

Great Barrington Libraries Board of Trustees  
December 12, 2017  
Mason Library  
231 Main Street  
Great Barrington, MA 01230

I. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 5:33 p.m.

A. Attendance: Patrick Hollenbeck, Hilda Banks-Shapiro, Dana Coleman, Lauren Clark, Susan Beacco

Absent: Kathy Plungis

Also Present: Amanda DeGiorgis, Director, Audience: 5

B. Approve November Minutes: DC: MOTION TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER MINUTES, SB: 2<sup>nd</sup>, No Discussion, Vote: 5 - 0

C. Friends: H. Hamer: November booksale raised about \$1,000. They are selling out of books and would encourage new donations of quality books. The December movie went well. The next movie is called "Bugs" about scientist and chefs who explore ways to use bugs for food. Holly brought \$25.00 gift certificates to the Marketplace for all library staff as a gift from the Friends.

D. Trustee Announcements: ADeG would like to allocate funds for programming from January - June from State Aid account in the amount of \$5,000.00. \$500.00 would be allocated for licensing and the web site, \$1,850.00 would go to Ramsdell, and \$2,650.00 would go to Mason. PH mentioned the acoustics at the library makes it difficult to hear musicians and other performers and perhaps rugs might help. DC: MOTION TO APPROVE \$5,000.00 FROM STATE AID FROM JANUARY 1, 2018 TO JUNE 30, 2018. HBS: 2nd. NO DISCUSSION. Vote: 5-0.

F. Citizens Speak: A Library volunteer stated it is Town budget season and it is vital for Library Trustees to be present at Finance and Selectboard meetings. A former patron spoke regarding access to the library and asked the Board to take action on their request.

II. Reports of Officers, Boards, Standing Committees:

A. Buildings and Grounds: K. Plungis absent.

B. Director's Report: A. DeGiorgis: (see attached report) The carpet has been cleaned downstairs, and upstairs will be done soon. The floors at Ramsdell will be done soon and the library will be closed for one weekend. The Holiday Stroll program at Mason was a success thanks to our house band, Lucky 5. Special Thanks to the Friends for assisting our staff in making this annual event the highlight of the holiday season. It was suggested that in the future the event should start at 4.p.m. The first biannual staff meeting went very well. They reviewed policies and procedures, as well spent time getting to know each other better. The next such meeting will be in June. The Action Plan for FY2019 was submitted and she will be working on this from July, 2018-June, 2019.

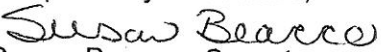
C. Treasurer's Report: K. Plungis absent.

III. Unfinished Business: PH passed out "job descriptions" for a library trustee. Discussion of what it means to be a trustee. Most important to the job: advocate at government level, fundraising, public relations

V. Adjournment: PH MOTION TO ADJOURN at 6: 52 pm. HBS seconded. Vote: 5 - 0

Next Trustee meeting: Thursday, January 11, 2018.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Susan Beacco, Secretary

**Statistics: November**

	Total Patrons	Adult programs	Children's programs	Computer use +iPad	Quiet/ study	Meeting room	Circulation
Ramsdell	537	2 programs 11 attending	2 programs 11 attending	23 (2 iPads)	0	-	1,121*
Mason	9,525	8 programs 151 attending	21 programs 315 attending	1,185 (168 Kids)	138	39	9,641**

\*DVD: 332 Audio: 107 Books: 655

\*\*DVD: 2,307 Audio: 849 Books: 6,381

**News, Projects and Proposals:**❖ **Mason and Ramsdell:**

- Maintenance: Carpet cleaning at Mason was HUGE success. The upstairs will be cleaned next but the date is TBD. Floor refinishing at Ramsdell will take place February 5 - 17. Ramsdell will be closed February 5 and will reopen after President's Day weekend on February 20<sup>th</sup>. Only one Sunday opening will be impacted.
- Holiday Stroll 2017 went very well despite the wintery weather. We had a great turnout and I would like to thank Holly, Ed and Pat for all their help in setting up and taking it down. If we participate again next year I think we will move the performance to 4pm as many people arrived just as the band was wrapping up.
- Mason's display cases for the month of November were courtesy of Muddy Brook's and Monument Valley's art classes. Muddy Brook's students created miniature books and Monument Valley's students have created small business card art. Thank you to Kathy for setting up these displays. They were well received and provided some much needed color in the Main Reading Room.
- The Book Lover's Book Club hosted local author Aaron Thier at their November meeting. Aaron talked about his new book, *Mr. Eternity*, which was a finalist for the Thurber Prize for American Humor this year.

