

**Great Barrington Libraries Board of Trustees  
April 13 2023**

**5:30 pm Meeting via Zoom only**

I. Call to Order

PH at 5:32

II. Approve Minutes

**Motion to approve Feb minutes**

LC move, RC second

Abrams and opening misspelled

Kanopy- CM vote

G. Patrick Hollenbeck (PH) x  
Carol McGlinchey (CM)x  
Lauren Clark (LC) -x  
Ruby Chang (RC) x  
Christopher Tucci (CT)x  
Margaret Heilbrun (MH) x

**Minutes Approved**

**Motion to approve March Minutes**

MH move, RC second

G. Patrick Hollenbeck (PH) x  
Carol McGlinchey (CM)x  
Lauren Clark (LC) -x  
Ruby Chang (RC) x  
Christopher Tucci (CT)x  
Margaret Heilbrun (MH) x

III. Director's Report- See attached.

Samara Klein (SK) –

DPW representatives, Library Director, and Asst. Director met at Ramsdell. A consultant will work with town to create priority list of all town work. SK advocated for electrical outlets in floor to be removed, outlets flush to ground with no covers will be covered, some patching in roof, new boiler is awaiting delivery, and ramp construction will begin in late May. New card catalog installed at Ramsdell.

Staff member Dorothy Phillips ending position at the end of month.

Berkshire Harm Reduction staff gave library staff instruction on naloxone administration.

Network of Library of Medicine staff, gave training to library staff on searching in Medline Plus- to assist with medical searches.

Health Dept. and DPH provided recommendations on books about public health

Arbor Day display by GB Tree Committee with book recommendations. Arbor Day celebration will occur at Mason. Activities for children and adults will occur.

April 17, yellow bags available for community cleanup for Earth Day celebrations.  
Reduce, Reuse, Recycle display will be up April and May.  
April 26<sup>th</sup>, 10:30-12:30, tech assistance by Simon's Rock students for day-of-service program

**Motion to approve Great Barrington Libraries Borrowing Policy & Procedures**

CM moved, RC second

G. Patrick Hollenbeck (PH) x  
Carol McGlinchey (CM)x  
Lauren Clark (LC) -x  
Ruby Chang (RC) x  
Christopher Tucci (CT)x  
Margaret Heilbrun (MH) x

**Motion passes**

**Motion to grant Wine and Beer @ Mason for DuBois media conference April 19th 6pm- 8pm**

LC moved, RC second

G. Patrick Hollenbeck (PH) x  
Carol McGlinchey (CM)x  
Lauren Clark (LC) -x  
Ruby Chang (RC) x  
Christopher Tucci (CT)x  
Margaret Heilbrun (MH) x

**Motion passes**

**Re-confirm vote from October 2022 to donate remainder of artifacts pertaining to the Stockbridge-Munsee**

CT motion, MH second

See attached memo on repatriation history. The Trustees commend the work of Talya Leodari.

G. Patrick Hollenbeck (PH) x  
Carol McGlinchey (CM)x  
Lauren Clark (LC) -x  
Ruby Chang (RC) x  
Christopher Tucci (CT)x  
Margaret Heilbrun (MH) x

**Motion passes**

**Motion to have State Aid allocated toward the following programming as identified by Library Director and staff: Mason's Children's department 5,200, Ramsdell 2,000, Mason 1,000, MAPS literature garden seed grant 4,000.**

CT motion, CM second

SK stated that this allows the staff to schedule and staff programming and not require a vote at the monthly meeting. Music Art Puppets Sound, Inc. (MAPS) as Artist-in-Residence at Great Barrington

Libraries – see attached proposal. Library staff has meet with representatives of MAPS. Video proposal shown: <https://youtu.be/c3G4foG1afY>

PH asked what happens if MAPS does not secure additional funding. SK stated that the Library would create a Letter of Agreement with MAPS if approved. RC asked about response to programs held in community, SK stated they were well attended and well received.

G. Patrick Hollenbeck (PH) x

Carol McGlinchey (CM)x

Lauren Clark (LC) -x

Ruby Chang (RC) x

Christopher Tucci (CT)x

Margaret Heilbrun (MH) x

### **Motion passes**

### **III. Treasurers Report Current Budget updates**

MH thanked for service as Treasurer

SK stated that budget is tracking. Fiscal year turnover in July. State aid will be added at this time.

CM asked if staff pay is included in budget. SK states it is, but it is not included as a line item. SK stated salaries are set by union and are a fixed yearly cost.

