

Great Barrington Libraries Board of Trustees
June 14, 2018 5:30 p.m.
Mason Library
231 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230

TOWN CLERK
GREAT BARRINGTON
AUG 13 2018 AM 11:06

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 5:32 p.m.

- A. Attendance : Patrick Hollenbeck, Kathleen Plungis, Lauren Clark, Dana Coleman, Hilda Banks-Shapiro

Amanda DeGiorgis, Director

Audience: 25

Absent: Susie Beacco

PH made motion to move straight to item D. DC seconded. Vote 5-0.

D. Public Discussion of proposed Du Bois Statue

PH began by giving a brief history of Flag Day. Housatonic VFW Commander Andy Moro led all in the Pledge of Allegiance. PH provided a history of libraries as places for the free exchange of ideas and encouraged all to listen and be respectful. Ground rules: Mr. Moro to speak first, all others allowed three minutes, to be respectful and be diplomatic.

1. Andy Moro: Thanked chair for invitation to attend. Mr. Moro is disappointed that a DuBois statue is being proposed for the library and not at his homestead. Mr. Moro referred to Du Bois' 1953 eulogy of Stalin praising him and provided further information regarding Du Bois' involvement with communism and Nazism. Mr. Moro believes the issue is that statues are being taken down in our current time. A state of Du Bois on public property is not appropriate. Mr. Moro referenced a letter he wrote to the Berkshire Edge which had to be removed due to the hate mail Mr. Moro received. Mr. Moro stated that his facts came from UMass and Wikipedia. PH thanked Mr. Moro.
2. Patrick Fennell: Mr. Fennell presented research of his own and stated that he believes statues are a thing of the past. Pointed out

the Laura Secord plaque on the lawn of Mason and that she is an American traitor. Mr. Moro interjected with information on Great Barrington's citizens who had fought and died in World War I and World War II and Vietnam and that they were the men who should be honored.

3. David Magadini: Mr. Magadini stated that he thinks a statue of a historical figure is appropriate and should include a quote of Mr. Du Bois. He provided a suggested quote to the Board "The cost of liberty is less than the price of repression." KP recommended the quote be passed on to the Statue committee. Mr. Magadini says statue and quote should be nonpartisan.
4. Charles Flynn: Mr. Flynn stated that he is a retired Navy commander and former Housatonic native. Mr. Flynn stated Great Barrington has a history of patriotism dating back to colonial times. Mr. Flynn would like it to be acknowledged that Du Bois might not be the right candidate for a library statue. He asks that those who fought for the country be honored and that any statue erected be one that reflects a respect for learning, reading and community.
5. Charlie Plungis: Mr. Plungis began by stating that he is of Lithuanian heritage. When Lithuania was invaded by Russia's communists after WWI, Mr. Plungis' grandfather left for America, while his great-grandfather stayed behind to fight the Communists. Mr. Plungis stated that Communists do not acknowledge personal freedoms and that Du Bois admired Stalin. Mr. Plungis pointed out how many people died due to Stalin (7 million) and that Du Bois defended and praised Stalin's actions. Mr. Plungis asked the Board if this was the man they want to honor on Town property.
6. Barbara Syer: Mrs. Syer stated that it would be better to put the statue at the Du Bois homestead or garden (at the end of Church Street).
7. Andy Moro and Patrick Fennell asked that their research documents be made available to the Trustees.

8. Justin Jackson: Mr. Jackson is a Simon's Rock professor with a PhD from Columbia. Mr. Jackson comes from a military family and is a historian. Mr. Jackson appreciates the viewpoints from the evening and wants to provide more information. Mr. Jackson stated that Du Bois identified with socialism and then Marxism. It is important to note that Du Bois broke from socialism and criticized communism at other times. Du Bois chose not to join the communist party many times during his life. Du Bois was interested in national sovereignty and he joined at a moment when he felt it was necessary to take a stand on civil liberties. Mr. Jackson said Du Bois was a historian of Africa and ended by quoting John Adams, "facts are stubborn things."
9. Andrew Moro: Will this statue be in the Historic District? PH: Yes but not as a historic building.
10. Audience member pointed out socialism and communism are all related.
11. Charles Flynn: Du Bois did accomplish many things but a statue to him is divisive. Mason Library is a special sanctuary to learning and reading. We have other famous people in town that would unite residents. Mr. Flynn says there is a place for a statue of Du Bois but Mason Library is not it.
12. Freke Vuijst: Ms. Vuijst provided some history on the prosecution of Du Bois in 1953. Under the Foreign Agent Registration Act (circa 1930s) citizens had to register if affiliated with foreign governments. Du Bois was accused of being a Soviet agent due to his petition for world peace. Du Bois was shaken and hurt financially and personally by this. The Defense was asked to throw out the case and it was. Ms. Vuijst stated that this wasn't an excuse to join the Communist Party but helped make his decision.
13. Emily: Emily was born in Great Barrington and came back. Emily is proud to live in Great Barrington but stated she did not learn about Du Bois until she went to college. Professors talked of him with honor. Emily wishes to be respectful and states that Du Bois was not Stalin. She stated that Du Bois' actual words can

illustrate how much he was for America and Great Barrington. As a resident, Emily is thrilled at the thought of a statue at the library and she would be proud to bring her five year old son to see it.

