

Library Trustees' Monthly Meeting January 6, 2025

Present: Diane Buzzell, Tom Skowron, Ashley Place, Carol Kelley, Brianna Lamb, Gabby Holmes, Harbour Fraser Hodder

Remote: Peg Bodine, David Maher

Call to Order: 6:00 P.M.

- **Interview Preparation:** Sample questions were distributed to the board. Each board member asked at least one question, with follow ups as necessary.
- **Interview candidate Lia Reilly for the position of Library Director:** Lia answered a variety of questions ranging from how to encourage more patrons to use the library, especially middle and high school students, to her experience in building maintenance, especially an older building. After the candidate left, **a motion was made and seconded to offer the Library Directorship to Lia Reilly contingent on positive feedback from her references.** The board felt that Lia would be a good fit as Director. Her clear communication skills and enthusiasm to become involved with the community will welcome patrons. **The motion passed unanimously.**
If a second meeting is needed the Board Chairperson will schedule one for the following week.
- **Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the minutes of the **December 2, 2024 Board Meeting.**

Librarian's Report

January 6, 2025

Circulation:

		2023	2024
December 2024	All Items circulated from this library	1552	1097
	NB Items circulated	1365	1130
	Checkouts Overdrive	597	590

WIRELESS STATISTICS:

NO STATISTICS AVAILABLE FOR THIS MONTH. CISCO MERAKI HAVE BEEN CONTACTED ABOUT SWAPPING EMAIL ADDRESSES AND HAVE NOT RESPONDED YET. THE OLD EMAIL WAS AMY'S AND PREVIOUSLY SHE HAD FORWARDED THE EMAIL EACH MONTH.

The Interim Library Director noted that the items circulated from the library were down in December 2024, as compared to December 2023. Because of staff shortages and the holidays, the library was closed more days than usual. In addition, the lower level, which houses the nonfiction materials, continues to be off limits to patrons.

Financial Report:

<u>Account Balances as of:</u>	9/30/24	10/28/24	11/25/24	12/23/24
Salary Account	70,213.58	64,575.16	58,992.93	53,626.58
Library Expense Acct.	31,271.70	30,075.13	19,338.17	16,923.54
State Grant	2,100.86	2,100.86	416.27	6,295.37
Gift Account	1,347.69 970.75 (Salem Bequest)	1,047.38 970.75 (Salem Bequest)	506.97 970.75 (Salem Bequest)	5,896.97 970.75 (Salem Bequest)
Child Book Gift	625.29	625.29	625.29	625.29
Trust Funds (expendable)	14,595.48	14,595.48	14,595.48	14,095.48

*We received our state aid grant of \$7,629.53 in December (MBLC increased overall state aid grant line by 14% this year) as well as \$5,000 from the Friends to go toward the gift account.

The trust fund decreased by \$ 500 reflecting a payment to BiblioTemps for the search for a permanent library director. The Interim Director shared the library's budget request which will be sent to the Select Board and Finance Committee.

December Activities and Programming:

12 people attended the Craft Night for Adults, led by Nancy Lamb. Participants made simmer pot jars.

The Movie Discussion group was not held this month, but copies of *A Christmas Story* (1983) were available for checkout at the desk.

The Book Club discussed *Gertrude Bell: Queen of the Desert, Shaper of Nations* by Georgina Howell on December 3, via hybrid format.

Storytime was hosted three times this month, with a total attendance of 18 children and adults. Art Club had two meetings this month with 5 participants. No one attended scheduled Thursday LEGO Club, but the LEGOs were used outside of this time, throughout the month.

Community Connections held their Read, Build, Play program on December 4 for Pre-K aged children. This program continues to be well attended and Community Connections programs are scheduled for every Wednesday in January.

A new tabletop gaming group began to meet this month and holds weekly meetings in the YA room.

The Friends Letters to Santa event was well attended again this year. Lots of letters were written and children had a craft table to decorate their own ornaments. Ms. Q's piano students played some holiday music and the Friends held the third annual cookie walk.

A First Night event was held at the library on December 31st from 2-4pm. Diane Buzzell led Trustees, Friends, and other volunteers in setting up the library for an 1890s inspired New Year's Eve. Kathleen McClintock generously donated party supplies and a cardboard cutout for photos. Volunteers dressed in vintage clothing, sparkling cider and cookies were offered, and a board featuring old fashioned New Year's traditions was displayed. This was the town's first time doing a New Year's event and participants responded positively, so we can expect to plan something similar next year.

Other News:

The FY26 budget request was submitted to the town on December 30. Several lines were increased due to rising

costs.

The library received 3 Cultural Council grants during the most recent grant cycle. One was for the Graveyard Girls program, which occurred in November. The second is a multi-day program hosted by Castle Nitor in which they will demonstrate old fashioned crafts and skills. The third is a children's gaming program scheduled to coincide with the summer reading program. We thank the LCC for these grants!

The Ad Hoc 130th Committee did not meet in December.

Our collection for the food pantry exceeded our expectations and we managed to fill over six large bags with food, paper products, and hygiene supplies. Thanks to all who donated!