### **IV. Citizens Speak/ Media Time**

Michelle Loubert, 70 Division St.- Mass Library Construction Grant Program, March 27 at Selectboard asked for info on review of grant. On April 10 Town Manager provided 5 reasons why the town will not pursue these grants- two prior failures, in order to apply need a strategic and financial plan, 150K in design funding committed, 60% is covered required town to raise 2 million, and only 10 grants approved yearly. ML asked why a Trustee voted against the proposal. MH shared prior experience indicates that Ramsdell is not positioned to submit a competitive application. A lively discussion between MH and ML occurred.

Eileen Mooney, 2 Bernard Gibbons Dr. Apt 203- suggested LC phone in.

Karen Johnson, State Road “new Butternut”. KJ wondered how the new DuBois plaza was approved. LC shared that this plan was approved several years ago. KJ shared a concern about not having a vote on the façade. LC shared this is an improvement project that will be funded independently. MH shared an appreciation of the prior library landscaping. EM shared that the Selectboard has not yet voted on approval.

### **V. Board Speak**

CM stated that she hopes for a smoother onboarding for future Trustees. Frustrated with first months of service concerning communication. Hopes for earlier submission of agendas and director reports. CM referred to Trustees Handbook provided by state. CM proposes there is a welcome and orientation for new Trustees.

RC asked if future visitor statistics could include historical data for comparison. SK will include in the future. CM shared she uses prior reports if she wishes to track trends now.

VI. Adjournment

Adjourn at 7:15pm

G. Patrick Hollenbeck (PH) x  
Carol McGlinchey (CM)x  
Lauren Clark (LC) -x  
Ruby Chang (RC) x  
Christopher Tucci (CT)x  
Margaret Heilbrun (MH) x

**March 2023 Library Report**  
**Great Barrington Library Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup> 2023**

March 2023 Statistics:

- Libby/OverDrive: 1,796
- Mason circulation (everything, all libraries): 7,983
- Ramsdell circulation (everything, all libraries): 1,082
- Mason in-person visitors: 5,818
- Ramsdell in-person visitors: 409

Budget:

- FY23: please see attached

Updates:

- Ramsdell Library walk through & updates
- Staff update
- Staff trainings
- Displays:
  - Book/film displays:
    - Public Health Week, curated by the Health Department and Board of Health
    - Trees, curated by the Tree Committee
  - Display case:
    - Reuse, Refuse, Recycle
- Upcoming programs & events:
  - Arbor Day with Tree Committee on Friday 4/21
  - Earth Day with DPW on Saturday 4/22
  - Tech Assistance with Simon's Rock students on Wednesday 4/26

Borrowing Policy: Please see attached revised Borrowing Policy. We hope that the revised policy will be adopted by the Great Barrington Library Board of Trustees in anticipation of the Great Barrington Libraries' going fine free on May 1<sup>st</sup>.

Indigenous Artefact Voluntary Donation: Please see attached memo and letter.

Artist-in-Residence Literary Garden proposal from M.A.P.S.: Please see video: <https://youtu.be/c3G4foG1afY> and attached proposal.

State Aid Allocation Requests

Non-Appropriated Library Trusts & Accounts: beginning FY22 & FY23, & 3/4-FY23				
Nonexpendable Trusts: Principal				
Mason Library				\$ 1,063.00
Mason Library				\$ 3,000.00
Ramsdell Library				\$ 3,000.00
Smith				\$ 24,045.00
Dewey				\$ 1,707.58
McKinley				\$ 28,548.20
Chesanow Reading Fund				\$ 3,500.00
Total				\$ 64,863.78
Expendable Trusts: interest from Nonexpendable Trusts				
Name/Description	Designation	7/1/21	7/1/22	4/5/2023
Hollenback Trust	Mason: new books	\$ 198.25	\$ 205.32	\$ 210.41
Mason Library	Mason	\$ 319.21	\$ 337.84	\$ 351.65
Ramsdell Library	Ramsdell	\$ 2,812.62	\$ 2,844.59	\$ 2,864.52
Smith Trust	No specific designation, but traditionally spent on things for children	\$ 1,914.48	\$ 2,063.26	\$ 2,173.65
Dewey Trust	Mason: nonfiction	\$ 260.66	\$ 271.71	\$ 279.77
G McKinley Trust	No specific designation, but traditionally spent on large print for Mason	\$ 5,876.32	\$ 6,069.84	\$ 6,208.64
Chesanow Reading Fund	Literacy: books, instructors, reading aids	\$ 805.64	\$ 829.82	\$ 847.06
Elizabeth Wheeler Trust	Furnishings	\$ 286.67	\$ 288.27	\$ 289.52
		\$ 12,473.85	\$ 12,910.65	\$ 13,225.22
Donation Accounts				
Name/Description	Designation	7/1/21	7/1/22	4/5/2023
Mason Library Donations	Mason	\$ 22,497.94	\$ 24,000.56	\$ 23,534.00
Deykin Donation	Mason	\$ 1,597.60	\$ 1,597.60	\$ 1,597.60
Ramsdell Library Donations	Ramsdell	\$ 12,294.11	\$ 12,793.18	\$ 13,008.18
Ramsdell Capital Improvements	Ramsdell; \$1,000 from Thurs. Morning Club for parking lot	\$ 5,118.00	\$ 5,118.00	\$ 5,118.00
		\$ 41,507.65	\$ 43,509.34	\$ 43,257.78
State Grant Account				
Name/Description		7/1/21	7/1/22	4/5/2023
State Grant		\$ 27,456.74	\$ 29,826.51	\$ 34,343.98