❖ **News:**

- First biannual staff Meeting occurred on Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to Patrick for providing snacks from Extra Special Teas. I would also like to thank Cherri for baking for us. The staff meeting went well and the feedback I have received has been positive. It was nice to have everyone in one room at the same time and to be able to go over policies, procedures and upcoming changes to Evergreen. I am planning on the next Staff Meeting in June 2018 before Summer Reading starts.
- Louisa Lebwohl, one of our Sunday staff, will be leaving us the first of the year. She will be moving to NYC to complete her MLS and to get more library experience.

Louisa was a great help and such a friendly face behind the desk. She will be missed and I thank her for her work at Ramsdell.

- Talya and Laurie presented the Word of Mouth Marketing program to the staff at the staff meeting. The two presented six books to the staff to vote on for the GB Reads program that they are planning for March. The titles were *Notorious RBG: The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsburg* by Irin Carmon, *The Omnivore's Dilemma* by Michael Pollan, *Elon Musk: Tesla, SpaceX, and the Quest for a Fantastic Future* by Ashlee Vance, *Hidden Figures* by Margot Shetterly, *The Elephant Whisperer* by Lawrence Anthony and *The Distance Between Us* by Reyna Grande. Laurie and Talya are hoping to get the book picked before Christmas.

❖ **Action Plan FY2019:** I submitted our Action Plan for FY 2019 with the Mass Board of Library Commissioners. This will run from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019. **See below**

*Objective: Investigate and determine appropriate renovations for Ramsdell Library.*

Actions:

1. By middle of 2018, in conjunction with the consultant, determine feasibility of raising adequate funds for construction.
2. By the end of 2018, design plans will be approved and build ready.
3. By beginning of 2019, launch publicity & fundraising campaign to renovate Ramsdell Library.

*Objective: Maintain buildings by working with DPW, Trustees and other groups.*

Actions:

1. Conduct inspections of building and grounds with DPW & Trustees (annually).
2. By the end of 2018, create a schedule with DPW for annual cleaning of carpets, upholstery & windows for both libraries, and yearly maintenance of tile and brick floors.

*Objective: Support staff professional development.*

Actions:

1. Annually provide staff training on new technologies and the opportunity to attend continuing education workshops.
2. Annually provide performance reviews for all staff.
3. By the end of 2019, educate staff on new technology (databases or devices) used by the library or the public in their day-to-day living.

*Objective: Improve usage through better communication to the community.*

Actions:

1. By the end of 2018, evaluate social media being used by community and readjust ours as needed.
2. During FY2019, investigate coordinated publicity with the Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce, Berkshire South Regional Community Center and CHP (Community Health Programs).

*Objective: Offer entertaining and enriching programs for all patrons.*

Actions:

1. Annually continue to pursue cultural council grants for funding of all programs.
2. By mid-2018, plan a series of workshops based on results of local advertisement.
3. By the end of 2019, create five artists' workshops at Ramsdell.
4. Explore music programming by the end of FY2019.

*Objective: Offer enticing and interesting materials in formats best suited to our patrons.*

Actions:

1. Monitor and review material usage and create emphasis based on usage, patron interest and research (annually).
2. During FY2019, explore adding fiction and nonfiction in foreign languages.

*Objective: Update the library's technology systems and offerings on a regular basis.*

Actions:

1. By end of FY2019, update technology in accordance with Town technology replacement plan.
2. Evaluate technological trends and how to provide support and access to our patrons (ongoing).

