

January Minutes 2022
* Director's Report
Financial Sheet

Great Barrington Library Board of Trustees

January 18, 2022 Tuesday

Call to Order at 5:35 pm by Patrick Hollenbeck

Roll Call via Zoom: P. Hollenbeck: Here K. Plungis: Here

L. Clark: Here J. Stanhope: Here M. Heilbrun: Here

C. Tucci: Here

A. DeGiorgis: Library Director

Audience: 9

B. Motion to Approve December Minutes: KP: Motion to Approve December Minutes: MH: 2nd. No Discussion.

Roll Call via Zoom: PH: Yes KP: Yes LC: Yes JS: Yes MH: Yes MH: Yes CT: Yes Vote: 6-0 Motion Passes

C. Friends Report: None

D. Director's Report: A. DeG (see attached report): Ramsdell is back open after a Staffing shortage. While they are down one full time person, they expect to hire someone soon, waiting on backgrounds checks, etc.

KP: Motion to Approve \$1,500 for programming January to May from State Aid. MH: 2nd. Discussion. JS: Is the monetary figure too low? A. DeG: virtual costs are lower because there are no transportation costs. \$1,500 will cover the programming.

Roll Call via Zoom: PH: Yes KP: Yes LC: Yes JS: Yes MH: Yes MH: Yes CT: Yes Vote: 6-0 Motion Passes

KP: Motion to Approve the Indigenous Land Acknowledgement. CT: 2nd. Discussion. A. DeG stated that Mason's collection of artifacts number at least 50.

Roll Call via Zoom: PH: Yes KP: Yes LC: Yes JS: Yes MH: Yes MH: Yes CT: Yes Vote: 6-0 Motion Passes

III. Update: Proposed W.E.B. DuBois statue at Mason

5:46 pm. Julie Michaels and Bobby Houston present on Zoom.

Earlier this afternoon, Mr. Houston forwarded to PH and PH forwarded to KP, who forwarded to the remaining Trustees and the Library Director. The attachment showed an updated architectural rendering for the DuBois statue for Mason's front lawn. The updated design shows an expanded rendering now showing a plaza that includes a seated DuBois and long seating on either side of the curved walkway that currently leads up to Mason's front door. Ms. Michaels stated that the seating and area will be created from repurposed marble from South County.

She further stated she and Mr. Houston met with Town Manager M. Pruhenski regarding the new proposal. That she now wants the Trustees' blessing to go forward with the new proposal. That she and Mr. Houston will be meeting with the Historic District Commission this Thursday (20th).

Mr. Houston stated that the group will also repair Mason's front steps and that they hope the project will begin in August of 2023 and to be completed in 2024. That this project will be a "gift to the town", no RFP's and when they have all in order, fundraising, design, etc., they will go before the Selectboard for their approval.

LC stated that the Trustees had given their blessing a couple years ago, we're not necessarily approving the design. JM stated that the proposed plaza has two rendering, a grass or a stone paver area, that this is still in process, that they have a bright architect that has given them a vision.

LC asked if we need to vote and looked for guidance from PH and KP. Mr. Houston stated he wanted a vote. CT wasn't sure what we would be voting on. BH stated: to approve the DuBois plaza in concept. Discussion continued with various Trustees stating that they weren't sure what they're voting on, that it's not clear if this is a role of the Trustees. MH stated that the group was authorized to move ahead and then asked where that authorization came from.

JM replied that three years ago, Fredke had come before the Board with a proposal and since then she has passed away. The Trustees gave approval then. It should be noted that since that time the Board has three new Trustees.

Discussion continued stating the original proposal was to be a seated statue and that the design has expanded and that the group has picked an architect. JM replied that they are a citizen's group, that they will be having a competition to pick a sculptor. That they would be happy to present ongoing presentations. JS was not clear on how Great Barrington handles the concept. That it seems the Selectboard ultimately will state "go or no go".

BH stated that they would not be going to the Selectboard if the Trustees do not endorse. That they will go to the Historic District Commission next. That the Town Manager has laid the groundwork and that the Town Manager is grateful that the group will go with this.

JS: Is it a defined process? JM stated that once approved they are not asking for further approval from the Trustees, for example, not asking for approval on the statue's look. She stated that the group is local and the community has shown its support. She stated again that they meet with the Historic District Commission on Thursday (it should be noted that that meeting was cancelled).

MH wanted to get back to the issue of people asking about the fundraising, whether there is African American input.

JM replied that once the group gets the Trustees' approval, then committees will be formed along with a fundraising committee. That committees can't be set up until they get a commitment.

MH stated that the Trustees have not yet seen a Mission statement. LC stated that she has attended a number of meetings, that the statement is in writing. JM stated that she had not been asked by the Trustees for this, however she is happy to provide memos. PH stated that he has had lengthy conversations with JM. JM stated that she does not want to see the group stalled for a few months.