14. PH wrapped up the discussion by stating that this is just the beginning of the process. There is currently no money, no statue and many more Boards to go through. He thanked the audience for their time and for sharing their viewpoints.

B. Nomination and Election of Secretary: PH asked if anyone was interested in position of Secretary. No one accepted. PH will ask Town to provide a secretary if no one volunteers at the next meeting.

C. Approval of May Minutes: PH made one correction on page 2: should read "statue" not "statute". HBS made motion to approve, LC second. Vote 5-0.

E. Citizen Speak: no additional comments made by audience

F. Request to allocate Library State Aid: ADG explained that it was time to allocate State Aid funds for programming for July-December 2018. KP asked if State Aid could be spent to purchase new computers for the library. ADG says yes. KP brought up proposed budget cuts from the FY19 budget cycle and the fact that it was stated the cuts would impact children's programming. KP pointed out that programming would not have been impacted. ADG and audience member Holly Hamer pointed out that supplies for programming would have been impacted and ADG stated that overall programming (children's books, audiobooks, etc.) would have been impacted. KP stated she was concerned about advertising of programs since Shopper's Guide Ad had been discontinued and would like library staff to put the outside sign out as much as possible. LC brought up permanent outdoor sign and perhaps it was time to revisit that. Audience member HH stated that the Friends advertise in five different ways and attendance is very much reliant on timing and interest. HH volunteered to help with this. HH also explained budget: yes, programming was not impacted but \$11,000 would have needed to come from State Aid, which would cut the amount available for programming. Also reminded Board that a chunk of the funds in State Aid were designated for Ramsdell. HH pointed out that cutting the FY19 budget would then result in increase in FY20, which would likely not be well received. PH pointed out that according to MBLC Statewide Library

Survey that Great Barrington's program attendance is in lower third in the state while program offerings were in the upper third. PH is looking for ideas to improve attendance. Pointed out that website needs a redesign. DC made motion to allocate \$5,000 for programming out of the State Aid account, HBS second. Vote 5-0 (KP wished it to be known it was a reluctant yes).

II. Reports of Officers, Boards, and Standing Committees

- A. Buildings & Grounds: KP reports there was not much from DPW Superintendent. KP planted flowers at Mason. KP would like to pursue hanging system for art at Mason and Ramsdell. KP would also like to revisit the freestanding sign at Mason. KP obtained estimate for 24" x 30" double sided sign similar to the one at Stockbridge Library. Estimate with permit would be \$1,325 (\$1,100 without permit). DPW would do permit and Historic District permission. Sign could be done in any color. LC asked if sign would include library name and that she thinks it needs to be big enough to read from the road. PH seconded the need for good placement and readability. PH would like to solicit funds/donations for sign and not take it from pre-existing library funds. PH brought up need for lighting the sign.
- B. Director's Report: see attached. ADG highlighted the Evergreen Upgrade, the change to the Commonwealth eBook Collection and then the need for the Trustee's help in promoting library events. Also thanked KP for gardening help and Friends for new circulation desk chairs.
- C. Treasurer's Report: see attached. KP remarked that she is still amazed by the amount of fine income.
- D. Friends Report: HH delivered report. Friends gave away 1,850 books during their Free Book Giveaway. Will be doing a Summer Reading Room Sale from July 1 – Labor Day. Friends will be helping RRSYP with publicity and offered to help library with Facebook advertising. Friends are interested in soliciting donations of annuals to fill the tree wells at Mason. Friends are also looking for ideas for a summer event

are no waitlists for titles. I want this to stay on our radar for the future. With the Commonwealth eBook collection switching to OverDrive the wait lists for books will be astronomical again. I will be keeping an eye out for patron feedback about OverDrive and then bring this up again.

The companies they have contracts with are:

Audio: HarperCollins, Tantor, Blackstone, Simon & Schuster, Gildan, Hachette, Macmillan, Scholastic Audio and more.

eBooks: HarperCollins, Sourcebooks, Disney Publishing, Abrams, Tyndale House, Rodale, Chronicle, Workman, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Lonely Planet and more.

