeanne Grant, Joe Knox, Helen Donahey

Brownell Staff in attendance: Susan Pierce, Hannah Tracy

Others: Alex Carmichael (community member strategic planning committee); Jennifer Borch, Education Program Coordinator, USCRI

Meeting called to order at/by: 7:00 by Christine

1. Agenda Changes/Deletions: Adding discussion of "Alignment" (aka "consolidation") to New Business; Moving presentation by Jennifer Borch from USCRI (formerly Refugee Resettlement Program) to first order of business

Jennifer Borch presentation:

Original intent for attending meeting was to discuss use of Kolvoord Room for English language classes. Needs a space for classes 2x/week for 90mins. -2 hours, evenings or weekends. Evenings more realistic as teachers not available on weekends. 5-10 students per class. Currently have 12 teachers in the program. 1-1 tutors also needed. 1-1 tutoring takes place in homes; classes need to be accessible by foot or bus. Currently have space in Winooski and Burlington. Needs space in Essex Junction. There is no budget for fees related to available space.

Christine, Hannah and Susan said Kolvoord room not available for that amount of time to be reserved. Space needed for many library programs. Could offer a once-a month reservation for conversation classes or some other kind of program. Interested in working with Jen to figure out how we can support the refugees using the library. Currently working on 5-year strategic plan, so this is an opportune time to be having this discussion.

Much discussion about other ideas. Local elementary schools, local churches (Jeanne will look further into Holy Family Parish hall. Has asked about space there already but there is a fee. Jeanne will see if fee can be waived. Linda also

expressed willingness to work with Holy Family to see if fee can be waived. Helen will check into her church to see if fee could be waived as well.) Other ideas: Teen Center, Senior Center, private homes, Community Room a new police station (probably too far), Essex Community Center, Congregational Church.

Christine said Brownell wants very much to access refugee community and bring families in. interested in finding a way to do that. Suggestions about partnering with, for example Teen Center of Senior Center (if those spaces work out) to bring people in language classes over to library to connect families to it.

Hannah also suggested increasing number of books in other languages in Brownell's collection. Jen mentioned Educational equity grant that is available right now. Money to make resources more equitable and inclusive. Grant request has to come from supervisory union.

Jen went on to give informative presentation about USCRI and refugees in general. Currently a large number of refugees coming to Vermont from the Congo. Resettling in Burlington and Winooski. Last surge of refugees from Bhutan. USCRI offers English language classes, citizenship classes, Pathways to college classes, and ESP (English for Specific Purposes) classes.

High points of Jen's presentation:

Refugees don't necessarily want to be here.

Have been forced out of their country.

They undergo more rigorous screening than any other group we allow here.

Get 3 months of support as a refugee in the US. \$975 per family member. Med care and food stamps for 8 months. Goal is to promote economic self-sufficiency. Employment is 1st priority for resettlement. Get assigned to jobs w/i 3-4 days and hopefully get upgraded as time goes on.

Currently have lowest resettlement goal in history of USRAP.

June 30 is World Refugee Day Celebration in BTV.

2 Orientations per month for volunteers. 2nd Tuesday/Month 12:30-1:30 (May 14); 3rd Wed./month 5:30-6:30 (May 15)

New Clothes for kids needed. Contact USCRI for info.

2. Dottie moved to accept March 19 minutes, Andy seconded. Unanimously approved.
3. Financial report: Joe and Dottie. \$45.02 for survey supplies approved. \$2805.61 in Trustee fund; \$2737.32 in another CD. Spreadsheet reflects about 75% of year; 3 months until end of year. Have excess funds. Report unanimously accepted.
4. Announcements
Trivia Night is Friday, May 3, at 6:30 at Brownell. Do trustees want to organize a team? Helen and Dottie are interested and will connect with each other as time gets closer. Staff or foundation member could also be part of the team. National Honor Society is organizing this event. There's a link on the website to sign up as a team. There will be food!
5. The Young Adult Library Assistant position is open as Mary is retiring. It is a 24 hour a week position; Wed. Fri. evenings and every other Saturday; 14.95 starting salary range. This person works primarily with teens.

Joe commented that in referencing a job at the library we should not specify that we are looking for a young person, as this could be perceived as age discrimination.

Helen suggested ordering fancy Brownell pencils for future needs as the pencils we were going to order for Village meeting ended up being too expensive.

6. Committee reports: Strategic plan process committee:
70 response from Village meeting; about 80 more online; Caitlin Claussen (ADL librarian) has 20 more surveys to give us. We are collecting surveys through the end of the summer. A question was added concerning whether acquiring more books was a priority. Then committee will sift through surveys.

Christine requested extra money to purchase paper for more surveys. Request granted.

Next push is breaking into smaller working groups. Strategic plan anticipated to be completed by end of 2019.

Any trustee or community member can attend any strategic plan meeting.

7. Foundation report: Dottie reported the Foundation met last night. Wondering whether interest on CDs set up by S. Brownell can accrue before siphoning off. We need to look into trust agreement and determine what Brownell's original intent was.

We have a large number of donated books. Discussion about what to do with leftover books that don't sell.

8. Old business: Three trustee portrait options were presented and we chose the one where we are all reading to be mounted next to the display case in front of the circulation desk and to put the more formal one on the screen behind the circulation desk that has rotating pictures.

Village meeting: Nothing to report

Municipal/Social media: tabled

Memorial Day Parade Book Sale

Linda suggested giving some books away alongside the ones for sale in order to get rid of our preponderance of donated books. We decided that might hurt our sales so tabled that idea for now.

For book sale, we arrive at around 8 on the Saturday, May 25, before the parade starts. Set up a tent, bring up tables, bring up better books, and sell them. An additional person will be downstairs selling books. At end of parade, we invite people to fill a bag with books and we charge \$1/bag. Books are available for sale 2 weeks after the parade as well. Discussion about staff and trustees donating their grocery bags for book sale. Carrie brought up the recent legislation re: no more single use plastic bags.

At next meeting, we will go into server room to see what boxes we need for the books. Joe has access to boxes as he works in a warehouse.

9. New Business: Alignment

Goal of Evan, EJ and Essex boards are for two communities to “align,” so Town and Village are separate but have same rules.

Aligning Brownell and Essex Free Library is one of Evan’s goals. Wendy and Trustees are concerned about this for many reasons. Governing structures are different. IT management is different. Essex Free is far behind Brownell regarding technology. Charters would have to change. Wendy’s frustrated with how much of her time it would take her to bring Essex Free to Brownell’s level of technology. That being said, we want to do more with Essex Free. Discussion followed about how to discuss this productively with Evan, the Trustees, and the Selectboard. Wendy is on alignment committee.

Suggestion to discuss this further with Wendy and following up with a meeting with Evan and George Tyler. Evan needs to understand that Trustees run Brownell. George needs to know how much Wendy has been doing for Essex Free since the Director’s death.

Adjournment: Dottie moved to adjourn; Joe seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 9:00.

This meeting will be held at Brownell Library in the Library’s Kolvoord Community Room, 6 Lincoln St., Essex Junction, VT. Accommodations will be provided upon request to the Library Director to assure that library meetings are accessible to all individuals regardless of disability.

Minutes submitted by: Jeanne Grant