Library Budget FY23			
FY23	Budget	Spent	4/5/2023
Equipment Maintenance & Repair	\$ 3,200.00	\$ 2,292.96	\$ 907.04
Office Supplies	\$ 10,350.00	\$ 7,789.53	\$ 2,560.47
Programming Supplies	\$ 3,170.00	\$ 1,787.90	\$ 1,382.10
Travel/Training	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 15.25	\$ 1,384.75
Dues & Memberships	\$ 1,010.00	\$ 885.00	\$ 125.00
Nonprint Materials	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 28,337.42	\$ 7,662.58
Books/Subscriptions	\$ 80,000.00	\$ 65,762.38	\$ 14,237.62

## Great Barrington Libraries Borrowing Policy & Procedures

The Great Barrington Libraries are the public libraries for the Town of Great Barrington and the Village of Housatonic. All holders of CWMARS (Central & Western Massachusetts Resource Sharing) public library cards may borrow materials from the Great Barrington Libraries.

### Obtaining a Great Barrington Libraries' Card:

*Residents of Massachusetts:* Residents of Massachusetts communities with public libraries certified by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners who do not have a library card with a public library belonging to CWMARS and/or those who have an academic library card are eligible for a free borrower's card from the Great Barrington Libraries.

To obtain a Great Barrington Library card, [apply online](#) or visit the library. You will need to show photo identification, along with proof of residence, in person at the library even if you use the online application. Photo identification can be a driver's license, passport, state identification, student or work identification. Proof of residence can be a current check or bankbook, voter registration card, current utility bill, a piece of postmarked local mail, digital receipts or bills.

Children and teenagers without identification may use their parents/guardians' identification. Children must be at least five years old to receive their own library card.

If a patron indicates that the identification process presents a hardship (i.e. is a participant in the state's Address Confidentiality Program), the library will attempt to make a reasonable accommodation.

*Exempted Non-Residents of Massachusetts:* Borrowers not residing in Massachusetts must pay a non-resident fee to borrow materials from the Great Barrington Libraries, unless they can provide documentation demonstrating that they:

- own a vacation home or property in Massachusetts;
- are renting lodging in Massachusetts for at least 30 days;
- are residing in Massachusetts while attending school, a training program or summer camp lasting at least 30 days;
- work in Massachusetts.



Verification of exemption documentation may include all those listed for identification and residence above, as well as a lease or rental agreement, land deed, school identification card, official notice from a school, camp director or employer on letterhead stationery, or other similar means of documenting a temporary residence.

*Non-Residents of Massachusetts:* Borrowers not residing in Massachusetts who cannot provide the documentation detailed above that would exempt them from non-resident fees are considered out-of-state borrowers and must pay a fee of \$25.00, by way of cash or check, per twelve-month period in order to borrow materials from the Great Barrington Libraries. Another member of the same family may use an out-of-state borrower's card.

*Institutional Cards:* Schools, daycare centers, nursing homes, businesses, and other similar organizations, may register for an Institutional Card by contacting the Library Director and signing an agreement stating that the individual(s) of the organization who are authorized to use the card will take responsibility for materials borrowed, including lost or damaged materials.

**Borrowers' Responsibilities:** Borrowers are responsible for all items borrowed on their cards, including replacement costs for items lost or damaged. Parents/guardians are responsible for any replacement costs incurred by children under the age of 18.

Borrowers are responsible for keeping their registration current. Any borrower who has mail returned to the library as undeliverable, has a phone number that is not current, or has an email address that is not valid, may be blocked from borrowing materials from the library until the registration is updated.

