

Topsham Public Library
Board of Trustees Business Meeting
Wednesday, March 28, 2018
Minutes

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Larry Fitch, President, at 7:00PM. Present: Jennifer Ecker, Anne Eustis, Irene Martin, Joe Trafton, Sally Von Benken, Larry Fitch, Jerry Davis, Hahna Patterson, Jim Demonsthenes, Megan Therriault, Anne Macri, Diane Hender, Director Susan Preece. Absent: Larissa Vigue Picard and Owen Yabsira.
2. **Consent Agenda.** The Board reviewed the Consent Agenda, which included the Minutes of February 28, 2018 Board meeting, Development Committee Report, Finance Committee Report, the Friends Minutes, and the Survey Subcommittee Report. Anne Eustis made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, Joe Trafton seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.
3. **Children's Services: Mariah Sewell.** Susan passed out the Project Outcome survey results from a parent child workshop. Mariah also passed out bookmarks from two kids who participated in the summer reading program, as well as a homemade thank you book from the Bright Start preschool.

Mariah explained that she works with children from birth to 12 years old, and the families who are involved with those kids. Collection development includes both children and parenting materials. She considers reviews, journals, patron request, series books, and popularity. Mariah has a couple of goals for the popular collection - having books patrons want to read, and making sure there is a diverse collection. There are three story times per week which vary by age, two book groups, passive programming (e.g. coloring, Legos), and big events like Big Truck Day. She also puts on a parent child workshop, preschool fair, and "fourth saturday" activities once a month which include sensory and craft activities. The summer reading program involves a lot of outreach to schools, and Mariah also does a lot of outreach to Headstart and local preschools. A big challenge is having enough money for the collection, particularly in order to keep up with series, and it's a tough decision every month on which books to buy. Memorial funds have had big impact. The Rollin's Fund covered an entire year of picture books budget. Another challenge is not enough space. The books are crowded, and many are still popular so she doesn't want to get rid of them. She talked about the popularity of the library with families, and that she often sees families 2-3 times a week. Things that Mariah is proud of are that Topsham Public Library is a Family

Place library (a space where kids and families can play and connect), and the bus books program. She recently presented at the Maine State Library Association on bus books implementation, and the Patten Free Library is just starting the program. She also talked about how the library is an important place for families to connect and support each other, and that she is proud to be able to provide them a place to be a community. There were 167 programs last year, that reached 4,440 people.

Joe asked who started and funds Family Place Libraries. Susan explained it was started in New York in 2005, and has since become a national program. It is funded through many different grants. It paid for training for Mariah, and the Topsham Public Library has gotten grants to provide some programs. Hahna asked what sorts of things we could do to get kids to come who had never been to the library. Mariah said it requires continuous outreach, and there is not one solution. She needs to go out the community, and the places that people are. She talked about a national move in this area, and that libraries are partnering with other locations to try to attract folks who don't normally go to the library (e.g. a mini-library at a YMCA). Jerry commented on the large numbers of kids he sees in the mornings, what a treasure Mariah is for the library, and he thanked her for supporting community efforts. Megan suggested putting something in the Family Focus (before and after school program) monthly newsletter to try to attract kids and parents. Sally asked how many kids have library cards. Mariah said some kids have cards, and others are on their parents account, but there is no age restriction on getting a library card. Larry asked about the materials budget for children services. Mariah didn't have the exact number, but estimated she spends about \$1000 month. Mariah talked about the Rotary, and how they have provided 112 books since 2012. Every month they give a certain amount of money for books. Larry suggested we pull out the donation amount, and it was suggested we feature it in the annual report.

4. **Directors Report.** We reviewed the 2017 Federal Annual Public Library Report done through the Maine State Library. Susan highlighted some key points. Program numbers are going up, with the exception of adult services, which is down slightly. Total program attendance is up from the previous year. Reference requests are up over the previous year. Anne M. asked what constitutes a reference question. Susan explained it is something that requires a library source of one kind or another. Susan pointed out reference questions are much more challenging since the internet is available for basic research, so the questions they

do get often require a lot of effort. Jim asked if the same amount of people are coming through the door. Susan said it was about the same, but down slightly.

We reviewed the Directors Report. The HVAC fix was much cheaper than anticipated. The interior painting will be finished next week. Susan said they are converting one of the literacy rooms into an office for Barb Hawke. Megan asked if the literacy rooms gets used a lot, and if it will be challenging to lose one. Susan said it will have an affect, but felt it was important for Barb to use the space given the confidential nature of her work. Susan mentioned the library was only open for 17 days in February because of painting and snow days, and that the library has been busy since. Joe had a question about the kiosk at the front entrance where all the new books are displayed. It seemed to him there were a lot of new books there, and he wondered how this related since circulation was down. Susan said book budget is up, and book purchasing is not always uniformly spaced out. Sometimes it happens in large chunks, and she wondered if that plus the recent library closures were the reason. Joe asked what would a 10% increase in circulation mean for the library. Susan said the teen room would require weeding, but there is more space in the adult section. Jim asked if there is more purchasing after the annual appeal. Susan said no, as they budgets are set in July and they try to stick to a target each month. She talked about the continual process of weeding out old books to make room for new ones.

5. **New Business.**

- a. **BoS/FC Joint Review Meeting - 3/21/18 update.** Susan said it went very well this year. The meeting reconciled the town Finance Committee request and the Selectmen's request. There was very little discussion on the library budget, and the library received all the money asked for in the budget. April 12 is a public hearing and Susan would encourage the TPL Finance Committee be there to listen. Cyndi will go in Susan's place as Susan will be on vacation.
- b. **Annual Meeting - thoughts on format changes.** Had a short discussion around how to use the annual meeting as a way to reach out to the community more. Larry pointed out that it might be too late for this year, but asked for thoughts on how the meeting might better reach people who are potential donors, current donors, and stakeholders. Sally suggested it shouldn't be something routine. Ideas included having a speaker, panel discussion, or a volunteer thank you event. Will be discussed again at a future meeting.

6. **Next Meetings:** April 25, May 23, June 20

7. **Upcoming Events.**

Thurs. Apr. 12 7pm Public Hearing on Town Meeting Warrant and
Budget

Wed. May 16 7pm Town Meeting

8. **Adjournment** at 8:10pm. Diane Hender made a motion to adjourn the meeting,
Jerry Davis seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Ecker", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jennifer Ecker, Vice President