

May 20, 2020 Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Friends of Brooks Memorial Library

The meeting was held by conference call. Participating were Joyce Marcel, Betsy Wagenknecht, Karen Duggan, Connie Kimball, Sue Dyer, John Komar, and Cindy Hutchenson, with Starr Latronica and Courtney Carey for the Library, Howard Burrows for the Trustees, and guests Kate Wylie, Carol Forsythe, Bob Oeser and Vidda Crochetta.

The meeting was called to order at 4:35pm.

The minutes were accepted with the corrected spelling of Cindy Hutchenson's name.

The treasurer's report was accepted and will be filed for audit. Our current treasury balance is \$44,274.45.

Connie presented the budget for 2020-21. She pointed out we have already gone over the proposed promotion budget because of the window signs. We approved a budget of \$32,250.

We all agreed-- the signs we purchased for the library windows look great!

Elected as officers for the next year were Joyce Marcel, President; Betsy Wagenknecht, Vice-President; Karen Duggan, Recording Secretary; and Connie Kimball, Treasurer. We were happy to accept Kate Wylie back as a returning board member.

Starr gave a library update. Although there is no anticipated reopening date, the library staff is getting prepared, with guidance from the state library department. The staff have worked extremely hard during the closure, completing online professional development, filling orders and cleaning library materials. The Town of Brattleboro Emergency Ordinance requires face masks in public buildings, so Starr has ordered 600 to have for patrons who might be without one. Cindy suggested a friendly reminder on the door about why we use masks (like the one posted at the Coop). There will be a shield around the circulation desks to ensure a safe distance between people. The town safety officer has determined that there may be 18 patrons plus staff on the main floor at any one time; the staff is removing furniture to limit seating. The decisions about time limits for visits and how to handle patrons in the Children's Room are still pending. Starr hopes to have outdoor seating available (particularly for Wi-Fi) once the town reopens outdoor dining at restaurants. Starr expressed gratitude for an innovative, flexible staff, and supportive Trustees and Friends. No matter the date set by the state, she assured us that the library will reopen only when she can be sure all policies are in place and all is safe at the library.

Starr has had no information from the Vermont Humanities Council regarding First Wednesdays.

We talked at length about the need for fundraising. John will find out whether we might sell "mystery" bags of books at the Farmers' Market or possibly at stores downtown, and Betsy will investigate how we might set up a system to use matching funds to encourage donations. Raising funds for online audio (music), online magazine subscriptions and online master classes were suggested as specific ideas for our fundraising, given the high usage of online services during the pandemic.

Howard suggested that there may be ways to deliver books to people; John is going to investigate this (suggested were meals-on-wheels, school lunch buses and shelves set up in other places in town).

Starr is looking into getting hand cream and cotton gloves for the staff, given the high frequency of their handwashing. She will get back to us for a specific request and we will vote by email, if necessary.

Starr thanked the Friends for all they do for the library.

The meeting adjourned at 6pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Duggan

Addendum: On May 30, the Friends voted by email to cancel our \$351 yearly subscription to Book Page, the popular book magazine we have been giving out at the library. Many board members expressed the desire to resubscribe when the library returns to normal functioning. Also by email, the Friends board approved these minutes.