Borrowers are expected to present their library card to borrow materials from the Great Barrington Libraries. However, as an accommodation, the Great Barrington Libraries will accept some form of identification in lieu of a library card, as long as the card is not expired. Patrons who do not bring their library card or positive identification to the library with them may not be able to borrow materials.

**Use of Another Borrower's Card:** Great Barrington Libraries discourage the sharing of library cards between family members and friends. The person whose name is on the card remains responsible for the safe return of all borrowed materials. Great Barrington Libraries may request positive identification from any person checking materials out. A loan may be denied if the patron attempting to check items out is not the same person as indicated on the borrower card presented, and has outstanding debt or blocks that would have prevented the loan on the patron's own card.

**Confidentiality of Borrowing Records:** In accordance with Chapter 78, Section 7 of Massachusetts General Laws, the borrowing records of individual patrons concerning types of materials and/or specific titles borrowed, and other records identifying the name of library users, is considered confidential by the Great Barrington Libraries. Only the Library Director may authorize dissemination of this information to a third party; this will be done only when required by law. Information about materials borrowed by minors may be granted to the legal guardians once those items are overdue.

**Loan Periods and Borrowing Restrictions:**

Item	Limit: 50 items total	Loan Period	Automatic Renewal	Lost Date	Replacement Charge
Books		3 weeks	3 weeks	28 days after due date	cost to replace
eBooks					
eAudiobooks					
Magazines: kids & teens		3 weeks	3 weeks	28 days after due date	cost to replace
Magazines: adult		1 week	1 week	28 days after due date	cost to replace
Audiobooks	6	3 weeks	3 weeks	28 days after due date	cost to replace
DVDs	4	1 week	1 week	28 days after due date	cost to replace
Video Games		3 weeks	3 weeks	28 days after due date	cost to replace
Hotspots	1 per a household (each hotspot supports up to 10 connected devices)	2 weeks	2 weeks	24 hours after due date, at which time service will be turned off and the hotspot will become unusable	\$35.00
Museum Passes	1	1 day	none	24 hours after due date	cost to replace
Library of Things	1	3 weeks	none	24 hours after due date	cost to replace

*Returns:* Books and magazines may be returned at any time in the book drops outside the library buildings. However, audiobooks, DVDs and Hotspots should be returned to the circulation desks. Museum passes should be returned to the circulation desk at Mason Library in Great Barrington. Items from the Library of Things should be returned to the circulation desk at Ramsdell Library in Housatonic.

*Blocks:* A patron will be denied borrowing privileges if their account has unpaid charges for lost or damaged library materials.

*Other Libraries:* Other libraries may have different lending periods and replacement costs, and may have fines for overdue materials.

### **Extended Loan Periods:**

*For People with Disabilities:* As part of the effort to ensure equal access to information and to ensure compliance with the American Disabilities Act, steps are taken by the Great Barrington Libraries to provide for reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities.

*Certified Disabled:* To be eligible for an exception to the Great Barrington Libraries' Borrowing Policy, the borrower must be able to provide certification of disability from a qualified health care or education professional (depending on disability), with appropriate justification from the borrower as to why the disability warrants the exception. Such justification should be directly related to the borrower's ability to process the material (i.e. dyslexia or other learning disability) and should stipulate whether this a one-time or ongoing request. Age alone does not qualify as a certifiable disability eligible for exception under this policy. First-time requests by certified disabled borrowers to negotiate exceptions to the library's Borrowing Policy must be done in person at the library.

*Exceptions:* Exceptions may be authorized by the Assistant Directors or Children's Librarian at the time the request is made if the request requires an immediate response; otherwise, the request should be deferred to the Director. Only the Director and Assistant Directors are authorized to negotiate open-ended arrangements. Such arrangements should be abstracted by library staff in a patron note on the CWMARS system to alert staff at subsequent transactions.

#### *Limitations:*

- **Reserve Books:** Items on reserve for others will not be granted extended loan periods regardless of the extenuating circumstances of the certified disabled requesting borrower.
- **Interlibrary Loan Materials:** Materials owned by other libraries will not be granted extended loan periods regardless of the extenuating circumstances of the requesting borrower because those lending periods are established by the lending libraries.
- **Total Item Limit:** Persons requesting items be granted extended loan periods under these guidelines will be limited to six items in circulation at any given time.

*For Massachusetts Teachers:* Massachusetts teachers may check out curriculum materials for an initial six-week period. Teachers are responsible for identifying themselves as such to the circulation staff and communicating that they are borrowing curriculum materials.

