

**Minutes Great Barrington Libraries
Board of Trustee Meeting
Hybrid at the Town Hall
334 Main St., Great Barrington, MA 01230
January 10, 2024 5:00 PM**

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L.c.30A, §18, and Governor Healey's March 29, 2023 Revised Order extending remote participation by all members in any meeting of a public body, this meeting of the Great Barrington Libraries Board of Trustees will be conducted both in-person and via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on town's website, at www.townofgb.org. For this meeting, members of the public and committee members may attend the meeting in person, or, for those who wish to do so remotely may by following the instructions at the top of this agenda. For those who are not in-person every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means.

Join Zoom Meeting

Please click this link to join the webinar: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85329478288>

To dial in via telephone dial 1 929 205 6099

Webinar ID: 853 2947 8288

Call to Order

Roll Call- Board Members: All responded with "Aye"
Patrick Hollenbeck, Chair(Zoom)
Sandra Pantorno
Carol McGlinchey
Rob Shaeffer (Zoom)
Ruby Chang
Lauren Clark
Library Director: Dawn Jardine
Assistant Director: Donna Brown
Friends of the Library: Ed Abrahams
Community member: Michelle Loubert

Approval of Minutes -December 20,2023

Carol would like to make correction under Officer Term Limits, —working 3 jobs is said by Lauren and not Carol. No other corrections. Motion to pass by Lauren and second by Carol. All vote to pass except Sandy who did not attend this meeting.

Welcome new Director - Dawn Jardine

Dawn- Everyone has been so welcoming and helpful, it has been a great experience. I have experience managing two libraries in upstate New York. I am excited to live in Great Barrington. There is some adjustment to Massachusetts library structure and terminology. Public libraries have similar challenges and missions. I am really happy to get started. Massachusetts Library Systems is coming this week to give orientation.

Lauren- We had not had a library director for 6 months but Donna has done a wonderful job in the interim and we appreciate everything she has managed to deal with and put up with, holding many balls up in the air.

Friends Report

Ed- We have finished decorating the main room of Mason Library. Bobby Houston and Scout House were the designers. We had been granted liquor license to celebrate on January 20, 5-7pm. Come and see the new room and meet Dawn. We are starting the film series. It will be first Saturday of every month for the next 3 months. The first film will be about a bookstore in Lenox as well as the

director. It will start at 6:30 PM. Holly will write press releases for all of this. Question from Sandy about volunteers for Friends: We have not much use of volunteers at this point, per Ed, have them call me. Carol: More members might bring other initiatives and ideas. Ed: just have them call me. Ruby: I wish to express thanks to Ed and Holly for all of the work they have done, carrying heavy books up and down for display in all weather... and raising money for this wonderful room at Mason. Ed: I would like to mention we had several large donations, one is Randy Weinstein. We raised twice what we normally do about \$16,000 this year which is good because we spent it on new furniture and rugs. We always take books, DVD and books. We file a tax return and has a spread sheet that can be reviewed. Ed does the tax returns but volunteer might also be helpful. We also support the summer reading program and occasional equipment.

Director's Report

Donna— Reviewed report, in person visit for Mason 4704, Ramsdell 129, Circulation at Mason, 6846, Ramsdell 426, Libby Overdrive 1972, Attached are State Aid, Ramsdell and Mason Donations and copy of the budget that we handed in and need to talk to TM about.

Sandy—where would money be used for consultants? Donna— from CPA money or donations or State Aid.

Carol—I had someone who would like to donate to Ramsdell. Steve Bannon noted to send the check to TM to the Town of Great Barrington then note/earmark it is for Ramsdell. This is non-tax deductible. If to the Friends of the Library then is tax deductible because they are 501(c)3. What is not sure is if it could be earmarked for Ramsdell. Ruby pointed out that in previous meetings, Ed had said that it could be earmarked for Ramsdell. There is a box at Mason Library that is for Friends if people would like to send letters. Address would be to Friends of the Library, C/O Mason Library 231 Main St. GB, 01230.

Review Annual Budget—Donna noted have not talked to TM and plan to for the end of the week. We need updated technology and will be discussed as line item for the town budget at the upcoming meeting. This was asked last year and did not happen. We are in need of two laptops right now. Dawn would like to know if we could get it through State Aid if we cannot get it through technology fund this year for immediate use.

Carol—What is our timeline for adding more hours at Ramsdell? Many people are asking that.

