

Great Barrington Libraries Board of Trustees
November 13, 2013
5:30 P.M.
Mason Library

I. Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Ed Abrahams at 5:32 P.M.

A. Attendance:

Present: ED ABRAHAMS (EA) HOLLY HAMER (HH)
 KATHY PLUNGIS (KP) HILDA BANKS-SHAPIRO (HB-S)
 LAUREN CLARK (LC) (arrived 5:40)
 ADAM GUDEON (AG)
 JESSICA MAGELANER (JM)

Audience: 1

B. Approval of October minutes .

There was one correction.

EA made a motion to accept.

2nd HB-S

Vote: 5-0

C. Trustees' Announcements:

None

II. Report of the Officers, Boards, & Standing Committees

A. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

EA Welcomed Adam Gudeon as our new Trustee and he extended a Thank you to the four other applicants for the position.

As part of the Transition process, EA also welcomed Jessica Magelaner as the Interim Library Director and stated that Donna Brown is serving as the Interim Assistant. EA stated that he will be meeting weekly with JM.

The Library Director job has been posted with an applicant deadline of Dec. 2nd.

HH, EA, two Selectmen & the Town Manager are on the selection committee.

EA thanked KP for organizing a Good Bye gathering for Kate Deviny.

EA also thanked Tom Warner for the effort he put into removing metal shelves from Ramsdell Library's basement, refiguring them, cleaning, and installing them on the left hand wall in the Young Adult room at Mason. His generous donation of his time was most appreciated. Approximately \$90 was spent in materials for the project. The bookcases previously discussed for this area will not be ordered.

B. Director's Report

JM Please see the attached report.

HH asked that the previously discussed Art Gallery for the Mason Library Community Room be pursued. EA will bring a proposal to the next meeting.

EA thanked JM and the Staff for the smooth Evergreen computer upgrading that occurred over Veteran's Day weekend.

LC asked about the Children's Authors' night. Wondered if the two Children's Librarians are working together on programming. Asked if there is a way to have a more coordinated program schedule. She would like to see the programming schedule be planned many months in advance.

HH suggested a Programming committee to be formed consisting of Staff and volunteers.

LC stated that AG, JM and herself will be meeting at a later date regarding this.

C. Treasurer's Report:

None

D. Friends' Report

HH presented the report for R. Blumenthal. The basketball film was one of the Friends' most successful events with approximately 35 people in attendance, including many of the Monument Mt. High School's boys' basketball team.

On the 20th of November the film will be "Brief Encounters".

A Used Book Sale will be held on the Saturdays in November. Each Saturday will have a particular theme.

The Children's Garden ping pong table has been put into storage for the winter.

E. Teen Room:

EA stated that with shelving now installed in the Young Adult room, the discussion will focus on the purchase of furniture. The Friends will order and pay for the furniture. A discussion revolved around the purchase of a couch and the pros and cons of such a purchase for that room. JM will also ask the Staff for their input regarding the appropriateness of the purchase.

IV. Unfinished Business

A. Ramsdell Initiatives Plan: LC spoke of the money allocation the Library received at the Town Meeting in May. She had attended a brainstorming session with the Town Manager, the DPW manager, and a representative from the Historical Commission regarding a reconfiguration of the Ramsdell basement in order to move historical artifacts down there. Preservation issues were a concern. The Town Manager will investigate other town storage areas. It is a goal to have the second floor at Ramsdell Library be put to more use by the public.

B. Bylaw review/revision: HH handed each Trustee a copy of the Bylaws with highlighted areas that are to be considered for revision. There will be a discussion and a vote on the Bylaws at the December meeting.

C. Policy Review: None

D. Tagline/Logo and Brochures: LC stated that the deadline for submission of a new logo is the end of November. So far, she has received 2 submissions. They and any other submissions will be reviewed at the December meeting. JM and L. Harrison, a Children's Librarian, will also view the logos. AG stated that JM will proof the brochures when he is in the final stage.

