

Minutes of the Library Trustees Meeting
Bushnell-Sage Library
March 9, 2022

Present: Pat Levine, Martin Mitsoff, Joan Powers, Deena Caswell, Sig Spiegel and Harold Hastings.

The meeting was called to order at 8:31 by Pat. Last month's minutes were approved as written on a motion by Martin, seconded by Pat, with all in favor.

Deena presented her Director's Report (attached) for our consideration. It covered in detail the library activities for the month of February. Discussion followed around all points. Of special note are all the programming partnerships that are currently running using various library spaces. These include South Berkshire Kids, the Railroad Street Youth Project (both their Q Club and their youth of color group). Added most recently is Cadmus Lifesharing's use of the kitchen as a learning space for their teen and adult clients. Also, coming in April is the first youth art show featuring a 10 year old artist.

Regarding Covid-19 protocols, in line with state and local guidance, the library will shift from a mandate for mask-wearing to personal choice, with emphasis on respect for others' decisions.

All town departments were asked to create a 5 year capital needs list. Deena had begun one and it was added to by group consensus. Among items on the list are carpet replacement, an accessible path around the back yard, and upgrading of the HVAC system.

Besides engaging in Zoom webinars, Pat encouraged Deena to take advantage of professional development opportunities such as the American Library Association and Mass Library Association conferences once they are in-person again.

Harold shared that this was a very good year for fundraising for the Friends and they are looking forward to supporting library programming in the coming year.

The next meeting was scheduled for April 13 at 8:30 in person at the library.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 on a motion from Martin, seconded by Harold and agreed to by all.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Powers

Bushnell-Sage Library
Director's Report for March 9, 2022

We're looking forward to the spring and preparing for changing COVID restrictions.

The library's FY23 budget, with recommendations by the town administrator, was presented to the finance committee. I was present, along with members of the trustees and public supporters, to discuss our need for a full-time children's program coordinator.

I also presented at the March board meeting of the Sheffield Historical Society to discuss the upcoming Smithsonian Crossroads exhibit. Members of the board were invited to be part of the various planning subcommittees and extend the invitation to other community members.

We partnered with the historical society to host a youth program on creating Victorian valentines. The program had to be rescheduled due to a power outage in town, but was successfully hosted the next weekend. Jen Owens said the kids used all provided materials and families enjoyed the class. You can see some of the completed valentines on display at the Old Stone Store. This program was funded by the Sheffield Cultural Council. We look forward to continuing to partner with the historical society on programming.

We are in the process of scheduling our first meeting of the Crossroads programming subcommittee. Monthly trainings with Mass Humanities are ongoing. We had a one-on-one conversation with project scholar Leo Hwang to discuss early thoughts on the community conversation portion. Maggie from Dewey Hall was able to join me for a training session on how to craft questions for community conversations.

As groups begin to feel comfortable meeting in the library again, we are continuing to expand our partnerships. South Berkshire Kids is hosting a new Tuesday program for families, "Sheffield Play." Railroad Street Youth Project (RSYP) continues to have their Q Club meet on Thursday afternoons. I'm meeting with Regina from RSYP this week to discuss hosting their group for youth of color at the library. Cadmus Lifesharing will utilize our kitchen on Tuesday afternoons to teach basic cooking skills to their teen and adult clients with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Our environmental sensors, provided and funded by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, are now up and running. One monitor is located with the General Barnard uniform and one is in one of the local history cabinets on the second floor. These monitors will alert us to temperature changes, humidity, water, and mold.

This month's take-and-make craft is origami hot air balloons. This craft will help children develop fine motor skills, learn shapes and patterns, and follow step-by-step instructions. Stefanie has introduced some new shelving and areas for families to place unwanted books to help us keep the children's area in order. We also look forward to bringing back StoryWalks to the back lawn.

Our first youth art show is scheduled for April – the featured artist is 10 year-old Celia Lennex. She will host a reception on Friday, April 8 from 4:30 – 7 p.m.

This past month, members of the circulation team have watched readers' advisory webinar on genres like true crime and narrative non-fiction, to better help them recommend materials to patrons. I took part in training sessions on introduction to strategic planning, and writing impact statements for grantwriters.

Respectfully submitted,
Deena Caswell