*Objective: Partner with other community groups on joint programs and initiatives.*

Actions:

1. Continue to work with the Berkshire Women's Writer's Festival in hosting and sponsoring events (annually).
2. Continue to work with CHP and South Berkshire Kids to provide programs for children and underserved parents.

*Objective: Encourage volunteerism at both libraries.*

Actions:

1. By the end of 2018, create a volunteer manual.



Appropriated Account	Date	Mason		LP		YA		Child		Contn.		Ramsdell		Start	Rollover FY17	Total	Balance	total spent
		Adult	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	Start					
Books/Subscriptions	12/1/2017	\$29,700	\$19,753.46	\$6,400	\$3,554.13	\$3,375	\$884.86	\$16,925	\$8,324.51	\$2,000	\$15,100	\$8,846.66	\$1,500	\$75,000		\$76,000.00	\$44,467.53	\$40,532.47
Dues	12/1/2017		\$410	\$132.00										\$410		\$410.00	\$132.00	\$278.00
Equipment Repairs	12/1/2017	\$1,255	\$229.53											\$2,000		\$2,000.00	\$249.53	\$1,750.47
Non-Print	12/1/2017	\$16,500	\$11,111.67											\$34,000	\$3,183.70	\$37,183.70	\$24,493.27	\$12,690.43
Office Supplies	12/1/2017	\$6,300	\$2,958.82											\$9,800	\$1,563.47	\$11,363.47	\$5,394.64	\$5,968.83
Program Supplies	12/1/2017	\$800	\$517.97											\$3,000		\$3,000.00	\$1,562.17	\$1,437.83
Water/Sewer	12/1/2017	\$1,500	\$945.89											\$2,500		\$2,500.00	\$1,511.19	\$988.81

Non-Appropriated in-Library		Balance	
Account	Date	Mason	Ramsdell
Out of State Fees	12/1/2017	\$75.00	\$0.00
Copier Fees	12/1/2017	\$1,530.35	\$71.00
Fines	12/1/2017	\$6,146.93	\$323.53
Donations	12/1/2017	\$15,168.41	\$12,697.20

Non-Appropriated Trusts		Balance		Stipulations
Account	Date	Mason	Ramsdell	
Mason Trust	12/1/2017	\$171.94		Spend interest only. Mason only.
Ramsdell Trust	12/1/2017	\$2,560.21		Spend interest only. Ramsdell only.
Chesnow	12/1/2017	\$614.59		Spend interest only. Literacy related
Wheeler	12/1/2017	\$273.98		Unrestricted by library or purpose
Hollenbeck	12/1/2017	\$142.25		Spend interest only. New books for Mason.
Dewey	12/1/2017	\$173.33		Spend interest only. Nonfiction books for Mason
McKinley	12/1/2017	\$4,349.91		Spend interest only. Traditionally for large print for Mason but otherwise unrestricted
Smith	12/1/2017	\$1,040.02		Spend interest only. Traditionally for children's but no library specified
Ramsdell Improvements	12/1/2017	\$2,948.83		Improvements for Ramsdell only.

Capitol Accounts		Date	Balance	
M Capitol Donations	12/1/2017	\$1,739.06	Mason only. For capital projects.	
R Capitol Donations	12/1/2017	\$5,118.00	Ramsdell only. \$1000 earmarked for parking lot. For capital projects	

State Aid		Balance	
Account	Date	Start	Current
Mason Adult	12/1/2017	\$700.00	\$15.00
Mason Children's	12/1/2017	\$2,300.00	\$450.00
Ramsdell	12/1/2017	\$1,500.00	\$245.00
Other	12/1/2017	\$500.00	\$500.00
Total Allotted		\$5,000.00	\$1,210.00
Total in Account		\$36,289.36	
Total Available after allocation			\$35,079.36





# Urban Libraries Council

## LEADERSHIP BRIEF

### FIVE LEADERSHIP ROLES FOR LIBRARY TRUSTEES

**About this Leadership Brief** Library boards of trustees carry out governing, policy, and planning activities to guide public libraries in communities throughout the country. In these turbulent times—when libraries face shrinking resources, demands for new technology services, and changing community expectations—trustees are much more than members of a traditional governing body. They are strategic leaders who serve as visionaries, community connectors, fundraisers, public voices, ambassadors, and persistent champions.