E. Long Range Plan Report: HH passed copies to each of the Trustees. KP voted to approved the Long Range Plan.
EA 2nd.
Vote: 6 - 0

F. Buildings & Maintenance/Repair Review:
HH will meet with JM to go over the list. Items of concern include: the drain on the Pleasant St. side of the Mason Library, the side steps at Mason, the exterior paint at Ramsdell Library, and the issue of mats being placed on the floor and steps at Ramsdell Library. The list will also be forwarded to the Town Manager, the DPW manager and to EA.

G. Smart Board: EA to meet with JM and the Town Manager.

H. Focus Group Report: KP: See report.

V. New Business:

A. Budget: JM stated that next year's salaries will show an increase in budget as that is part of a contract. Overall, the rest of the Budget will only show an increase of \$700, a \$300 increase in the postage and a \$400 increase in the copier fund (due to the cost of ink and paper). She needs the Trustee's approval by Dec. 2nd, 2013 as the Budget needs to be submitted to the Town Accountant by that date. EA thanked JM and the Staff for their diligence regarding the 2014 budget. HH moved to approve the 2014 - 2015 Budget. HB-S seconded the motion.
Vote: 6 - 0

B. Transition: EA stressed that this will be a partnership and that anyone should pass suggestions, ideas, onto EA, HH, JM or the Town Manager.

VI. Citizen Speak:
None.

VII. Adjournment:

HH made a Motion to Adjourn.
HB-S seconded.
The Board voted (6-0) to adjourn at 6:57 pm.
Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Plungis
Secretary

Statistics:

	Total Patrons	Adult programs	Children's programs	Computer use +iPad	Quiet/ study	Meeting room	Item added
Ramsdell	757	9 programs 71 attending	7 programs 31 attending	101 + 2	9	0	1
Mason	11,417	10 programs 99 attending	13 programs ? attending	1,350 +1 (258 kids)	169	28	4

News:**Teen Room:**

Katie will be ordering posters for the door to make it more inviting. More news on bookshelves from Ed?

Staffing notes:

Full-time employee Cheryl Attarian is out until December; with Kate also gone this leaves Mason short-staffed by two full-time employees. Part-time staff have offered to work extra hours to help cover on days where we are especially short.

Works in progress:

- Lauren Clark- has a library poster that she is going to mount for us. She needs to discuss how we want it mounted in the Community room so she can figure out how best to do this.
- Ruth Heuberger wants to do a children's author night with 3 other writers; Amanda is working on this.
- The Berkshire Miniature gamers (Jean Kollmer) wants to come back; Amanda is working on this.
- The Neighborhood Diner is creating placemats with ads for local businesses and organizations. The library has purchased a 2.5 X 4 ad for \$170 – this cost will be split between Ramsdell and Mason adult programming.
- Our Evergreen system was updated Veteran's Day weekend; the system was down from 6 PM November 8th through November 12th. Staff came in to Mason and worked together to get everything back in order before we opened November 12th – the upgrade was carried out successfully with minimal inconvenience to patrons.
- Adam is working on the brochures

HOW THE TOWN LIBRARIES FIT THE NEEDS OF VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

MINUTES FROM TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2013

9 AM

MASON LIBRARY

Present: K. Plungis, E. Abrahams, L. Clark, J. Tabakin, B. Andrus, J. Greene

While 17 organizations, individuals had been invited to the meeting, two organizations showed up: Betsy from the Chamber of Commerce and Jon from the Steiner School.

The Director of Simon's Rock and the Director of the south campus of BCC replied that they both would rather meet when the new Director is on board.

A comment received by an individual stated that our town libraries do not need to "fit" with the surrounding libraries, but to have a "unique, creative, and complimentary atmosphere in order to make our town libraries welcoming to all, which includes having a "forgiving attitude towards minor infractions". That it is more important to create a "welcoming atmosphere, with a pleasant greeting to one and all rather than trying to be everything to everybody".

