



Board of Library Trustees Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 19, 2021 6:30pm

This meeting was held online via "Zoom" pursuant to NH Executive Order 2020-04, Section 8 and NH Emergency Order #12, Section 3.

Start here:

1. **Call to Order** – Opening Statement and Roll Call

The following statement was read aloud by Kathy Parenti:

"Good Evening, in coordination with the Board of the Library Trustees, I am declaring that an emergency exists and we are invoking the provisions of NH RSA 91-A:2, III (b). Federal, state, and local officials have determined that gatherings of 10 or more people pose a substantial risk to our community in its continuing efforts to combat the spread of COVID-19. In concurring with that determination, we also find that this meeting is imperative to the continued operation of Town government and services, which are vital to public safety and confidence during this emergency. As such, this meeting will be conducted without a quorum of this body physically present in the same location.

At this time, we also welcome members of the public accessing this meeting remotely. Even though this meeting is being conducted in a unique manner under unusual circumstances, the usual rules of conduct and decorum apply. Board members should silence, turn off and/or set aside their cell phones since any texting by them during this meeting may be subject to the Right-to-Know law. We ask that no one uses the "chat" feature of Zoom. Any person found to be disrupting this meeting will be asked to cease the disruption. Should the disruptive behavior continue thereafter, that person will be removed from this meeting. This meeting is being recorded for placement on the Town website. Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting must be done by Roll Call vote.

Roll Call attendance:

When each member states their name, also please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, required under the Right-to-Know law.

Lynn Coakley: **present**

Janet Hromjak: **Present**

Jennifer O'Brien-Trafficante: **present**

Kathryn Parenti: **present**

Jennifer Siegrist: **Present**

Shirley Wilson: **present**

John Yule: **present**

Tracy Quirk-Berube Alternate: **present**

Chris Costantino, Alternate: **present**

Betsy Solon, Director: **present**

Laura Dudziak, BOS Rep: **present**

2. **Regular Reports**

Director's Report

January 19, 2021

Happy New Year! 2020 certainly brought its own challenges to our library, but it also brought some great things like the return of the Soldiers' Memorial Statue and the NH Library of the Year Award. In addition, our patrons have gotten more e-book savvy and have become masters at navigating our

online catalog. Our library staff members have amazed me with their creativity and passion for serving the community and we've been able to make some much needed cosmetic improvements inside the building while it has been closed to the public. So, not such a bad year, especially since everyone on staff has remained healthy.

FACILITIES

After the last Trustee meeting, the roof above my office suffered a major leak – water pouring in and damaging insulation and ceiling tiles (we got video!) Fortunately, Andrew was able to make some patch repairs to get us through the winter, but we will need to call in a roofing company this Spring if the warrant article doesn't pass in March.

As planned at the December meeting, we used surplus 2020 funds from the Compensation line to purchase six 6-foot tables for programs, a 20'x30' function tent to use for outdoor events, and all of the materials to redo the circulation/reference service area (mobile desks from Brodart and lumber and cabinetry from Lowes). Andrew is very excited to begin renovating!

We are well-stocked on sidewalk salt, hand-sanitizer, disinfectant and paper goods for the next few months.

PROGRAMS

AARP Tax Assistance 2021: We were notified this week that AARP will not be doing any in-person tax assistance this year but will offer an online version instead. We've already begun fielding calls from people asking when the tax program will start and even turned away 3 individuals who came to the door asking to come in and see the AARP folks upstairs! The leader of the tax volunteers promised to get us information by February 1st so we can update our doors, website and Facebook with the appropriate messaging. Unfortunately, people seem to think the tax program is sponsored by the library, when in fact, we just loan out the meeting room to the AARP volunteers - so we may hear a few grumbles from the community.

- Adult, Teen and Youth reader's advisory have all been wildly popular
- In our first month of offering them, we've sent out 80 Children's Book Subscription boxes for Heron Pond students (<https://www.wadleighlibrary.org/Pages/Index/182673/bookbox-jr>)
- Staff has created two Bitmoji story times for Jacques students – they are cleverly done and very engaging (<https://www.wadleighlibrary.org/Pages/Index/82/storytimes>)
- Staff have been holding biweekly ZOOM meetings with the school librarians and their students and have been reading stories to elementary classrooms on Fridays
- Teen subscription boxes for grades 6 – 12 have been a big hit (<https://www.wadleighlibrary.org/Pages/Index/182564/teen-bookbox>) as has the new Manga Request form (rather than request 30 items in a series, teens can just list the individual series name)
- Themed Craft Kits and Book Bundles (for preschoolers) have been flying out the door since we started them last Spring
- Online book clubs for both children and adults have been going strong