JS stated that we were elected by the town, that she is very unclear as to her role. Wants to see the full proposal or to designate LC as our Trustee liaison.

BH gave an example of the Town accepting a previously privately funded project, the children's playground behind the Town Hall. That Jane Iredale funded the project and the Town gratefully accepted it. KP replied that she wanted firmer, written input from the Town Manager. JM stated that she didn't realize that last month that we wanted a statement, that she will be happy to get this to the Board.

CT stated that he had just found out about the new look for the proposal and has not had time to digest the info. That he wants more information before he votes, that he doesn't want to vote "in the moment". A further back and forth continued about this. PH stated that the Board operated under the Open Meeting Law and that the Board cannot carry on discussions via email about this. That individual Trustees can email JM or BH. MH stated that would be going outside of the process.

JM again stated that she would be happy to prepare a memo to the Trustees. That PH is right, that the journey has to work with the Town and the Historic District Commission. LC restated that we need to be aware of the Open Meeting Law.

PH stated that we, the Trustees, are locked on this, that the Open Meeting Law needs to be followed, that we voted on the concept, that it has to go through the Historic District Commission. MH stated we need to lean communally.

PH asked that JM and BH assure us of giving updates as they move forward. JM said that she will write a memo this week. That the goal is to build community not fracture. That the group has been busy, all voluntary, pro bono, including the architect. That she was sorry that this wasn't moving forward tonight

PH thanked JM and BH and said that this is further along than an hour ago.

LC asked if all the Trustees really need to be involved. Are we adding six more people to this process?

JM stated she would love to have a representative. To have Lauren Clark as a liaison.

PH opened the discussion up to any attending Citizens. That there were a few in attendance. Please raise your hand. None responded.

PH again thanked JM and BH for attending. That good points came up this evening. That LC will be the liaison for the Trustees. That he can always be reached and emails from the group will be sent out. JM said that she thought there would be more of a commitment. That people she has spoken to in the community are wildly positive.

The Trustees then went back to their Agenda.

II Treasurer's Report: JS stated that the interest on the Trust accounts have been updated. That the first installment of State Aid has been received. Spending is on par.

III. Buildings and Grounds: CT left the meeting at 6:18 pm for a previous commitment.

DeG. Mentioned the upper floor ceiling at Ramsdell. KP gave a background of the damage up there that a History Commission member noticed back in October.

IV. Citizen Speak: None

V. Board Speak: None

VI. PH: Motion to Adjourn at 6:32 pm. KP 2nd. Discussion. PH stated that the Friends of the Library had originally planned on being part of the DuBois project fundraising. That he had spoken with JM and after a conversation, that she agreed that the Friends will not be fundraising for the project.

A. The five remaining Trustees agreed to Adjourn. Meeting ended.

B. Next meeting Thursday, February 10, 2022 5:30 pm via Zoom

Kathleen Plungis, Secretary
Kathleen Plungis

January Library Life
February 10, 2022

Stats from January:

Libby/OverDrive: 1,747

Mason Circulation (everything): 6,801

Ramsdell Circulation (everything): 732

Mason had 4,656 in person visitors

Ramsdell had 199 in person visitors

- **FY23 Budget Update:** Presented the library budget to Finance Committee and Selectboard on February 2. Budget discussion continues on Wednesday, February 9 and the public hearing is March 1.
- **Staffing:** Hiring continues to be a struggle and I am looking at tweaking operational hours as well as looking at temporary staffing solutions. Any tweaking of hours would be temporary until we are back to full staff. We are currently down two FT positions.
- **Kanopy:** CW Mars negotiated with streaming company, Kanopy, to offer a discount to all member libraries that joined. I have initiated the process for us to join as this makes it more affordable for us. I will publicize when it is live and ready to go. Kanopy offers a range of independent films and documentaries including a Kids version. Current patrons who are Massachusetts residents have access to this service via Boston Public Library.
- **Buildings and Grounds:** The HVAC at Mason went out to bid at the end of January. Sean also put in a request for FY23 to continue with the ramp access at Ramsdell. More of the exterior molding at Mason has fallen off but Sean is aware of the problem.

Feb. 2022

Town Clerk

PROPOSED MEMORIAL TO W.E.B DU BOIS

Several years ago, the Great Barrington Library Trustees approved the placement of a seated sculpture of W.E.B. Du Bois in front of the Mason Library. An African American, born in Great Barrington in 1868, DuBois was a sociologist, historian, and civil rights activist. Among his many accomplishments, DuBois was a founder of the NAACP and author of "The Souls of Black Folk," a seminal collection of essays on the African American experience.

Our independent group of local citizens—The W.E.B. Du Bois Sculpture and Education Project— working with Friends of the Library and the town's W.E.B. DuBois Legacy Committee, has joined together to realize this vision. With the town's blessing, we will now establish a campaign to raise \$350,000 to create the monument and promote the legacy of Du Bois to our community and its children. Any funds remaining after the project is completed will go toward a Diversity and Education Fund to provide scholarship opportunities for Berkshire County students.