I will attempt to contact the other organizations, individuals to see if they have any comments, concerns.

Overall, the meeting went well, with constructive ideas being offered.

1. One suggestion was for the area libraries (probably from at least Stockbridge, if not Lee and Lenox, down to Sheffield) meet at least quarterly (to start with) and to discuss each library's strengths.
2. That each library could have a link on their website to offerings-programs by other area libraries.
3. Possibly create a "Berkshires' Libraries" website. If not, then somewhere on each library's website info on each library: their hours, strengths, programs, any special interest (# of computers, etc.).

Other ideas brought up:

1. Mason Library to have a career center-monthly charge for fax, scanner, printer, etc.
2. Sunday afternoon hours at the libraries
3. More Spanish language books
4. Re Simon's Rock and BCC, should they give our libraries their reading lists and we have the books in our libraries? Do they need this?
5. Tutors use our study rooms in order to meet their students. Should we charge for this?
6. Steiner School students use our downstairs as a "safe place" when they get off the bus after school. Students and parents use the children's library for recreational purposes, attend the children's programming.
7. Publicity-are we doing enough?
8. Offer Poetry Slams-Ramsdell's 2nd floor might be good for this.
9. Improve service- may need more tutoring space, place small tables around the perimeter of the downstairs Community Room for this.
10. Do our Teens need career help offered by the libraries? (Check with high schools)
11. Offer space in our libraries for free performances, a place to hang up posters.

Simon's Rock Library Director: will meet with new Director
BCC South County " " " " " "

Long Range Plan Great Barrington Libraries 2011-2016

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the Long Range Planning Committee members who worked on this project: Trustees Ed Abrahams, Lauren Clark and Kathy Plungis, Library Director Kate Deviny, Assistant Director Jessica Magelaner, Bill Nappo, Kate Hold, Jim Stark, Ellie Smith and Bobbie Neausbaum.

Thanks to the library staff who made contributions and helped with editing and to Mary King of the MBLC who guided us through the planning process and facilitated our first planning session.

And final thanks to the patrons who responded thoughtfully to the user survey.

Approval of the plan

The Board of Trustees of the Great Barrington Libraries approved this revised Long Range Plan on November 13, 2013.

Planning Methodology

In December of 2012, we discovered that the current Long Range plan for 2011-2016 had not been fully approved by the MBLC and needed augmentation in the areas of goals and action plans.

That plan had these goals:

- I. Making the libraries and their materials available
- II. Reaching out
- III. Providing information, enrichment, and a community crossroads

Because the plan needed more detail and leadership at the libraries had changed, a new long range planning committee was formed to modify and supplement the original document.

The first meeting of the long range planning committee was held January 23, 2013. The Library Director gave an overview of the planning process which would follow the Massachusetts Library System (MLD) three-meeting model given at a roundtable discussion led by MLS staff. The committee decided that the library mission statement needed to be updated. The committee then met several times before and after the public forums and the survey completion to create defined goals.

During the first week of February, the survey was sent to all Great Barrington resident library cards holders who included email addresses in their information. The survey was designed by staff using Survey Monkey and was available only online and on iPads available at the libraries. A link to the online survey was also sent via the library's monthly email newsletter and posted on the library's homepage; bookmarks were created to publicize the survey. Responses were collected between February 1 and March 1, 2013.

Public forums were held on Saturday, February 16 at Mason Library and on Wednesday, February 19th at Ramsdell Library. Eight people attended the Mason forum which was lead by MLS advisor Mary King who administered a SOAR exercise (strengths, opportunities, aspirations, results.) The Ramsdell forum was led by Trustee Kathy Plungis and attracted thirty-five attendees.

All ideas were recorded (see appendix) and the committee grouped those comments into themes. Recurring themes were: encouraging use of both libraries by non-profit organizations; promotion of inter-generational relationships; building and strengthening connections between local organizations and the library; fostering a spirit of community, increasing volunteer opportunities and training, making Ramsdell Library ADA accessible and the theater space actively used.