**Obtaining Available Materials:**

*Holds:* Most items in circulation owned by the Great Barrington Libraries or other Massachusetts public libraries in the CWMARS or virtual catalogue systems may be reserved or placed on hold. There is a limit of twenty holds per library card. A Hotspot should be picked up within two days of placing a hold, or it will be set aside for the next user.

*Request for Purchase:* Great Barrington Libraries welcomes suggestions for purchase of materials not in the collection. Please see the Recommendation for Addition to the Collection form in the Collection Development Policy.

**TO:** Trustees of the Great Barrington Libraries  
**FROM:** Talya Leodari, Assistant Library Director  
**RE.:** Stockbridge-Munsee Community Artifacts Repatriation - UPDATE  
**DATE:** April 7, 2023

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After the October 2022 meeting in which the Trustees voted to return the artifacts in the Taylor Collection to the tribes from which they came, I undertook a review and sorting of the collection. I divided the items into four basic categories: items that were associated with collection cards and are from the Great Barrington area, items that have no cards but are similar enough to the Great Barrington ones that they can realistically be assumed to be local, items with collection cards from elsewhere, and items with no extant collection cards associated with them. There was also a small box of items that are possibly of social or historical importance but unlikely to be of indigenous origin (these include two shark teeth found off the coast of Maine and pieces of the Berlin Wall). I repacked the items in clean bags and new boxes, carefully labeled. There were a few items that I thought might be of religious or ritual importance, or that were marked as being found with human remains and these I packed separately with a pinch of tobacco and covered with a piece of linen fabric, as requested on the Stockbridge-Munsee's repatriation brochure. I will contact the tribes associated with the other artifacts once this repatriation is complete.

I contacted Bonney Hartley, the Tribal Historic Preservation Manager based at Williams College, and broached the topic of the collection and repatriation. On November 9, 2022 I took the entire collection to Williamstown and met with Bonney and Jeff Bendremer, archaeologist and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer. I left the parts of the collection that are local with them for cataloging and assessment. In December Bonney contacted me with a few additional questions and to let me know that she wanted to discuss the collection with the tribe's Cultural Affairs Director. **On March 17, 2023 she emailed me to say that they had identified 16 items as being likely funerary in nature and the Tribe wishes to claim them under the "unassociated funerary objects" category of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).** She attached an inventory of those items and I have begun the NAGPRA process with the National Parks Service.

The remainder of the collection includes many fine examples and unique cultural heritage items that the tribal museum would be pleased to receive and use in displays about the tribe's deep history in the Berkshires. **I am asking that the Trustees confirm their vote from the October 2022 meeting so that the Library may make a voluntary donation of the remainder of the collection pertaining to the Stockbridge-Munsee to the Arvid E. Miller Memorial Library Museum of the Mohican Nation in Bowler, Wisconsin.**

For further information, please see the formal request letter from Bonney Hartley, Tribal Historic Preservation Manager for Stockbridge-Munsee Band Community, attached.

## ***Stockbridge-Munsee Tribal Historic Preservation***

*Arvid E. Miller Library Museum  
N8510 Mohheconnuck Road  
Bowler, WI 54416*

*Extension Office  
86 Spring Street  
Williamstown, MA 01267*

Great Barrington Libraries Board  
231 Main Street  
Great Barrington MA 01230  
c/o Talya Leodari, Ph.D., Assistant Director  
*via email only*

April 6, 2023

### **Re: Donation of artifact collection**

Dear Great Barrington Libraries Board:

Stockbridge-Munsee Community is the Tribal Nation indigenous to the Berkshires. Due to multiple removals we were forced to endure from these beloved homelands, our community now is based in Bowler, Wisconsin. Our Tribal Historic Preservation Office, in Williamstown, Massachusetts, has been pleased to work with Dr. Leodari on assessing the artifact collection of the Great Barrington Libraries. We worked to consult on the items that we identified as likely from burial contexts and therefore subject to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), a Federal process with which we are underway and on track to complete in the next two months. When completed, these items will be reburied by the Tribe.

For the remainder of the items that we assessed, our Arvid E. Miller Memorial Library/Museum in Wisconsin—the repository of the Tribe's material culture and archive—would like to request the collection as a voluntary donation. Despite the lack of detailed provenance records for the collection, there are many unique cultural heritage items that our Museum would be pleased to receive and better connect our community with our deep history in the Berkshires.