A new assortment of 130th anniversary t-shirts was received, in sizes up to 3XL and in maroon, purple and gray.

Coming events:

Thursday, January 9 at 6PM: Craft Night for Adults will feature DIY Snowmen, led by Gabby

Tuesday, January 21 at 1PM: Children's Historical Storytime: Emily Upham's Revenge

Thursday, January 23 at 6PM: Movie Discussion Group: *While You Were Sleeping* (1995)

Tuesday, January 28 at 7PM: Book Group: *Indian Horse* by Richard Wagames

Every Wednesday at 10AM: Community Connections programs for young children

Building Maintenance:

Major leaks and puddles were recorded during December, mainly in the director's office and the Children's Room electrical closet. Buckets needed to be placed to catch water and devices needed to be unplugged in the office as it was a safety hazard. The leak from the office traveled to a ceiling tile downstairs that needed to be removed as it was saturated.

The Board will be submitting a Capital Improvement Request/Report, highlighting the library's structural issues. This includes detailed descriptions of all damaged interior areas, with accompanying photos.

Renaud and an associate from Edge Automation LLC are scheduled to work at the library on January 8 in order to regain client control over the HVAC system. This project was quoted at \$3,019. This will hopefully reduce costs in the future and give us better on-site access to our systems.

Humidity continues to drop in the basement, still closed off to patrons. The average is now around 34%. Staff has decided to turn off lights in the downstairs area in order to save on the cost of electricity. If staff need to go downstairs to retrieve a book, they may turn the light on.

On December 7, 2024 the Library Building Maintenance Committee (LBMC) held its Annual Walk Through. Ellen Smith and Brianna Lamb filed a report (see below). More people are needed for the LBMC. This will be discussed at another meeting.

EXTERIOR–

- Front porch lights not working
- Stain on porch ceiling and some peeling paint in the corner near the door
- Back lot lights: some work and some don't

UPPER LEVEL—

- One recessed light and one large light burnt out in craft room
- Severe peeling of paint on back wall of craft room due to leaks
- Water stains on ceiling tiles near elevator due to leaks
- Several recessed can lights out in circulation area
- One pendant light is out over circulation desk and two in play area
- 3 recessed can lights are coming out of the ceiling
- Several recessed can lights are out in main book area
- Peeling paint beginning to crack/chip on wall near DVDs
- Severe peeling and exposed slats near old staircase; major leaks
- Peeling paint over “stage” area is due to leaks
- Severe peeling and cracking due to leaks in service/electrical closet
- *Tom Skowron checked the heating units in the attic on Mon. December 2 and found them to be in working order. He will check again on the first below zero day to make sure they are still working.

MAIN LEVEL—

- Ceiling light over fiction stacks is burnt out
- 2 recessed can lights burnt out over circulation desk
- Tech service lights are out/blinking
- Lights over paperback section and on Elvira Haston’s portrait burnt out/blinking
- 1 light out in chandelier above old entrance
- Several bulbs burnt out in chandeliers in reading room
- Fire panel is an ongoing issue, alarm going off randomly
- Fire extinguisher inspection: new extinguishers needed
- Elevator inspection: February 2025
- Defibrillator: new battery

LOWER LEVEL— Off limits to patrons and staff due to air quality from Feb. 2024 water heater burst

- 4 lights out over stacks
- Water stain on ceiling near staff room due to leaks
- Several water stains in meeting room ceiling
- Several lights out in meeting room
- Old storage/stairway area has severe peeling and leak issues

Respectfully submitted,

Brianna Lamb, Interim Director

Old Business:

- **Ad Hoc Long Range Plan Update:** The Long-Range Plan has been completed and will be submitted by the end of January.
- **Ad Hoc 130th Birthday Celebration:** The Committee did not meet in December. The board thanked Diane Buzzell for her outstanding work in organizing the library’s participation in North Brookfield’s First Night. With less than a month’s notice, she assembled people in period costumes, organized games, goodies and displays of traditions of New Year’s Eve in years past.
- **Capital Improvement Planning Committee:** A 2025-2026 Fiscal Year Capital Improvement Request Form for Roof Repair and Restoration was filed and a request to the CMRPC for assistance was submitted. The board thanked the chairperson for the detailed report of the building’s structural needs.
- **Lower Level:** The lower level remains closed to patrons. An insurance claim for water damage caused by the malfunctioning water heater was filed on November 21, 2024. To date Ashley Barre, the town’s

liaison between the insurance company and the selectboard and the library board of trustees, has not heard from the insurance company.

- **Emergency door and ARPA funding:** Work on the emergency door is now complete. ARPA funding paid for the installation of the door. It was noted that Haston Library received approximately \$30,000 from the ARPA fund for various projects.
- **HVAC and temperature controls:** This was addressed in the Library Director's report.

New Business:

- **FY 2026 budget:** This was addressed in the Library Director's report.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to adjourn the meeting the meeting at 7:26 P.M.

**Respectfully submitted,
Carol Kelley
Secretary**