With information from the forums, survey and suggestion boxes, the committee redefined the library goals as:

- I. Increase Usage
- II. Renovate Ramsdell Library
- III. Create community hub
- IV. Increase volunteer participation
- V. Technology readiness

The Library Director met with the Town Manager and the Town Planner to ensure that the library plans worked within the Town Master Plan (below). In August, the Library Director enlisted the staff to further refine the goals and to create an action plan. With that input, the Library Director created a final draft of the goals, objectives and action portions of the plan and finished writing the overall plan for submission to the Town Manager and the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees received copies of the draft plan at the October meeting. After revisions, they voted for acceptance of the report on Nov. 13, 2013.

The plan will be submitted to the MBLC before December 1, 2013 and will be given to the Select Board members.

Each fall the library director will give a progress update to the Board and submit a new action plan for the following fiscal year (July-June) which will be submitted to the MBLC by December first of that year.

Town of Great Barrington Master Plan

Service and facilities goals for the libraries noted in the Town of Great Barrington Master Plan include:

Goal SF 1: Maintain existing services, facilities, and programs

At a minimum, do not decrease police, fire, senior center or library funding....The library staff, along with an invigorated board and Friends group, provides diverse educational experiences and information to our evolving community

Goal SF 2: Be fiscally prudent by increasing partnerships and cooperation

Strategy 1.2: Consider memberships, cafes, business incubators, and other innovative methods to generate revenue from after-hours or special use of town facilities. Buildings like the Housatonic Community Center, the libraries and parks could be considered. Taxpayers rightly deserve access to town facilities but frequent special events and after-hours staff time can burden operational budgets.

Goal SF 3: Optimize the use of Town facilities

Strategy 3.2: Make accessibility improvements to Ramsdell Library. Because of the cost of these improvements, grant funding will be required. This is a medium to long term priority. If funding is limited, consider a partnership with private non-profit agencies.
Strategy 3.3: In concert with the resolution of the Housatonic School, consider improving the Housatonic Community Center with a community room on the southern or eastern sides. Either this building or an improved and accessible Ramsdell Library would be logical locations if senior services demand required program space in Housatonic.

Goal SF 5: Consolidate facilities and operations if possible

Strategy 5.3: If expansion of senior services to Housatonic is required, co-locate them at an improved Ramsdell Library or Housatonic Community Center.

Library Information

What the libraries do:

- provide current, informative and enriching materials in a variety of formats
- conduct and/or provide space for classes, workshops and lectures
- provide training on technological devices including computers, e-readers, tablets and microfilm readers
- promote creativity through collection development, workshops and films
- connect people with civic groups and community organizations
- initiate and/or lead book discussion groups and provide loan books for them
- provide programming which educates, entertains, helps foster community
- provide homework and learning resources for children and teens
- provide public and private work spaces for meeting, studying and reading
- provide disaster recovery centers
- provide free broadband internet access and devices to access such information
- provide archival storage for local history documents, photos and objects
- provide access to government and local news, documents, maps, and information

Hours:

Mason - Mon. - Fri. 10am -7pm, Sat. 10am-3pm.....50 hours

Ramsdell - Tues., Thurs., Fri., 12pm-6pm, Wed. 12pm-8:30pm, Sat. 10am-5pm..... 33.5 hours

Staff:

8 full-time, 5 part-time = 10.5 FTE

Collections:

Holdings - 93,976 (includes 22,680 downloadable or eBooks through CWMars)

Per Capita - 14 (pop. 6,700)

Annual Circulation - 148,777

Per Capita - 22

Interlibrary loans - out: 17, 245 in: 17,461

Other:

Yearly visitors: 138,004

Registered borrowers: 5,701

Times computers used: 18,447

Quiet rooms used: 1,779

Meeting rooms used: 1,870

Programs, adult: 219 attendance: 2,688

Programs, children: 220 attendance: 2,688

Assessment of User Needs

(see appendix: 2013 User Survey)

105 people filled out the attached survey with 67 of them over fifty years old. 31 were between 20 and 49. 85 of the respondents lived in Gt. Barrington/Housatonic and 54 worked in the area. There was little participation by younger people. 75% have used the branch library, Ramsdell, in Housatonic.