Donna noted we need to add more staff members and not posted yet.

Ruby—Summary, we will have updates after discussion with TM about technology budget through the town.

Discussion

Town building conditions assessment (DPW)—Ruby update, tried reaching out to DPW today to get draft for the town conditions assessment for Ramsdell Building and we don't have it yet. In the meantime, we have reached out to other consultants, next Tuesday morning we are having someone from EDM in Pittsfield who has done work for the MBLC and knows what is required by them. Carlo Schneller (Senior Structural Engineer) will be coming to take a look at the building. Update from Ruby to Dawn explaining the CPA Special Grant and needed Buildings Program and Conditions Assessment. Dawn has read through the last Building Program from 2020. We had been trying to get the town sponsored building assessment draft so we are not wasting tax dollars redoing whatever portion the town has already performed such as environmental assessment for asbestos and lead.

Review DesignLab Architects recommendations and plans: Ruby reviewed history of the company which has done the renovation for the "sister library" of Ramsdell called West Branch of Somerville. We had two Zoom meetings with them. Both with Pat and myself and one also with Sandy. We requested a proposal. They also recommend us travel out to see West Branch and another bigger library in Providence RI. This will be planned for the near future.

Review Rob Cullin budget proposal for Building Program: Ruby noted Rob Cullin also gave a budget proposal but both Pat and myself had a really hard time understanding the proposal and what is actually covered. The building conditions assessment they farm out to this company called Sorenson and we had a zoom meeting (Pat and I) and they are pretty expensive and we decided to hold off on them at this point. Rob: We need to consider the travel expense and maybe is not necessary. Ruby reviewed if cost is \$10,000 to \$50,000, we need 3 bids. Rob noted he had conversation with TM and he mentioned Best

Practices. We do need to get bids if over \$10,000 but we may only get one or two bids and that is acceptable as long as you show that you had reached out. You have to document that you had reached out for proposals. If it ends up being one person, you need to document that others were not interested. Pat would need to write the RFP. There was not anything submitted to Rob and we should give the same proposals. Ruby clarify that there was not any RFP given but just verbal discussion. Rob noted he would be happy to work to have a document so everyone has equal footing.

Building Program Committee recruitment: Ruby: For Ramsdell Library Renovation, we need volunteers with various expertise to help us with management. A group would include people with financial, architectural, legal, construction background. It will not be the board that would be doing it. I would like to take recommendations from the board as well as community members. Would need to form a committee with 7-8 people. Separate entity from the Library Trustees Board. We would need this committee whether we get the grant or not because Ramsdell needs to be completely ADA compatible. Right now, we only have a ramp. There are no ADA Compatible bathrooms and the air conditioning quality is not good enough to hold meetings. We would need to reach out to people or nominate people, talk to people and get a sense of what their thoughts were. We are trying to present ourselves in a way that would make the project interesting to them as well. Carol recommend Eric Gabriel , a Select board member who is in the building trade. Sandy: consider someone from the Historical Committee might want to be involved. People who are really stakeholders for the community. Something that would peak their interest. Sandy request what are their expectations. They will meet and decide for themselves. The Goal is renovation of Ramsdell. It would be up to the Committee members to determine how often they meet and individual responsibilities, set a timeline and mission statement. Pat: The Select board and TM would need to approve of this committee. Pat: noted that the town has to hire an OPM (Owner's Project Manager) that kicks in down the road, may next fall. This committee will stay through the design phase. Then, they disband after that and not part of the Construction phase. Sandy: First meeting? Ruby no dates yet.

Fundraising updates: Pat: TM has concerns about having a fundraising component. Liana Toscanini will be in charge from NonProfit Center of the Berkshires. The TM concerns will need to be worked out. When the Water Fountain Stations were put up, the funds were given to the town and was tax deductible. We should look into this. Looks like had to be for public purpose.

OML training by board members —reminder. Also campaign finance paperwork need to be filled and brought back before 1/20/24.

Ramsdell Celebration combine with community outreach—Dawn and Donna suggest in the spring when weather is nicer and we will be open more hours with increase staffing. Carol recommend having young families with strollers come and celebrate. Planning time: At least two month ahead to plan, end of April, early May. Also talk with Housatonic Improvement Committee to coordinate. Rob feels May is better.

MBLC Grant review: Pat recommend everyone take a look at the application. Ruby will send it out. One application. Get a perspective of what we are actually trying to shoot for.

