

Brownell Library Trustees

Meeting Minutes

June 17, 2025

Brownell Trustees in attendance: Dottie Bergendahl, Beth Custer, Helen Donahey, Jessica Dow, Jeanne Grant, Sheila Porter. Brownell Staff in Attendance: Tracey Durgan, Wendy Hysko. Also present: Regina Mahoney, City Manager.

1. Agenda changes or deletions: none
2. Public to be heard: none
3. Announcements/Introductions: Regina Mahoney, City Manager, and library board members introduced themselves to one another.
4. Minutes of May 20, 2025 meeting. No changes were noted.
Dottie moved acceptance, Sheila seconded, passed unanimously.
5. Financial report – Dottie reported that the checking account balance is \$2,026.64. The CD is at \$2,928.93. The Memorial Day book sale proceeds were a somewhat disappointing \$156.00. Dottie shared that in the past the sale has made as much as \$400+/-, and recently in the \$200s. It was noted that it rained all day. There was discussion about future pricing. Changes will be posted in advance for patrons.

Dottie reviewed the library budget and noted no concerns about going over budget. Tracey reviewed a situation with a vendor that required Brownell to temporarily delay placing book orders. The issue has been resolved, but this forced delay means that some orders that were planned for the current fiscal year may not arrive in time to be paid in this year's budget.

Dottie had a question regarding the furniture line item in the buildings budget v. the furniture line item in the library budget. Tracey explained that the building furniture line item was specifically for new library shelves. This was a special item for this year. The furniture budget line is for the patron furnishings that are part of the library budget, not the buildings budget. Permanent shelving is a buildings item.

Sheila moved acknowledgement of the Financial Report, Beth seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Reports – the board reviewed the Library Director and Staff report. Concerns regarding the threats to the IMLS funding, which supports the Interlibrary Loan system, were discussed. Jeanne mentioned a new program offering of a potluck dinner. The first one will be July 18.
7. Committee reports:
 - Strategic Plan – Jeanne shared the draft with Regina. The next step will be a presentation to the City Council when Karen returns. Dottie suggested that a meeting be scheduled with the Library Board and Foundation to brainstorm how

the Foundation can engage with the Strategic Plan and the 100th anniversary celebration. Discussion of this was moved to the Foundation report.

Draft

8. Work Group reports:

100th anniversary celebration – This group will meet again in August. Patrons are already asking for bags.

Sustainability initiative – diverse recruitment – Jeanne noted that with four trustees missing this should be tabled, but suggested that it might be best addressed by a subgroup and then brought to the full board. There was discussion about a diversity statement. Regina clarified that there is a diversity statement on the hiring section of the city website, and Brownell falls under that statement for its recruitment efforts. The city also has an overall declaration of diversity that was part of a statewide effort. There was discussion about how to promote openings on the board and increase awareness of vacancies well in advance of the signature collection deadline. Dottie noted that the Foundation is a good way to bring in trustees who are not eligible to be elected. The Foundation can also promote volunteer opportunities that can lead to interest in joining the Board. Let Jeanne know if you want to work with Alex on diverse recruitment.

9. Foundation report: Dottie reported on the June 16 meeting. The Foundation is working on writing letters to past donors and past trustees requesting support for the Foundation and announcing the 100th anniversary. Jeanne noted that both Karen and Venessa have fundraising experience and suggested that the Board partner with the Foundation on this. The Foundation would like a trustee to assist with the third Saturday donation days (10 – noon) on a rotation. The next donation days will be:

June 21 – Jeanne Grant

Sept. 20 – Sheila Porter

October 18 – Jess Dow

November – Beth Custer

10. Old Business

- a. Roof/building update – scheduled for replacement in July. Not ideal timing with summer programs but can't be helped. Beth wondered if the Summit Street School lawn could be used if needed for outdoor activities.
- b. Lincoln renovation update – Regina reported that it is moving along. Hoping to move back into the building in August, but it's too early to schedule at this point. Repaving between the two buildings is scheduled for Juneteenth when the library is closed. The driveway is not scheduled to be repaved at this point.
- c. Kolvoord Room use – continues to be busy.
- d. Memorial Day book sale – previously discussed
- e. Essex Pride – wet and cold and really fun. Well-attended despite the weather.
- f. IMLS update – Wendy reported that funding is secure through the current fiscal year but then is under threat depending on what happens with the current bill in congress. Wendy reviewed some options that can be explored to connect all of our libraries statewide or county-wide to create systems for cost-sharing should

the current system lose its federal funding. Vermont pushed to secure its IMLS funding early so is in a better position than some other states that did not.

Meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm. (Sheila moved, Dottie seconded, motion passed unanimously.)

Minutes submitted by: Helen Donahey

Note on Vermont Open Meeting Law - minutes must be taken at every public meeting and must include at least the members present, active participants, motions made, and votes taken. And posted on website and be available by request within 5 days of meeting.