

# Trustee's Report

## Library Trustee Meeting

Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

At the Leverett Library - Chris recording

Present: Hannah Paessel (Library Director). Trustees Chris Condit, Judith Davidov, Rachel Flint, Lisa Sullivan-Werner. Leslie Fisette (from the Friends group), and visitor Doc Pruine, from the Reminder newspaper. Absent: Trustees Seth Seeger and Joan Godsey

### Approval of September 13<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes:

Judith moves to approve the minutes, Lisa seconded, all voted to approve.

### Trustee Business:

Discuss: Increase in Book Banning

[Overview of the problem with a focus on Massachusetts](#)

[What is the role of Library Trustees when there is a challenge?](#)

[Review our policy](#)

[How are Massachusetts libraries preparing and responding?](#)

[Hopkinton in the news](#)

[Proposed Massachusetts Legislation](#)

Judith: The Boston Public Library joined "Books UnBanned" an outfit to supply any banned books to youth patrons from around the country with their ecards. Boston Public Library basically says, in part paraphrased: "Nobody has the right to restrict anyone else from access to books or material they want to read. They can choose to not read anything they want but not to deny material to others". Boston Public Library offers ecards so youths ages 13-26 can check out frequently challenged or banned ebook or eaudiobooks. (see links to attached documents above). At a June 12, 2023 meeting, the Hopkinton Board of Library Trustees voted to make the HPL a Book Sanctuary.

Rachel shared that school libraries have a very different mission: to support the curriculum, and many parents want to have a large voice in what books are available and what their kids have access to.

There are big differences between an unofficial challenge, often dealt with only a discussion with the concerned person, and an official challenge. The latter involves filling

out our request for reconsideration form, which if returned, is brought to the Trustees next meeting for a discussion. The items would be banned only when the challenge is supported by the Trustees.

Hannah reported that a Jeff Raymond who as a former Massachusetts town library trustee sent out records requests to each library in the state to document challenges and/or banned books. He is documenting the extent of the problem in Massachusetts at: <https://www.masstransparency.org/>

Two bills are up for review in the State Legislature, one by Julian Cyr which focuses on school libraries and another by Jacob Oliveira (SD279) to tie state funding for libraries to their adoption of the American Library Association's Bill of Rights.

Leslie thought we were already dealing with these book banning issues. Hannah suggested one of the things that causes folks to want to ban books is that they don't understand our mission. Our mission statement is in Leverett Library Long-Range Plan. *Leverett Library is a dynamic community center that enriches people's lives and supports lifelong learning. The library responds to the community's recreational, cultural, informational, and educational needs by providing print and non-print materials, technological resources, and programs, for children and adults.*

Judith wanted to know if there was something we could do to help people struggling with the banning issue. The ALA (American Library Association) is available to supply support.

Basically, the discussion ended with a mutual understanding that we would keep revisiting the issue as needed in future meetings.

### **Discuss: Budget Priorities an early conversation**

We decided to table this to a future meeting to provide time and brainpower for an in-depth discussion.

#### [Long Range Plan](#)

Priorities 2020-2025

- Increase community awareness of and engagement with library services and resources
- Provide opportunities for staff development and increase staff and volunteer capacity
- Expand digital resources and maintain high quality print and nonprint collections
- Maintain clean, safe, attractive, and comfortable facilities and grounds, and embed

sustainable practices into our building and grounds operations

- Generate a schedule of programming that attracts audiences and appeals to a variety of user demographic groups.

### *Potential future projects*

Services/Programming/Youth Librarian 15 hours per week (about \$15,000)

Bathroom ventilation fans (\$1,819) - essential

Add automatic door openers for one bathroom and Community Room

Add use indicators for bathrooms (\$10,702 for above two items)

We discussed the staffing structure at the library and the strengthened services/programs we could provide with an additional staff member. We will revisit this further at our next meeting.

Hannah noted that in Hatfield they built a teen volunteer group to build access to youth.

Holiday Party for volunteers?

Probably not due to on-going COVID concerns, maybe do the same we did as last year, with thoughtful gifts to volunteers.

### **Updates:**

Building:

- One HVAC unit had a bad blower. It has been repaired. There is no indication that this is symbolic of future troubles.
- New alarm was successfully installed.

Grounds

*New front garden: installed! Dawn is now watering it thanks to the support of the FoLL.*

Other - None brought up

### **Director's Reports:**

Financials:

### Account Balances

Account	Appropriation	Amount remaining	%
General Expenses	\$29,142	\$18,423	
Wages	\$65,770	\$48,008	
Building	\$23,870	\$21,764	
State Aid	n/a	\$14,953.55	
Gift	n/a	\$94,534	
Revolving - Fines	n/a	\$525.18	
Revolving - Printing/other	n/a	\$904.09	

### Circulation & Attendance:

	September 2022	September 2023
CWMARS	2,443	2,619
Overdrive	634	579
Kanopy	37	123
Craftsy	0	5

\*Our patrons have made 133 accounts on Kanopy so far.

	September 2022	September 2023
Attendance	789	905
Programming	242	254

## Staff & Volunteers:

Everyone is amazing!

No other updates at the moment.

## Meetings & Programs:

- Grants
  - Cultural Council Grants submitted: Lotus Flower Craft by the Korean Spirit and Culture Promotion Project, Crafting Wild Soda workshop, Yo Yo Guy for the SRP kick-off.
  - Other LCC possibilities include ASL intro class(es), Copper Bookmark Workshop, Sourdough or Cheese making workshops, and possibly a Capoeira workshop. Also wrote letters of support for a drumming workshop by the Wendell Warriors and a pollinator lecture by John Root.
  - Collaborating with school on a possible grant to bring Meg Medina, children's author and 2023 National Ambassador for Young People's Literature
- Strength Training
  - Hoping to collaborate with COA and/or Rec Committee to offer more sustainably.
- 250<sup>th</sup> Cake celebrating the town's founding is coming soon.

## Technology:

Other:

### **Friends of the Leverett Library**

#### *New Community Gathering Spaces behind Library*

It is hard to get our minds around such a big project. Here is a possible timeline to help clarify the process based on the plan you saw last time. Please see attached document "Outdoor expansion planning.docx" which includes an 18-step flow sheet of the process. The project scope of project will become clearer when we review the UMass Conway School design documents, due in January 2024. Among other things, the official planning process should only start when the fundraising has reached a minimum of \$7,000 and project funding feels secure (which has a goal of \$10K to reach the fund-matching criteria).

We need to keep in mind that the main thing the anonymous doner for the matching grant wanted was to grow to the endowment, but the friends want to expand the outdoor footprint of the library, feeling that would provide a more concrete (and

needed) goal. We note we have students from the UMass Conway School design putting together a proposal for things we might do.

We talked about what the "outdoor footprint" is all about and that it is important to maintain a transparent footprint throughout to build town support from all parties.

Friends will have Holiday Baskets again. Please bring in any empty re-useable baskets from last year!

Brainstorming for Friends fundraising: offer a Business Membership to the Friends, find folks who have "summer houses" on the lakes and the like to auction off for time - it was a lucrative source for the "new" library fundraising project we enjoyed at the end of the last century ;^).

Old Business

Chris moved we quit at 8:22, Lisa seconded, and all voted to do it.

**Next Meeting: November 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.**