

**Town of Belmont, NH
Belmont Public Library (BPL)
Library Trustee Meeting Minutes
August 13, 2024**

Attendance:

Mary Charnley, BPL Trustee
Shela Cunningham, BPL Trustee via Google Meet
Terry Elliott, BPL Trustee (arrived 6:47 pm)
Jessica Ellis-Hopkins, BPL Trustee
Hillary Horn, BPL Trustee via Google Meet
Eileen Gilbert, BPL Director

Call to order: 6:07 pm at the Belmont Public Library (BPL).

New Business:

Prior Meeting Minutes: Mary motioned to accept the Meeting Minutes of July 8, 2024. Jessica seconded. All voted in favor.

Director's Report: Mary motioned to accept the report; Hillary seconded. All voted in favor.

Director's Financial Report:

Northway Bank: Eileen and Mary had interactions with staff at Northway Bank in early August resulting, we think, from the bank upgrading computer systems and their access to BPL's accounts as part of that work. In following up with the bank, there was confusion among bank personnel causing concern and work for the Director and Trustees. The Director has confirmed that the account balances are as they should be. The Trustees and BPL Director are evaluating a follow-up response to the bank re this situation.

Eversource: There is continuing concern about the potential impact to the BPL budget from the anticipated rate hikes proposed by Eversource, especially as it is unclear specifically what the increase will be. Hillary accessed the Eversource web site looking for specific information about the proposed increases as it relates to the library, but it did not provide the info needed. Eileen will call Eversource to request what the specific increase to BPL will be and when it is to take effect. This is especially important as we are beginning the budget cycle for 2025.

Budget: Jessica highlighted how well we are doing at staying on budget: we are 58.5% through the budget at 58.3% of the year. Mary motioned to accept the financial report; Jessica seconded. All voted in favor.

Mileage Reimbursement: At last month's meeting, Mary made the motion to transfer \$250 from Programming to Dues and Professional Development to cover mileage reimbursement for professional development. Jessica seconded. All voted in favor. Eileen to implement this. **Status:** Pending

Budget Process for 2025 Budget: Discussion included significant dates (the deadline for the worksheet is 9/13), the Capital Reserve request and its wording on the 2025 warrant article, as well as potential impact of any library expansion.

Friends of BPL: The Friends have developed a formal document and budget for their Membership Drive which is a high priority in light of the need for volunteers.

The BPL Staff and Trustees will be meeting with the Friends of BPL on Tuesday, September 17, 2024 at 6pm at the library. Mary motioned and Jessica seconded that paid non-exempt Library Staff attending this meeting will be paid for their time.

Separately, the Friends will be distributing fliers at the High School, Middle School, and Grade School to encourage participation. The Director will begin providing her monthly reports minus the financials to the Friends Committee Board Members (only). The Director also agreed that the library staff will accept applications/donations to the Friends on their behalf.

Other:

Patron Request: Lisa Fontaine has requested the establishment of a third 'Little Free Library'. There general agreement that this was an idea to pursue, but after the budget process has been accomplished.

Adult Evening Programs: There was discussion about the minimal attendance at the once-a-month evening programs sponsored at the library this summer. This is in contrast to the well-attended daytime programs held at the library. Given that this was a topic which may need time and effort to come up with a successful plan, this is being tabled until after the budgeting cycle is complete.

Old Business:

ALA Grant Status: We are in Round 2 of the grant. As a result of the patron feedback requesting better lighting in the Library, Eileen will contact Gove Electric, our current electrical services provider, to see if they are willing/able to provide these improvements. A trustee should also attend the meeting with Gove. **Update:** A quote was received from Gove Electric effective for 30 days. However, additional questions have been raised by the Trustees about the work to be done. It is felt that another meeting must be held with the contractor to better understand the impact of the work on the building especially in consideration of it being on the Register of Historic Buildings.

Communication Charges: As a result of the phone and fax line conversion (see last month's minutes), there was discussion about the amount currently being deducted for communication charges from the Town's allotment to BPL. Eileen to speak with the Town Finance Director.

New Federal Disability Standards: Piper Webs, the company which created and maintains the BPL web site, is starting to inform its clients about the new standards which will affect the BPL website. This includes a webinar for the professional staff and an individual review to be done of the BPL website. **Status:** Piper Webs has not yet provided further info re the webinar or review plan. Eileen to follow-up with Piper Webs.

Public Comment Policy: Jessica presented a draft Public Comment Policy for review and discussion. The suggested changes included reducing the number of minutes, a 24-hour written request form with specific information and why it was needed. This will be reviewed again after the changes are made. **Status:** Shela made the motion to accept the revised policy; Hillary seconded. All voted in favor.

NHLTA: Mary, Shela, and Terry attended the Annual NH Library Trustee Association (NHLTA) Conference on June 5, 2024 in Concord, NH. They will be sharing information from the sessions they each attended at a future meeting. **Status:** Due to a full agenda this will be continued at a subsequent meeting.

Belmont Public Library Maintenance:

The 'Property Maintenance ID, Track and Review Form' is a paper log sheet dedicated to keeping track of structural issues of BPL as they arise. **Status:** This appears to be helpful and is being incorporated into regular use by the staff.

Internal Woodwork Repair: The woodwork over the fireplace has suffered water damage over the years. A quote has been received from the contractor recommended by BPS. Per Tom Garfield, Duffy Fund Trustee, the quote for

the completed repairs will be submitted to Dave Caron to process for payment by the Duffy Fund. **Update:** The repairs are scheduled to begin September 17.

BPL as Cooling Center: There was discussion of the extreme heat we have been having and the potential effect on residents who may not have air conditioning. As a result, Eileen to talk to Alicia about the potential use of BPL as a 'cooling center' for Town residents. **Update 8/13:** With the lower temperatures there is no longer a need for this.

Other

Library Expansion: Previously, Jessica developed a set of criteria for evaluating the firms under consideration for the library expansion project. After discussion about how these criteria could be quantified, we agreed, as a first step, to develop a spreadsheet where each firm would be rated per criteria. These will be based on the interviews held as well as written materials provided by the firms. Meantime, Eileen is setting up interviews with two more firms with Trustee participation. **Update:** There has been no response from the additional firms contacted.

Jessica made the motion to end the meeting; Mary seconded. All voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned: 8:30 pm.

Upcoming meetings: A special working meeting to review the proposed budget will be held **on Tuesday, August 27 at 6 pm** at the library. The next regular Belmont Public Library Trustee meeting will be held on **Wednesday, September 4, 2024 at 6pm** at the library. The BPL Staff and Trustees will be meeting with the Friends of BPL on **Tuesday, September 17, 2024 at 6pm** at the library.

Mary Charnley

Shela Cunningham

Jessica Ellis-Hopkins

Terry Elliott

Hillary Horn