PREVIEW TO THE 2020 STATISTICS

- Staff processed 453 passports (295 of them before the pandemic hit) bringing in \$15,855 of unanticipated income for the year. After \$1,415 in expenses, we netted \$14,440.
- There were 65 non-resident cards added to the system (\$2350)

- In an unusual turn of events, our eBook/eAudio circulation increased by 29% over 2019, while the circulation of print materials decreased by exactly 29%. With the extra staff time that it takes to do curbside service, it's pretty remarkable that we've been able to maintain more than 70% of the pre-pandemic checkouts. I can assure you that staff is exhausted by the time 4:00pm comes around each day!

FUTURE COVID PLANNING

In preparation for tonight's discussion, the Library Department Heads met to evaluate next steps regarding COVID Service. The consensus was to maintain our current operations through February and then to add on more appointment hours on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons beginning in March. We won't be able to add any more service hours (currently 10-4 M, T, W, Th, F, 10-1 Sat., and 5-7 Wed. nights) until new staff is hired, something we are reluctant to do until we know the 2021 budget has passed by the voters.

The staff would also like to see a Trustee-approved volunteer policy in place before the library building is reopened to the public. We have informally followed a policy for new volunteers that I brought along with me from my former library – one that requires background checks and annual volunteer “contracts” and which adheres to the NH Dept. of Labor rule that volunteers may only perform tasks not handled by paid employees. However, that policy did not apply to volunteers already in place before my arrival. We'd like to set up guidelines for organizations such as the National Honor Society and Opportunity Networks who like to send over volunteers and we'd appreciate something in writing regarding court-ordered volunteer service. Is that something the Trustees would consider for their February or March meeting?

OTHER ITEMS

On a personal note, I am excited to begin year #5 as Wadleigh's Library Director. Each year has brought its own special challenges and accomplishments and I'm sure 2021 will be no different! I look forward to the day when we can allow patrons unrestricted access to the library building again and I can't wait to see how our services and offerings evolve as a result of the pandemic. I'm honored to work with such a great team of Trustees, Staff, Friends and Supporters and I'm constantly humbled by everyone's dedication to the Milford community. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of that.

Finally, if you haven't yet done so, please update your 2020 Trustee hours.

Director Solon reiterated that the roof issue over her office will have to be addressed in spring. We are returning \$4,712 to general fund after our end of year purchases; it's always good to give something back. Circulation was surprisingly good for a pandemic year at 70% although touchpoints for staff increased from 4 before Covid to 12 after Covid. Staff is doing three times the work to get an item out for patrons.

Review and Approval of Minutes from 12/15/20

Kathy Parenti motioned to approve the minutes from 12/15/20 as presented. John Yule seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Lynn Coakley: Aye	Janet Hromjak: Aye	Jennifer O'Brien-Trafficante: Aye
Kathryn Parenti: Aye	Jennifer Siegrist: Abstained	Shirley Wilson: Aye John Yule: Aye

Treasurer’s report for 12/31/20

All reports were reviewed.

Donations received:

Unrestricted	\$ 200.00
Adult programs	\$ 250.00
NH Humanities Council Grant	\$ 200.00
Donation jar (building fund)	<u>\$ 97.50</u>
	\$ 747.50

Shirley Wilson motioned to accept donations in the amount of \$747.50. Janet Hromjak seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Lynn Coakley: **Aye** Janet Hromjak: **Aye** Jennifer O’Brien-Trafficante: **Aye**
Kathryn Parenti: **Aye** Jennifer Siegrist: **Aye** Shirley Wilson: **Aye** John Yule: **Aye**

3. New business

Budget Discussion

The Board of Selectmen requested that all departments find additional funds to cut from the Town’s operating budget. Both Director Solon and Kathy Parenti spoke with Town Administrator, John Shannon and the library budget is ok as is.

Mask fundraiser

The Trustees held discussion on a suggestion to sell the 2020 NH Library of the Year masks as a fundraiser. The blue library staff masks were purchased locally from Souhegan Products for \$7.50 each.

This fundraising effort would have to be taken on by the Trustees and would include coordination with community outreach, advertising and promotional components. Library staff can be a conduit for the sales but cannot market or directly sell the masks. The Trustees could purchase the masks and then anything above that cost would then be donated to the library. The balance between local and profitable were discussed at length as well as the actual logistics of selling masks.