Western Mass Library Breakfast-- Williamstown with Senator Paul Mark Friday January 26 at 8am. Friends have offered to make a donation. We will need a head count.

Discuss and Vote (Lauren had to leave for this part)

Purchase of Air Purifiers for Ramsdell- Pat would like to table this till next month to get more information as far as library square footage and what the cost would be. Money would come from State Aid. We do have money for this kind of purchase. We could also ask Rotary club etc. Lee Bank does a lot for the community. Also Adams Bank and Carr Hardware may be additional places. Eileen: Why is this not in the Town Capital Fund? Ruby: recommend asking town since there are no air exchange capability at Ramsdell and would improve air quality for library staff as well. Sandy: Anything for the health and safety of the employees should come from the town.

Secretary position(senior tax work-off program)- Rob suggested Eileen send out notices, no one at the volunteer pool of the library is interested. Eileen will run this on her NEWSLetter. Sandy will send out info for OLLI Group as well. Paperwork in meeting packet. We will table this for now. Motion made by Ruby to advertise the position, second by Sandy. No discussions. Vote: "aye" to all present except Lauren not present.

CPA Special Round Funding paperwork and expenditures: It is in the packet and not ready for signing at this point and will be tabled.

Officer Term Limits: Ruby: new members come in every year, propose election be held later in the year to allow new members get to know the whole board. Propose to elections in the fall. Sandy noted to maintain knowledge and their position, recommend a 2 year term rotation. No voting system, a moving system. So, everyone has a chance. Carol noted 2 year makes sense. Ruby noted we change members every 3 years. Eileen: Check the bylaws, town bylaws require officers be chosen after the elections. Ruby noted that we are at the cycle where we could make changes in the bylaw. Rob: TM wants us to make changes on our bylaws and then select board has to approve it which then goes to the town meeting and statehouse. Rob noted TM wants to do this in February and 2 years is a better time frame. There is a learning curve and how to figure things out. I don't like the election right after being elected. New trustees are put in a unfair position and should have abstained from voting due to not being informed. Sandy reviewed our present bylaws which does not say needing approval for making changes by anybody else. Rob: need to be clarified by TM. He can clarify this with the TM. Michelle: reviewed Open Meeting Law. Information can be pushed out but cannot reply "all". Sandy: adding term limits and vice chair position. And duties of the vice chair. And day and time of meeting. Also discuss rotation method of switching positions. Ruby: motion for term limits of 2 years for each position, second by Sandy.

Vote: Pat abstain, Rob, Carol, Sandy, Ruby all "yes".

Rotation Discussion: Ruby mentioned Lauren (who has left the meeting) at the last meeting cannot perform any of the positions because she is too busy with her job. We need to make sure we do not put pressure on those who cannot perform the required positions. Sandy says that we will have to be understanding in that situation, but for the majority of us, I hope we are not going to default on our responsibility. Carol: One way is to offer the rotation position with the option of saying I prefer not to take the position. If we have a really good orientation and mentorship which we should, we could easily feel comfortable doing the job. Sandy: everyone on the board should say they could handle the job and it is an exception not the rule. Rob: The point is to get everyone involved and can be an officer if they wish. They could participate and rotated. Someone like Lauren who does not have the bandwidth to do it should not be obligated to have to be an officer. Sandy: Rotation would allow different approaches from different people. Carol: It is not mandate. Sandy: Rotation but not obligation. Ruby: no voting involved. Sandy: No Voting, not a matter of whether I like you or not. Sandy: Rotation would be chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer. Sandy: We need the definition of responsibility of vice chair. Carol: can be pulled from Robert's Rule, generic. Rob: I will discuss with Mark about confirming whether we should submit the changes of the bylaw by February first.

Eileen: The agenda says officer term limits but not bylaws. Citizens need to have the ability to discuss this. Mark does not have a legal deadline, that date could presumably be extended.

This rotation of positions discussion was agreed by members to table till next meeting when it will be listed on the agenda.

Board Speak— Helpful to sign the newsletter written to update the board.

Citizen Speak/Media Time—Michelle recommend that she should be allowed to speak when her hands are up. Ruby noted I could not see her due to others were position in the way.

Next meeting date—February 14 at 5pm at Town Hall, hybrid.

Adjournment: (Roll Call Vote)—Carol make a motion to adjourn, Sandy second. Meeting adjourned at 6:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Ruby Chang