

**Bennington Free Library
Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes November 14, 2023
@ The Bank of Bennington**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Munson, Jon Goodrich, David Newell, PJ Venti, Kelley Legacy, Norma McShane, Susan McKenna, Brian Cunningham, Michelle Wiegers, Bruce Smith, Gary Corey (Select Board Liaison), and Lynne Fonteneau-McCann (Executive Director)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jackie Marro

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME OF NEW MEMBERS

- The Bennington Free Library welcomes Bruce Smith, retired MAUHS nordic coach and community member/volunteer, to the Board of Directors.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- Minutes from the September 19, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting were approved unanimously.

FINANCE REPORT:

A. Annual Fund: as of 11/14/2023, the Library has received \$23,060 in gifts, or 46% of goal.

B. Revenue and Expense Reports

- Lynne reported that we are at 32% of the budget. We have pre-paid for fuel and incurred approximately \$20,000 in capital work and landscaping, however, we are on track to meet budget.
- Jon asked for better representation of interest income on the reports. Kelley will schedule a Finance Committee meeting before the January board meeting to review.
- With no questions or further discussion from the Board, the R&E reports were approved.

C. Review and Approval of FY25 Budget

- Lynne presented the FY25 Budget. The Library will be requesting a 3.5% increase from the Town of Bennington and Woodford, mainly to offset the increased costs in our hourly personnel. Lynne reported that Shaftsbury has new policies and requirements for budget increase requests, and it was decided to ask for level funding from them this year.
- With no further questions from the Board, the FY25 Budget was approved.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT HIGHLIGHTS (full report circulated in meeting materials):

- Karson and Linda D. met with Amanda Monick (The Tutorial Center) and a student interested in a 30-hour work experience for their high school completion requirements. All parties agreed it's a good fit, and the student will begin under Karson's supervision as schedules allow.
- Wendy attended the annual New England Library Conference
- Window Dressers installed our weatherization inserts. The total cost of the project was \$2,072. PJ commented that the entire process of building the inserts was very well organized and enjoyable and would recommend that others also volunteer in the future.
- The Harvest Fest Pop Up book sale was canceled due to an uptick in Covid.
- Work on the Bradford Garden has been completed.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Call for volunteers for the Holiday Book Sale scheduled for December 2nd.
- There was a brief discussion about the new unemployment insurance requirements proposed in Act 76 to begin July 1, 2024.
- The Library's Internet/Telephone Subsidy is ending. Lynne will be looking at other vendors and pricing, and will contact Nick Cave, the town's IT source for advice and suggestions as telecommunications will be a large expenditure for the Library as we change providers and replace/upgrade some of our equipment (routers and switches).
- The Library was notified that MSK will be conducting lead pipe testing on the property as part of their ongoing testing and assessment of the town pipes. No action by the Board needed.
- Kelley shared the opportunity for Matching Grant Funding to help defray costs of hiring Harrington Brands to help the Board in developing a Strategic Plan in 2024. Lynn will look into the grant and apply if applicable.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- With no further agenda item, the Board of Directors convened an Executive Session.

BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE (FY 2023-2024):(Third Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m.)

- January 16, 2024
- March 19, 2024
- May 21, 2024
- June 18, 2024

Respectfully submitted,
PJ Venti