If you approve, our Tribal Historic Preservation office would plan to first keep the collection here to work with Williams College students on producing a display on the Tribe's cultural history that is reflected in these materials, and to work with the Williams College Museum of Art on creating 3D photogrammetry images of some of the unique pieces. We would be happy to make a copy of the exhibit panel for your library if desired, and to share the photogrammetry images with you. Once the collection transfers to the Arvid E. Miller Memorial Library/Museum, the collection could always be loaned back to the Great Barrington Library or other local institutions upon request.

Thank you for consideration of this request to approve donation of the non-NAGPRA sensitive artifact collection to Stockbridge-Munsee Community.

Sincerely,

*Bonney Hartley*

Bonney Hartley  
Tribal Historic Preservation Manager

(413) 884-6048

Email: [preservation@mohican-nsn.gov](mailto:preservation@mohican-nsn.gov)

# **Proposal:**

## **MAPS as Artists-in-Residence at Great Barrington Libraries**

**Who:** MAPS (Music Art Puppet Sound, Inc.), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization dedicated to bringing art, music and horticultural education and experiences to underserved and marginalized communities. MAPS, an interdisciplinary arts organization, was founded by visual artist/puppet-maker, Rachel Sherk, and composer/performer, Aaron Rourk. Rachel holds an MA in Puppetry and Community Activism from NYU. Aaron holds an MFA in Sonic Arts and is a Master Gardener.

**Where:** The Great Barrington Libraries, Mason (Great Barrington) and Ramsdell (Housatonic)

**What:** Artist-in-Residence Program, growing a “Literature Garden”

MAPS will initiate a community engaged artist-in-residence program at both the Mason Library and the Ramsdell Library. MAPS artists, Rachel Sherk and Aaron Rourk, will share their artistic practices with the community while also working together alongside the community to build and grow a “Literature Garden” that will thrive in years to come.

**When:** A year-long artist-in-residence program starting in June 2023 and running through June 2024, with elements continuing into future years.

**Project Description:** Libraries are an essential gathering space for the community, and what better reason to gather than in the pursuit of art and community engagement. As artists-in-residence, we will use the wealth of public resources that our library provides as artistic tools, demonstrating our own artistic process while engaging the local community in collaborative art-making. We will research using all the tools the library has to offer (literature, encyclopedias, online resources, the vast array of objects in “The Library of Things”) as we dive into the collections of both the Mason and Ramsdell locations and make our artistic processes public as we encourage our neighbors to join us in the exploration and practice of making creative work.

The through line of this work will be the creation of a community-designed “Literature Garden” which will encapsulate our own artworks along with creative work from the community. The garden will bring together all of the varied topics that MAPS utilizes - literature, visual arts, sculpture, puppetry, music composition and community

engagement. Part of our artistic process is diving into research, a classic library activity; we also love involving local communities in our projects. At MAPS, we conduct research using both traditional resources, like books and online tools, along with nontraditional resources, such as visual arts, color studies, music journals, tools and technology (The Library of Things!), and conversations with local communities. Throughout a year-long artist residency, we will create artworks within the library during open hours, encouraging interested library patrons to join us as we work. Along with this, we will lead workshops and dialogues as we work toward synthesizing our artistic pursuits into two community gardens. At the Mason Library we will grow a shade garden behind the library. At the Ramsdell Library we will create an accessible garden at the library's sun-filled entrance. Both of these gardens will be inspired by literature in the respective libraries, as explained below.

### **Culminating Project: Literature Garden**

Imagine a garden inspired by literature that one could wander through and take in not only the fragrances, the beautiful blooms and the artful structure, but also read beautiful passages from great books! After passing through the garden, one could go directly inside the library to find one of the books featured in the garden. MAPS is eager to create these kinds of exciting experiences in collaboration with the Great Barrington library community.

In this project, MAPS will encourage library patrons to identify and tag mentions to plants in literature. Whether a person enjoys fiction or nonfiction, cookbooks or poetry, plants are continually acknowledged in both historic and contemporary writing. We will ask the community to keep track of these "plant-passages" via custom calling cards that note the book, author, page number and specific passage. In spring, the plants represented in the accumulated passages will be organized into two "Literature Gardens" (a name which is subject to change based on patron input), one at each library. MAPS will lead workshops in plant propagation and will utilize the libraries' research capacities to determine appropriate plants for the Berkshires' climate, with a focus on native plantings where possible. Plants will be grown from seed (both purchased and wild-collected), nurtured and installed in the garden along with small placards that denote each plant's "place" in literature. MAPS artists, library patrons, staff and other volunteers will work together to tend the garden (weeding, watering, mulching, etc.) throughout the summer of 2024 and into the future!