Action items:

Jennifer O’Brien-Trafficante will reach out to the Friends of the Library regarding participation and invite to the February meeting.

Jennifer Siegrist will contact the printer regarding pricing, lead time, pre-ordering, and materials.

Director Solon has sizing information.

2021 calendar update

The calendar was changed due to the deliberative session being moved from 2/6/21 to 1/30/21. The library will close so that everyone can attend the deliberative session, which will be held in-person at the High School. There was consensus to amend the calendar.

2020 Trustee Town report submittal

The draft submittal was reviewed and it was suggested to acknowledge the Board of Selectmen's participation in our selection and to add extraordinary in describing our director.

The town is looking for submittals for the town report cover. Jenny Siegrist will send the Soldiers Memorial picture from the thank you cards to Tina Philbrick.

Covid Update

Director Solon referenced her report and added that staff would like to maintain what we are doing through the end of February and maybe add more hours for public browsing in March. We do not see any in-person meetings happening in the near future. The mobile circulation desk and function tent will be up and installed in spring and we will also need to figure out what parts of the library to keep open for public access when the warrant passes.

Library staff did not get to the elementary schools for Back To School in September, but the children's area is partially open and we are taking appointments for children who turn five (5) to come in to get their first library card. As we look to expanding open times, maybe we could consider adding something special for children.

Action items:

Director Solon will take this back to the children's librarian.

Other New business

Volunteer policy

Director Solon submitted a draft template from Primex. The Department of Labor restricts what we can have volunteers to do so we are just covering ourselves. Lynn Coakley, Jenny Siegrist and Janet Hromjak will review the template and bring back a draft policy to the February meeting.

4. Public Questions and Comments

There were no public in attendance and no comments.

5. Old business

Warrant Article Submission

Kathy Parenti attended budget and bond session and stated that the HVAC and electrical warrant article is supported by both the entire Board of Selectmen and the entire Budget Advisory Committee. The capital reserve fund warrant article was reduced from \$150k to \$50k and there is no support from the Selectmen or the Budget Advisory Committee.

After brief discussion on the importance of the HVAC warrant article, Shirley Wilson motioned to remove the capital reserve warrant article from the March ballot. Janet Hromjak seconded.

Roll call vote:

Lynn Coakley: **Aye** Janet Hromjak: **Aye** Jennifer O'Brien-Trafficante: **Aye**
Kathryn Parenti: **Aye** Jennifer Siegrist: **Aye** Shirley Wilson: **Aye** John Yule: **Aye**

Selectmen Dudziak noted that there was some confusion regarding the Selectmen's vote and her understanding is that there would be some support for the capital reserve fund. There was further discussion on the pros and cons of establishing a capital reserve fund and the amount to put forth. It was noted that the library has never had a capital reserve fund and there is no money in the town

budget to handle a major repair. The Trustees authorized Chair Kathy Parenti to make the decision to keep or remove the warrant article based on the outcome of the Selectmen's vote tomorrow. The motion and vote was rescinded.

6. Close Meeting

Deliberative Session is at 9:00AM on 1/30/21 at the Milford High School.
Next Trustees regular meeting is 2/16/21.

Election forms available from the Town Clerk for all Trustees re-running and must be dropped off before 1/29.

7. Non-Public meeting

Lynn Coakley motioned to close the public portion of the meeting at 7:30PM and go into non-public session under NH RSA Section 91-A:3; II(c) Reputation. Jenny Siegrist seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Lynn Coakley: **Aye** Janet Hromjak: **Aye** Jennifer O'Brien-Trafficante: **Aye**
Kathryn Parenti: **Aye** Jennifer Siegrist: **Aye** Shirley Wilson: **Aye** John Yule: **Aye**

There were no comments from the Trustees regarding the non-public session.

Janet Hromjak motioned to seal the non-public minutes. Lynn Coakley seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Lynn Coakley: **Aye** Janet Hromjak: **Aye** Jennifer O'Brien-Trafficante: **Aye**
Kathryn Parenti: **Aye** Jennifer Siegrist: **Aye** Shirley Wilson: **Aye** John Yule: **Aye**

Jen O'Brien-Trafficante motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:37PM. Shirley Wilson seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Lynn Coakley: **Aye** Janet Hromjak: **Aye** Jennifer O'Brien-Trafficante: **Aye**
Kathryn Parenti: **Aye** Jennifer Siegrist: **Aye** Shirley Wilson: **Aye** John Yule: **Aye**