In conceptualizing the sculpture, we have chosen to create a scholarly Du Bois, hands on a favorite book, seated on a bench that arches out from the current outdoor staircase. This will create a gathering space for the town. The Library apron is already much-used for selling books on the weekends; we envision people joining Du Bois to sit, read, visit, and learn. To further emphasize the influence of this great man, we will engrave a quote from Du Bois onto the marble bench, thus linking the seating to the monument.

I am attaching a model of the proposed bronze sculpture positioned in front of the library. This was displayed at the library for the community to observe and comment on. I'm also attaching the photo of a maquette we commissioned to give the townspeople a sense of the work.

Our goal with the creation of this monument is threefold: to honor our most famous native son, to create a community gathering space using local materials, and to educate the community on Du Bois' legacy and the process of creating the actual monument.

The marble for our bench will come from the same quarries that provided stone for the Washington Monument. Chesterwood, the Stockbridge museum/home of Daniel Chester French has offered space in which our sculptor can create the work of art.

The community will be invited to visit on open studio days and watch the piece being designed.

We have created a sub-committee of the Du Bois Project that will hold a design competition for regional sculptors to propose their versions of the seated Du Bois. We expect to have our sculptor chosen by the summer of 2021, even as we are looking for grants and begin raising funds for the project.

Julie Michaels

Chair, Du Bois Sculpture and Education Project

lilypadinc@aol.com

413-429-1385

Appropriated Account	Date	Start	End	Total Spent
Dues	1/31/2022	\$1,010	\$51.00	\$959.00
Equipment Repairs	1/31/2022	\$3,200	\$19.68	\$3,219.68
Office Supplies	1/31/2022	\$10,350	\$6,260.83	\$4,089.17

Appropriated Account	Date	Mason		IP		YA		Child		Adult		LP		Ramsdell		eContent		Joint Services**		Contingency		Total	Balance	Spent
		Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End			
Print/Subscriptions	1/31/2022	\$22,685.00	\$12,835.71	\$6,000.00	\$2,888.98			\$17,000	\$2,636.82	\$3,800	\$2,636.82	\$3,800	\$2,636.82	\$17,000	\$2,636.82	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$6,211.75	\$5,900.00	\$854.40	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Nonprint	1/31/2022	\$10,100.00	\$4,700.35					\$6,000	\$29.94	\$1,763.16	\$5,000	\$1,763.16	\$5,000	\$1,763.16	\$5,000	\$9,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$9,000.00	\$14,169.41	\$21,875.36
Program Supplies	1/31/2022	\$885.00	\$419.74					\$1,550	\$734.55	\$625	\$625	\$384.01	\$384.01	\$1,550	\$734.55	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,172.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,172.00	\$3,176.00	\$1,047.76

** Joint Print: Wowbrary, Magazines, Wash Post, WSJ

** Joint Nonprint: WebDewey (cataloging), NYT, NYT Cooking

Non-Appropriated in-Library Account	Date	Balance	IP	Ramsdell
Mason Trust	1/31/2022	\$325.79		
Ramsdell Trust	1/31/2022	\$2,823.92		
Chesnow	1/31/2022	\$814.19		
Wheeler	1/31/2022	\$287.23		
Hollenbeck	1/31/2022	\$200.75		
Dewey	1/31/2022	\$264.57		
McKinley	1/31/2022	\$5,944.66		
Smith	1/31/2022	\$1,967.02		

Non-Appropriated Trusts Account	Date	Balance	Stipulations
Mason Trust	1/31/2022	\$325.79	Spend interest only. Mason only.
Ramsdell Trust	1/31/2022	\$2,823.92	Spend interest only. Ramsdell only.
Chesnow	1/31/2022	\$814.19	Spend interest only. Literacy related
Wheeler	1/31/2022	\$287.23	Unrestricted by library or purpose
Hollenbeck	1/31/2022	\$200.75	Spend interest only. New books for Mason.
Dewey	1/31/2022	\$264.57	Spend interest only. Nonfiction books for Mason.
McKinley	1/31/2022	\$5,944.66	Spend interest only. Traditionally for large print for Mason but otherwise unrestricted
Smith	1/31/2022	\$1,967.02	Spend interest only. Traditionally for children's but no library specified

Capital Accounts	Date	Balance	Stipulations
M Capital Donations	1/31/2022	\$1,597.60	Mason only. For capital projects.
R Capital Donations	1/31/2022	\$5,118.00	Ramsdell only. \$1000 earmarked for parking lot. For capital projects

State Aid Account	Date	Balance	Current
Adult	1/31/2022	\$850.00	\$550.00
Mason Children's	1/31/2022	\$400.00	\$400.00
Ramsdell	1/31/2022	\$250.00	\$250.00
Other	1/31/2022	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Allotted		\$1,500.00	\$1,700.00
Total in Account		\$29,037.93	
Total Available after allocation			\$27,837.93