### **How:**



From June to September 2023, MAPS artists, Rachel Sherk and Aaron Rourk, will be in residence at each library one day a week, stationed in a conspicuous location within the library, during “MAPS Time”. MAPS artists will be visible and approachable as they create small-scale artworks inspired by the collected plant-passages. Rachel will use multimedia collage and painting practices to synthesize visual and text-based artworks. Aaron will compose emergent, blooming sound works that blend acoustic instruments with electronic sound-shaping technologies. Patrons will be invited to observe the artists’ creative process and influence the artworks that are created and to contribute the plant-passages they have identified. We will make a point to involve the library’s collection into our workshops, making use of books, research tools and “The Library of Things.” Over the fall, winter and into 2024, the “MAPS Time” schedule will shift to a bi-monthly routine.

Once a season, MAPS will host a community meeting for patrons to gather to read aloud notable plant-passages and discuss plants, plans and technical considerations for the Literature Gardens. We will research the needs of the plants that have been identified, look at garden plans for inspiration and create new garden designs that consider color, plant size, growth rates, blooms times, and more. In our planning process, should a plant come up that is inappropriate for some reason (climate, cultural requirements, invasive species, poisonous, etc.), appropriate alternatives will be identified with help from MAPS’s horticultural expertise (Aaron is a Master Gardener, Rachel has gardened since childhood).

When mid- and late-summer arrive, MAPS will guide patrons in the collection, cleaning and storage of wild seeds. Other seeds may need to be purchased from reputable seed companies. Some seeds require overwintering in order to foster germination, others can be direct sown. MAPS will grow species in our small nursery, and any patron with seed starting experience and/or interest will be encouraged to grow species as well. MAPS will host seed-starting workshops to introduce patrons to the basics of propagation and to the special requirements of the particular species that have been chosen for the Literature Garden. In the spring of 2024, when seeds have germinated, MAPS will lead patrons in the necessary steps (fertilizing, potting on to an appropriate medium, etc.) to grow seedlings into healthy specimens that are ready for planting out in the garden. When the plants are ready, garden beds will be created and the plants will be transplanted by the community.

Once the garden is installed MAPS will continue to support the garden by overseeing weeding and upkeep, with help from community volunteers and interested library staff.

We will also explore the option of involving volunteers from the Western Massachusetts Master Gardener Association.

**Why:** Our society is in crisis due to a myriad of persistent problems - the worst potential consequences of climate change loom and our society is suffering a crisis of identity as individuals grapple with social media platforms, crises of housing, systemic racism, national and international political strife, environmental disasters, and so much more.

The space of the library has always been a place to come together as a community and find information. Traditionally that was through books, but libraries have grown to include much more, including our wonderful Mason and Ramsdell branches where you can check out a sewing machine, a metal detector, a subscription to New York Times Cooking, and other amazing resources.

Libraries, filled with books and other wonderful learning tools, have so much to teach us about so many things. As artists-in-residence at both libraries, MAPS will make use of these learning tools and share them with patrons. The space of a library is saturated with knowledge; the natural world is no different. In fact, our environment and the plants and animals that live within function quite similarly to a library. Like a library, which brings together people and knowledge, the natural world connects plants, animals, ecosystems, environments, climates, soil, and weather. We can learn so much by watching nature and gardening gets us out into the ecosystem!

By encouraging library patrons to dive deeply into literature and find mentions of plants and other natural phenomena, we hope to foster a sense of connection with the natural world and with the world of storytelling. Salman Rushdie calls us the “storytelling animal.” In this project, we will ground ourselves in story as we connect to our animal roots, just one species of the 200 million others with which we share Earth.

### **Past Work with Libraries:**

MAPS has been programming with libraries since before we existed as a nonprofit organization! It all began way back in 2011 when Rachel Sherk, future co-founder of MAPS, led a socially engaged art project at the John G. McCullough Free Library in North Bennington, Vermont. Over the course of a few months, Sherk brought various forms of art-making to the library, collaborating with local visual artists, culinary artists, and musicians. Following that work, Sherk created songwriting and performance workshops at the Starr Library in Rhinebeck, NY. The workshops culminated in a

gallery show hung amongst the book racks for patrons to view as they pursued the shelves.

Early in his own career, Aaron Rourk (the other future co-founder of MAPS) brought musical performances to libraries near his hometown in Maine, namely the Northeast Harbor Library and the Jesup Memorial Library in Bar Harbor.