The main reason to use the library that people gave was the traditional one - to borrow books, videos, magazines and audio books. The main service used was to borrow books through interlibrary loans.

The library website and signs posted in the library were the two main methods used to find out about library events.

The development of proposed services to be offered at the library were all encouraged by the survey takers. Films and adult classes and lectures as well as children's crafts ranked high as programming priorities.

The library staff were ranked well and listed as a top reason for visiting. The buildings and convenient, downtown locations all factored highly in the overall ratings given.

Conclusions

The main use of the library is to take out items for primarily recreational reading, listening and viewing. Most of the patrons are Great Barrington and Housatonic residents but last year 52,000 items were loaned to people living in other Massachusetts towns, mostly nearby.

Many patrons have their own laptops but enjoy the speed and availability of high speed broadband both inside and outside the libraries. Patrons would like more computer classes. The use of interlibrary loans have increased and for the first time, our books loaned are equal to books borrowed from other libraries. Fewer young people use the library for homework or research, as is the national trend.

Patrons felt that improved publicity, marketing and outreach would be beneficial to awareness of library assets and offerings. They preferred traditional methods of promotion rather than electronic. That may be more reflective of the older average age of the participants; more contemporary methods including social media should be pursued.

The following five goals were developed from this assessment and further conversations with staff, patrons and Trustees.

Goal 1: Increase usage

Goal 2: Maintain and improve buildings

Goal 3: Establish the libraries as a community hub

Goal 4: Design and implement a volunteer program

Goal 5: Put technology at the forefront

Long Range Plan 2011-2016

Mission Statement: The Great Barrington Libraries mission is to inspire life long learning and to strengthen our communities. We seek to provide the tools for learning and the space to do so. We provide access to information and help our users connect with other resources and each other.

Goals, Objectives and Actions

Goal 1: Increase usage

Objective: Improve communication with users and community

Actions:

2013

- I. Establish a program committee to work on offerings and wider promotion
- II. Complete library promotional brochures
- III. Create an ad hoc advisory committee for book and media purchases

2014

- I. Provide library information on Senior Center and Town websites
- II. Review and update card holder data; do card holder drive
- III. Explore sending library pamphlet to all citizens with other town mailings
- IV. Create tracking and evaluation of most read and viewed items to inform further purchases

2015

- I. Review website for increased traffic and adjust coding, size or platform as necessary
- II. Explore the use of radio publicity
- III. Establish an annual card holder drive

Objective: Offer programs which speak to a wide range of participants and are well attended

Actions:

2013

- I. Coordinate planning, both adult and children's and Ramsdell's and Mason's with staff, Friends, Trustees and community members
- II. Track all programming, time of day, day of week and hour by attendance and cost to help evaluate and plan
- III. Revamp computer and technology classes; promote iPad and eReader use

2014

- I. Explore library's potential role in community as career and job center
- II. Survey other providers to see if library can fill a gap in language offerings
- III. Create programs which appeal to underserved groups: seniors and teens

2015

- I. Expand continuing education offerings and author book signings
- II. Use Ramsdell Theater for performing and visual arts classes
- III. Consider exchanging rehearsal space in Ramsdell Theater for free admission to practices

2016

- I. Incorporate experience with Ramsdell Theater usage with existing plans to help refine renovation plans
- II. raise needed funds for additional equipment such as increased seating, stage lights, etc.