While library services are sometimes considered discretionary when it comes to allocating limited public funds, today's library is an essential community resource that strengthens economic vitality, improves literacy, supports workforce development, and bridges the digital divide. As community leaders who understand the dimensions of modern library services, trustees can be the voice that shifts the library's position among decision makers and funders from discretionary to *essential*.

This Leadership Brief describes the five critical roles elected and appointed trustees play in shaping the 21st-century library. These roles emphasize how trustees help define the public library's place in the community, ensure that the library stays connected to community needs and interests, and generate support for the library's long-term future.

#### The 21st-century Library Trustee

Trustees come to their volunteer community roles with a range of experiences and backgrounds. The decision to become involved with the library might be rooted in a long-time connection as a library user or might be an outgrowth of involvement in other community agendas. But the bottom line is a desire to ensure the long-term vitality of the public library in the community.

Library boards have fundamental governing responsibilities, usually established by local code or state law, which are intended to ensure that the library operates from a solid and trusted governance base.

#### TRUSTEE GOVERNING ROLES

- Hire and evaluate the library director
- Monitor and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the library
- Set library policies
- Review and adopt the annual budget
- Develop long-term library plans
- Advocate for the library
- Communicate regularly with the library director
- Conduct the affairs of the board at regularly scheduled meetings

Just as the 21st-century library is broadening its impact, expanding its reach and deepening its community connections, library trustees must follow suit, both as a collective governing body and as individuals with community influence. Often it is the trustees' work outside the library—the spontaneous connections in non-library settings, the passionate commitment to the library every day, the visible support for the library and its director, the willingness to

talk about the library regularly—that offers the greatest value and the most promising results.

In addition to the traditional governing responsibilities, five leadership roles that trustees carry out to support the 21st-century public library are

1. **Visionary**—crafting and supporting implementation of a long-term vision to strategically position the library throughout the community;
2. **Connector**—expanding the library's circle of influence in the community by building relationships and creating productive partnerships;
3. **Fundraiser**—advocating for the library's budget with financial decision makers and acting as a force for fundraising;
4. **Voice**—being a visible, consistent, reliable, determined, and loud voice for the library in the community;
5. **Team Player**—working together to strengthen the influence of the library board and ensure representative participation when board vacancies occur.





## Library Trustee as Visionary

Working closely with the library director, trustees help craft and support implementation of a long-term vision that will strategically position the library throughout the community. A range of social, economic, environmental, and technological trends have influenced the services, direction, and vision for public libraries. A library's ability to anticipate and respond quickly to emerging trends will strengthen its position in the community and build sustained support.

Trustees help shape and implement the library's strategic vision by

- being familiar with and committed to long-term plans and strategies;
- paying attention to and sharing local trends with the board and staff to assess their potential impact on library services;
- supporting creative and visionary action plans recommended by the library director;
- listening to the community to connect emerging interests and needs with library services;
- talking about the library vision and strategic plan whenever and wherever possible to increase public awareness of the library's capacities, services, and long-term role as an essential—*not discretionary*—community asset;
- encouraging and supporting attention to both visionary planning and efficient day-to-day operations to ensure that the trustees and the library staff collectively keep an eye on the future.

### TRUSTEE STRATEGIC ROLES

- Strategically positioning the library in the community
- Expanding the library's circle of influence in the community
- Advocating for the library's budget and acting as a force for fundraising
- Being a visible, consistent, reliable, determined, and loud voice for the library
- Working together to strengthen the influence of the library board

## Library Trustee as Connector

Trustees help expand the library's circle of involvement and influence by serving as a bridge between the library and the community. Their broad knowledge of library services and capacities, combined with their deep professional and community connections, can bring new library users, supporters, and champions to the fold. Even more important, these connections will open doors and help the library director get to the tables where important community decisions are made.