Video: Lionsgate, Disney Studios, The Great Courses, Acorn TV, Warner Brothers, MGM, NBC Universal, Viacom (MTV, Nickelodeon, VH1), Paramount Pictures, A&E, Cinema Guild, Film Rise, Kino Lorber, PBS, Samuel Goldwyn Films and more.

Comics: DC, Image, Dark Horse, Archie, Disney, Marvel, Papercutz and more.

Music: Universal Music, Warner Bros, eOne Music, INgrooves

- **STAS Hanging System:** I have been in touch with Steve at STAS regarding their picture hanging system. We currently have their zipper hooks at Mason. They have an entire system (rails, hangers and the zippers), which I think would be ideal for Mason and Ramsdell. I have given him the dimensions and pictures of what we are looking for and he will be getting back to me with an estimate.
- Thank you to Patrick for making a miracle happen by obtaining twelve laptops for the Minecraft camp. Laurie and I are beyond grateful and we are excited for the programs we can offer our children!

Appropriated Account	Date	Mason		LP		YA		Child		Contin.	Ramsdell		LP	Start	End	Rollover FY17	Total	Balance	Total spent
		Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End		Start	End							
Books/Subscriptions	6/1/2018	\$29,700	\$4,267.59	\$6,400	\$508.77	\$3,375	\$93.52	\$10,925	\$561.71	\$2,000	\$15,100	\$1,052.23	\$1,500	\$75,000	\$397.34		\$75,000.00	\$8,881.16	\$66,118.84
Dues	6/1/2018		\$410														\$410.00	\$132.00	\$278.00
Equipment Repairs	6/1/2018	\$1,255	\$229.53								\$745	\$20.00		\$2,000			\$2,000.00	\$249.53	\$1,750.47
Non-Print	6/1/2018	\$16,500	\$3,505.02		\$2,000	\$2,000.00	\$7,000	\$1,631.75	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$7,500	\$1,989.95		\$34,000	\$3,183.70		\$37,183.70	\$10,219.76	\$26,963.94
Office Supplies	6/1/2018	\$6,300	\$29.41								\$2,500	\$96.72		\$9,800	\$1,563.47		\$11,363.47	\$1,159.20	\$10,204.27
Program Supplies	6/1/2018	\$800	\$148.85					\$1,600	\$31.57		\$600	\$169.01		\$3,000			\$3,000.00	\$349.43	\$2,650.57
Water/Sewer	6/1/2018	\$1,500	\$173.99								\$1,000	\$107.60		\$2,500			\$2,500.00	\$281.59	\$2,218.41

Water sewer bill with Town Hall - T. Hall says new \$3

NC,
M-1315.01 R+8325
M+1,186.68 R+73.47
M+749.36 R+11.00

Books/Sub: M-7574.35 R-3092.90

Dues: NC

Equip Repair: NC

Non Print: 4,090.81

Office Supplies: M-1521.00 R-565.01

Program Supplies: M-65.89 R NC

Water/Sewer M-81.00 R-40.96

In All, about 20,980 is left before the end of this fiscal year

Non-Appropriated Trusts		Balance		Stipulations	
Account	Date	Mason	Ramsdell		
Mason Trust	6/1/2018	\$175.89		Spend interest only. Mason only.	
Ramsdell Trust	6/1/2018	\$2,566.98		Spend interest only. Ramsdell only.	
Chesnow	6/1/2018	\$619.72		Spend interest only. Literacy related	
Wheeler	6/1/2018	\$274.32		Unrestricted by library or purpose	
Hollenbeck	6/1/2018	\$143.76		Spend interest only. New books for Mason.	
Dewey	6/1/2018	\$175.67		Spend interest only. Nonfiction books for Mason	
McKinley	6/1/2018	\$4,390.96		Spend interest only. Traditionally for large print for Mason but otherwise unrestricted	
Smith	6/1/2018	\$1,071.57		Spend interest only. Traditionally for children's but no library specified	
Ramsdell Improvements	6/1/2018	\$2,948.83		Improvements for Ramsdell only.	

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Capital Accounts		Balance	
Account	Date	Mason	Ramsdell
M Capital Donations	6/1/2018	\$1,739.06	
R Capital Donations	6/1/2018	\$5,118.00	

Mason only. For capital projects.

Ramsdell only. \$1000 earmarked for parking lot. For capital projects

State Aid		Balance	
Account	Date	Start	Current
Mason Adult	6/1/2018	\$700.00	\$350.00
Mason Children's	6/1/2018	\$2,300.00	\$1,785.00
Ramsdell	6/1/2018	\$1,500.00	\$1,300.00
Other	6/1/2018	\$500.00	\$62.00
Total Allotted		\$5,000.00	\$3,497.00
Total in Account		\$38,689.00	
Total Available after allocation		\$35,192.00	

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+20
+26