Goal 2: Maintain and improve buildings

Objective: Investigate and determine best, feasible renovations for Ramsdell Library

Actions:

2013

- I. Trustees, town manager and town planner to review current usage and anticipate future usage as they review plans
- II. Pursue Community Preservation Act monies and other potential grants
- III. Finalize historical designation

2014

- I. Determine feasibility of raising adequate funds for construction
- II. Launch publicity and capital fund drives

2015

- I. Plans finalized, fundraising continues

2016

- I. Prepare for CIP funding vote FY 2017
- II. Fundraising continues

Objective: Maintain all buildings and grounds

Actions:

2013

- I. Trustees, DPW and Library Director establish and conduct annual inspections of buildings and grounds
- II. Create annual schedule with DPW for carpet, upholstered furniture, window cleaning and maintenance of tile and stone floors
- III. Complete repair of Mason front and side steps, Ramsdell steps and doors and installation of Ramsdell replacement windows and window repair
- IV. Complete upkeep list created with DPW

2014

- I. Enlist volunteers, senior tax abatement workers and/or House of Corrections and community service workers to assist with groundskeeping
- II. Finish cleaning, object removal and renovation of Ramsdell basement so that it can be used for clean, dry storage
- III. Build stand alone archival storage unit in basement for Historical Society and Commission use
- IV. Explore possibility of air conditioning theater prior to renovation
- V. Complete upkeep list created with DPW

2015

- I. Open up Ramsdell Theater, furnish and light and write policy for community use

2016

- I. Prepare for construction of elevator/addition FY 2017

Goal 3: Establish the libraries as a community hub

Objective: Continue to create physical and virtual spaces to posit the libraries as the town information hubs

Actions:

2013

- I. Provide bigger community bulletin boards in Mason Library
- II. Provide links to various library/Friends web and Facebook pages on main webpage
- III. Provide more after hours programming and community use of specified areas

2014

- I. Explore local volunteer recruitment fair at Mason Library
- I. Consider forming headlines discussion group
- II. Finish cataloging donated art collection at Ramsdell Library
- III. Explore potential art shows in both libraries
- IV. Examine changes to book cataloging system and consider revisions

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Goal 3: Establish the libraries as a community hub

Objective: Partner with local non-profit and community groups on programs and initiatives

Actions:

2013

- I. Continue as one of the hosts for the annual Berkshire Women's Writer's Festival
- II. Explore collaborative events with local educational and non-profit organizations
- III. With CHP and Berkshire Kids, explore programs for children and underserved parents

2014

- I. Work with Congregational Church, UMass and DuBois Center to establish annual DuBois celebration
- II. Open Ramsdell Theater for community use
- III. Work with Great Barrington Fairground on food/farming education tie-in with libraries

2015-16

- I. Extend relationships with Fairview Hospital and other community resources

2015

- I. Explore options for Senior Center to provide services at Ramsdell Library

Goal 4: Design and implement a volunteer program

Objective: Encourage volunteerism at both libraries

Actions

2013

- I. Volunteer coordinator and staff develop opportunities, protocols and procedures
- II. Establish annual appreciation event for volunteers by Friends and staff during National Library month
- III. Use online volunteer sign-up tool for adult programs

2014

- I. Identify volunteer projects for teens
- II. Work with various high schools to provide an introduction to library work and careers
- III. Showcase volunteers and volunteer projects on Facebook and website
- IV. Explore extension of weekend hours using volunteers

2015

- I. Evaluate volunteer program and initiate needed changes

Goal 5: Put technology at the forefront

Objective: Update the library technology systems, offerings and staff knowledge regularly

Actions:

2013

- I. Increase use of website, e-readers and iPads through bookmarks, signs and classes

2014

- I. Provide information to surveyed users on social media; reevaluate library website
- II. Increase purchases and promotion for library owned e-Books
- III. Continue staff training on current and new technologies
- IV. Offer workshops for staff and public taught by professionals

2015

- I. Develop a three year technology upgrade and replacement plan
- II. Send staff member to the Technology in Libraries Conference

2016

- I. Add updated or new technology