Many community and government leaders have acknowledged that they did not recognize the library's potential to support major community initiatives until someone offered it as a resource. From supporting early literacy efforts to providing services to seniors—and everything in between—public libraries build their services and create their program agendas around the needs of the community.

Trustees help broaden the library's circle of influence by

- raising awareness of library services, capacities, plans, and place in the community;
- recognizing and promoting the public library as a resource that has expertise and capacity far beyond lending books;

- attending public meetings such as the city or county council to network with decision makers and learn about public priorities;
- recommending library leaders for positions on non-profit and government boards and commissions;
- creating partnerships with organizations that do not typically work with the library;
- identifying people who have community influence and who may be interested in library service and connections.

Positioning the library in the community is a constant challenge. When services were more traditional and competition more limited, the library's role in the community was simpler, clearer, and narrower. With library agendas and capacities that support larger community goals in education, public safety, economic development, the environment, and more, creating the connections that maximize potential and increase the library's value proposition requires systematic and strategic outreach.

Examples of community connections that help broaden the library's circle of influence include

- local elected officials—mayors, city council members, county executives, and county commissioners;
- school district leaders—superintendents of schools and boards of education chairs;
- key players in economic development;
- groups involved in workforce development/job services;
- health care providers;
- major regional employers;
- local media and communication experts to support library marketing efforts;
- philanthropic leaders;
- key business leaders such as bankers, financial and investment planners, and retail owners.





To be effective in this outreach role, library trustees need resources that support their work—practical information sheets that highlight what makes today's library different, easy-to-remember messages that summarize the library's desired role in the community, talking points that highlight current priorities and challenges, and business cards that identify the individual's connection to the library and highlight library strategies. While seasoned library trustees are generally well-versed in themes and messages, staff can facilitate their effectiveness in diverse settings by providing simple tools and resources.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

- Connected
- Committed
- Supportive
- Apolitical
- Passionate
- Willing to show up
- Dedicated
- Open-minded
- Curious
- Interested in community issues
- Visible

#### Library Trustee as Fundraiser

During tough economic times, the trustee role as financial advocate becomes paramount. Regardless of the library's financial structure or sources of funding, trustees must be financial champions who can articulate the library's value proposition clearly and confidently. With public budgets tighter than ever, private funding secured through library foundations is becoming essential to sustain library operations.

The network of supporters and community connections that trustees help build provides the foundation for

fundraising. Keys to success as a library financial champion include

- understanding and being able to explain the library's financial structure; including sources of income and the status of those sources;
- being able to articulate the library's value to the community;
- knowing what the current financial needs are;
- developing a clear outreach strategy that identifies the best contacts based on their financial capacity and their connection to the library;
- having a specific, well-defined, and well-supported "ask" for each potential funder.

It is important to separate the relationship building and fundraising processes so that it doesn't appear that all relationships center around seeking financial support. The first contact should not be an "ask" for a donation. However, successful relationship-building processes that bring key stakeholders closer to the library will contribute to successful fundraising efforts.

#### Library Trustee as Voice

In an increasingly noisy and competitive market, the library voice must be louder. And library trustees can and should play a major role in that work by finding, defining, and exercising their individual and collective voices on behalf of the public library.

Trustees help raise the library's profile by being a visible, consistent, reliable, determined, and amplified voice for the library in the community. The broad role libraries play in the community and the remarkable range of services provided are becoming better known. However, some library directors admit that marketing, branding and telling the library story can be difficult, therefore it is essential to have strong trustee voices to share the powerful story of the library.

Some trustees have acknowledged that their role and the work they do is often not visible outside the library. In an effort to meet this challenge, the library can include goals in its strategic plan in which the board's impact can be broadened, their profile raised, and their voice defined.

Specific ways trustees can use their voice include

- talking about the library often and in diverse settings—rather than just in library-related meetings;
- supporting library marketing and branding, including allocating budget funds to marketing and participating personally in marketing work;
- identifying specific library services or capacities that will resonate with particular constituencies and connections and sharing that information;
- wearing a library hat at all times, not just when doing library business;
- being identified throughout the community as someone who is connected to, knowledgeable about, and dedicated to supporting the public library.