When Sherk and Rourk founded MAPS in 2018, one of their first community-engaged art projects was at the NYPL's Tompkin Square Library in Manhattan. The project culminated in a series of sound art compositions made in collaboration with the local community. As artists-in-residence, Sherk and Rourk spent two afternoons a week throughout the summer making audio recordings of community members' favorite passages from literature, and original poetry and prose created by library patrons. These sound bits were then molded into an audio composition which was performed live at the library.

MAPS has also led various workshops for youths at the Tompkin Square Library, leading children in the creation of puppets inspired by the summer reading theme "Outer Space".

When COVID-19 caused mass closures of public spaces, MAPS created an online resource for the Harlem Public Library in Manhattan. Using the local Marcus Garvey Park as the inspiration, MAPS created a remote learning video for the library that featured an original chimera creature and used storytelling to engage youths in reading, local history, the environment and at-home art-making.

Since relocating to Great Barrington, MA, MAPS has created several programs for the Mason Library, incorporating the library's rotating themes. These programs included a dinosaur puppet-making workshop and an alien mask-making workshop for youths and their guardians.

MAPS deeply believes in the library system and is committed to engaging the local community through the use of the library's wealth of resources. A library is a communal space for sharing knowledge and inspiration and for coming together as a community.

## **Schedule**

*During each “**MAPS Time**” one MAPS artist will be at the **Mason Library** and one at the **Ramsdell Library** for a **four-hour period of time**. So each library will have an artist working and programming with the community. Community Meetings will last for roughly one hour.*

6/7	“MAPS Time”
6/14	“MAPS Time”
6/21	“MAPS Time”
6/22	Community Meeting
6/28	“MAPS Time”
7/5	“MAPS Time”
7/6	“MAPS Time”
7/12	“MAPS Time”
7/19	“MAPS Time”
7/20	Community Meeting
7/26	“MAPS Time”
8/2	“MAPS Time”
8/9	“MAPS Time”
8/16	“MAPS Time”
8/23	“MAPS Time”
8/24	Community Meeting
8/30	“MAPS Time”
9/6	“MAPS Time”
9/13	“MAPS Time”
9/20	“MAPS Time”
9/21	Community Meeting
9/27	“MAPS Time”
10/4	“MAPS Time”
10/18	“MAPS Time”
10/19	Community Meeting
11/1	“MAPS Time”
11/15	“MAPS Time”
11/16	Community Meeting
11/29	“MAPS Time”
12/6	“MAPS Time”
12/13	“MAPS Time”

1/3 "MAPS Time"  
 1/18 Community Meeting  
 1/17 "MAPS Time"  
 1/31 "MAPS Time"  
 2/14 "MAPS Time"  
 2/28 "MAPS Time"  
 2/29 Community Meeting  
 3/13 "MAPS Time"  
 3/27 "MAPS Time"  
 3/28 Community Meeting  
 4/10 "MAPS Time"  
 4/24 "MAPS Time"  
 4/25 Community Meeting  
 5/8 "MAPS Time"  
 5/22 "MAPS Time"  
 5/23 Community Meeting  
 6/5 "MAPS Time"  
 6/12 "MAPS Time"  
 6/19 "MAPS Time"  
 6/26 "MAPS Time"  
 6/27 Community Meeting

Total hours for "MAPS Time": 320 hours  
 Total Community Meetings: 12 meetings (~12 hours)

## Budget

*\*donations will be pursued for the material goods listed herein*

*\*\*MAPS does not expect the Great Barrington Libraries to cover all of these costs.*

*\*\*\*MAPS will apply for grants and other funding to supplement any funding the library may be able to provide. MAPS is incredibly excited by this project and understands that funding is a challenge, we are prepared to secure funding!*

Facilitation:	\$49,200.00
Art Materials:	\$2,000.00 (MAPS already secured grant)
Seeds:	\$1,000.00
Seed-Starting Mix:	\$200.00
Fertilizer:	\$200.00

Compost:	\$200.00
Topsoil:	\$120.00
Mulch:	\$120.00
Tools:	In Kind Donations

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TOTAL:	\$53,040.00
Securred:	\$2,000.00
<b>Total Needed:</b>	<b>\$51,040.00</b>

**MAPS will be applying to these grants and foundations to fund this project:**

*\*we will continue to identify grants and add them to this list*

- Great Barrington Cultural Council
- Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation
- The Feigenbaum Foundation
- Housatonic Heritage
- Mass Humanities
- Mass Cultural Council
- Lee Bank Grant
- Guido's Fresh Marketplace Grants
- Various Private Family Foundations