

Craftsbury Public Library

Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting

September 6, 2022

6 – 7:30 p.m.

Next meeting

The next meeting will take place Monday, October 3rd

Present

Ned Houston, Janice Andrus, Allison Van Akkeren, Steve Moffatt, Ailynne Adams, Marc Ciecierski, Susan O'Connell (Library Director), Lise Erickson

Absent

Christina Rumery, Chris McDonnell

Financial Report

Miscellaneous fundraising is a bit of a catch-all category on the financial report - it looks good. The book sale brought in some great funds. Andrea volunteered a huge amount of time sorting books for the books ale. Allison will write some thank you notes to the primary book sale volunteers. Steve took a huge load of books to Stowe recycling. Apparently, they would like you to call before you show up with a truck load of textbooks, but they took them. It cost about \$10 to recycle a truckload. Other extra books were donated to a St. Johnsbury organization that sends books to service members.

Donations is tracking nicely. Grants looks pretty good. We haven't used investment income yet. Normally we use investment income in Jan or Feb when we're not generating any revenue, but we did not do that this year.

In summary the expenses and revenue look pretty good – as expected. There is a small shortfall (about \$1,000 in the hole) but there is a lot of back and forth in there.

The new bookkeeper, Janice Leonard, is working out well. Having a bookkeeper employed makes the Treasurer position sustainable. Janice is following up on looking in into our unemployment insurance. We've made some significant progress in legitimizing some of the library business practices. Adding benefits for the director, having a bookkeeper on staff, and clarifying board responsibilities have all been great improvements. Steve moves to accept financial report. Allison seconds. Unanimous approval.

Librarian's Report

- Reporting on library circulation is now broken out by regular circulation, Kanopy and Green Mountain Library Consortium (GMLC, audiobooks and eBooks). Kanopy: by June we were over the anticipated rate of use for a library our size. We're currently limiting usage to 5 views per month, per person. If the demand stays high, we could

change the current per person usage or we could increase our spending in this regard. GMLC: 3 months of data on Overdrive is steady. This service has been available to our patrons before the new cards, we had just previously not had our data broken out by library.

- Summer was busy and steady. The usage in summer is different. A number of folks posted up for a week of remote work while visiting family. Lots of families were taking home big stacks of summer reading.
- The library has issued 331 of the new library cards. Some are library card upgrades; some are new patrons.
- We will be starting a new audiobook service next month called the palace project. This is a program being offered through the VT Dept of Libraries. We were hoping to be in the first cohort so that it could roll out with the library card/number upgrades and other digital services. It should be coming soon and could give some benefits that aren't currently available to us through Overdrive/GMLC. The library could potentially buy audiobooks if we wanted to make them available to a greater number of our patrons at once, for special programming.
- It was great to have the book sale moved to 3 weeks of donations instead of a rolling donation. We want to be sure to promote this next year – make sure folks know that they can plan for August to donate their books. Other benefits of the book sale are that we get to replace some of our worn books with some newer copies from the donations. There is also a nice stack of children's books set aside for Trunk or Treat.
- We were sad to see Prin go. Paula Davidson has replaced Prin and we are still working out what her hours will be. That will be a board vote – see below under Personnel.
- The kayaks have been a huge hit! Seems like once they've tried it, folks come back. A loan is for 5 days, like other loans from the Library of Things.
- Community collaborations continue. The Big Tree Contest is a collab with the Conservation Commission. We're talking about new collaborations with Sterling library. Considering maybe a sterling Storytime in the future.
- Due to staffing shortages, there is no reach program at Craftsbury this year. The library will try to pick up more programming for students after school. The library will try to help support the community and fill the gap.
- "First Amendments Auditors" have been filming patrons and employees in public buildings in Vermont. The mission seems to be to provoke people into saying something that is not in alignment with the constitution, e.g., "You can't film here." The library is a limited, or non-public forum and we must uphold patron privacy. We are looking to see if our missions and policies should be amended in any way to further protect patron privacy from the possibility of these "audits." At this point we think we're okay.
- COVID Update: At this point cases remain low, and weather remains warm, so we are keeping things the same.

Working Group Reports

Personnel

Paula will be working variable hours each week. Prin is serving as a substitute, but Paula will be acting as substitute more often. Ned crafted a motion based on Susan's recommendation. The motion is to allow Paula's hours to be adjusted according to workload, up to the agreed upon annual total which averages out to 10 hours a week. The motion has unanimous approval.

Art & Artifacts

We started doing research on pieces by contacting artists, family members, etc. We will make a document available to board members with a summary and history of each piece. Decided to order plaques for the pieces that are missing them. We are looking in to how best to insure them. One way to do that is to make a valuation based on what we would spend to replace the piece. Steve and Susan remember that there is some sort of artwork rider already in our policy.

Anne Williams generously donated a Frances Colburn painting that had belonged to her husband.

Plants and Property

Still need to update the list of generic maintenance – window screens still need fixing or replacing. We are looking at a solar array for our roof (this is something that would involve the ARPA funds, see ARPA Project below). The toilet was fixed through a group effort. The lights have been upgraded! The lights, in toto, are the biggest energy user in the library. Let the record show that Steve says he has upgraded many lights to LED and has never seen a marked difference – he's skeptical that this will actually make much of a savings.

Books for Babies

From the last 3 months we have two new bag deliveries to make to new babies. Marc is going to deliver those. We still need more special knit items to complete bags. Lise mentions that a "Knit for Babies" knitting group would be a great idea. Could get a knitting group together to make baby things, once a month – with donated yarn.

Resignation from the board

Christine McDonald has resigned from the board. She's busy with her book tour. We need to do some thinking about board members. We need to replace Mitch, Christine and Ned. Ned's term as President will be up at the end of the year. Mitch's replacement will be elected at next Town Meeting Day. We will form a working group at our next meeting. They will bring board recommendations forward at the following meeting. A discussion to be added to the agenda for next meeting: do we really need 10 board members? This is a big board for the size of the organization/budget, etc. If we have a smaller board with our volunteers a little more formally organized, then that may fit the need.

ARPA Project

The power goes out, the library is not functioning anymore - what do we do? The first idea was to get a generator. Could there be a quieter, better solution? Yes, a battery bank that comes on that would power the circuits that we determine are important – some lights, heat, computers. We could charge the batteries off the grid, could charge it with a generator – but the option we’re looking at is to charge it with a solar array. With that array we could keep the batteries charged up. Right off the bat we could donate the extra energy to something else – the Craftsbury Food Pantry?

Later on, we could use the excess energy to power a heat pump. We put together a plan – if we hired someone it could run \$40k, with volunteers we could do it for \$25k. With “tax credit alternative” it could come in around \$20k. The ARPA request is for \$10k, to match the \$10k the library could contribute from the budget. They had to submit the ARPA proposal before the deadline so there was not time to have a full board meeting. Ned makes a motion to request authorization to move ahead on this project contingent to securing the ARPA, and/or other, funding. Jan seconds. Unanimous approval.

Adjournment

Steve moves to adjourn. Lise seconds. Unanimous approval. Meeting adjourned at 7:38 pm.