#### Library Trustee as Team Player

Trustees are both individuals with a commitment to the library's success and members of a governing board. It is important to give equal attention to both roles. As members of a governing board, trustees work together—in partnership with the library staff—to ensure effective operations, monitor finances, assess user input, and develop a shared vision for the library's future. As individuals, trustees leverage their personal and professional interests and connections to raise the library's profile in the community and support the shared library vision.

**Continued on page 4**





## Library Trustee as Team Player (continued)

Connecting the group and individual roles will increase the board's influence and credibility. For example, systematically cataloging individual connections, developing coordinated outreach plans, sharing successful outreach and fundraising techniques, and monitoring results will broaden the impact of efforts to increase the library's circle of influence.

Because of the importance of the trustee's external role, ensuring that the board represents all sectors of the community will increase its credibility and influence. And board members can play an important role in identifying people to fill vacancies on the board to provide the best balance.

Trustees carry out their team member roles by

- participating in all board activities;
- communicating openly to build strong relationships with other board members and library staff;
- supporting team-building efforts to increase board effectiveness;
- participating enthusiastically in training and professional development opportunities designed to enhance trustee effectiveness;
- speaking and presenting regularly on behalf of the board as a collective community resource;
- working in partnership with other trustees on outreach and fundraising when multiple contacts will increase the likelihood of success;
- identifying with the board as a team.

### SERVING THE LIBRARY WELL

- Know the library
- Bring new people to the table
- Be there
- Open doors

## Strengthening the 21st-century Library

Trustees are essential to long-term library success. Their ability to connect with the community, work closely with the staff, and help raise funds to provide financial stability all contribute to stronger, more successful public libraries.

As with any volunteer commitment, serving on a library board of trustees is time consuming, demanding, and seemingly thankless. But the thanks comes from seeing the increasingly vital role that libraries play in communities

throughout North America. From the smile on a child's face when he or she first discovers the magic of the public library, to the intense focus of job seekers using public library Internet access to submit applications, to the relief of new immigrants who rely on the library to guide them in a strange new home, supporting successful public libraries provides incredible rewards.



**Special Thanks** The Urban Libraries Council thanks the members of its board, the library board members, library directors and the public libraries from across the United States and Canada as well as our generous sponsor and corporate partner, **Brodart**, for creating the foundation for this Leadership Brief in Washington, DC, in June 2010.



Cleveland Public Library (OH)  
New Haven Public Library (CT)  
San Antonio Public Library (TX)  
Santa Clara County Library (CA)  
Detroit Public Library (MI)

Johnson County Library (KS)  
Carnegie Library Of Pittsburgh (PA)  
Cuyahoga County Library (OH)  
New York Public Library (NY)  
Toronto Public Library (ON)

East Baton Rouge Parish Library (LA)  
Chattahoochee Valley Libraries (GA)  
Ottawa Public Library (ON)  
Jefferson County Library (CO)

**About Brodart** Since 1939 Brodart has been the premier supplier of shelf-ready materials to libraries delivering carefully selected, cataloged and processed books, as well as automation resource tools. Today, Brodart offers state-of-the-art online tools, bibliographic services, and consulting exclusively to libraries. Customers select from over four million English-language titles, Spanish-language materials, plus audio and video products. Brodart Books & Automation serves libraries across the nation through McNaughton subscription services, customized selection tools, and flexible cataloging and processing options from standard jacket application to library-specific cataloging practices.

**About ULC** The Urban Libraries Council (ULC) has worked to strengthen public libraries as an essential part of urban life since 1971. As a member organization of North America's leading public library systems, ULC serves as a forum for research widely recognized and used by public and private sector leaders. Its members are thought leaders dedicated to leadership, innovation and the continuous transformation of libraries to meet community needs. As ULC celebrates its forty year anniversary, its work focuses on assisting public libraries to identify and utilize skills and strategies that match the challenges of the 21st Century.

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