

**MINUTES**  
**Board of Trustees**  
**Barrington Public Library**  
Thursday, October 17, 2013

Library Board Room  
281 County Road, Barrington RI 02806

**Members Present:**

Kate Johnson  
Cindy Kaplan  
Eileen Meehan  
Dan O'Mahony  
Vince Wicker  
Laura Young

**Absent:**

Stephen Palmer

**Presiding:** Vince Wicker

**Also Present:**

Debbie Barchi, Director  
Ann Strong, Town Council Liaison

Meeting was brought to order at 7:02 p.m.

Minutes from the September 19, 2013, meeting were approved (motion by Young, second by Johnson).

**Financial Reports:**

Accepted. Director gave a brief review with an explanation of the patterns of spending throughout the year (e.g., expenditures for part-time staff, supplies, book budget, etc.).

**Statistical Reports:**

Accepted. Activity statistics reflect that Barrington is a community of readers who use their local public library. Reader's advisory services offered by the library are well received and support/encourage circulation. High level of use also reflects the priority the library places on community outreach and personal public service. Barrington has the highest per capita circulation rate in Rhode Island (and the fourth overall circulation of all cities and towns). Statistics also reveal the aggressive weeding of the collection that the library must maintain (e.g., shown by "negative growth" sometimes in the overall size of the collection).

**Director's Report:**

Barrington Public Library will host a program on Community Leadership Strategies for library directors and trustees on Monday, November 18 at 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The library received about 25 applications for the vacant Head of Reference librarian position. After review, the pool was narrowed to the eight, and the top five were interviewed. The Director hopes to decide quickly. Once a final decision is made, it may take 6-8 before the new person comes aboard (to accommodate their notice/transition from their former library).

Laurie Burke held both the title of Head of Reference and Assistant Director (performing administrative duties as needed). The new person will be hired as Head of Reference, and the Assistant Director responsibilities will be added to the duties of a different staff member with long-time service. The Director will confirm this arrangement with the Town Manager.

The AristoCats program ended Wednesday, October 16; it was an enormous success with big crowds, positive feedback, and great interaction between the younger and older musicians.

The Friends of the Library book sale will be November 1-3. This event typically raises about \$9K.

**Old business:**

- a) Director's performance review – deferred to Chair (Wicker) for follow-up with Director.

**New business:**

- a) Discussion of next 5-year plan – The Director explained that the library is required to have a new 5-year plan by the time it files its next annual report with the state (in August 2014).

Development of the last plan began with a focus group to gather input from the community from a mix of library patrons/citizens. Open-ended questions included: How do you use the library? What services, etc. would you like to see? This core input then was given to BPL department heads to work with staff to develop achievable goals for the next five years. The goals then were compiled, reviewed and reconciled across the library, and then drafted into a plan. The draft plan was presented to the Trustees for feedback. The final plan was drafted by Director and presented to Trustees for approval.

The Board discussed ideas for gathering input from the community for the next 5-year plan. If we do a focus group, we should work to develop a list of potential members of the community to recruit to get a cross-section of library users and non-users. There was a suggestion to conduct an online survey (linked from the library's web site) and use the results to inform the focus group questions. It will be important to find ways to reach residents who do not currently use the library. Social media avenues may be especially useful in targeting the teen audience. Eileen Meehan will work with the Director to develop a survey.

Questions might include:

- How often do you use the library?
- Level of satisfaction
- Have you used the reference desk?
- Have you attended a library program?
- Why do you come to the library?
- Demographic info: age category, gender, marital status, with or without children, etc.
- What would bring you to the library more?
- Technology use at the library
- Questions should cover the basic functions/purposes of the library: spaces, content, and services.
- Suggestion to place the web address of the survey in the town calendar (sent to every town resident).
- Ask survey respondents for contact information to participate in follow-up focus groups.

Town of Barrington this year is also redoing its Charter (redone every 10 years) and plan; look for ways to link the library's effort to the overall Town planning process where appropriate.

**Agenda for November 21, 2013, meeting:**

Old business

- a) Update on 5-year plan

New business

- a) None

Council Liaison Ann Strong presented volunteer pins to Kate Johnson and Eileen Meehan.  
Congratulations!

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dan O'Mahony, Secretary  
Barrington Public Library Board of Trustees

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**Absent:**

Stephen Palmer

**Presiding:** Vince Wicker

**Also Present:**

Debbie Barchi, Director  
Ann Strong, Town Council Liaison

Meeting was brought to order at 8:08 p.m.

Minutes from the September 19, 2013, Corporation meeting were approved (motion by Meehan; second by Young).

**Financial Reports:**

Accepted. In the Treasurer's absence, the Chair reviewed the monthly financial balance sheet; total current assets = \$613K (not counting the full depreciation of assets).

Monthly Coastline Trust Company report for September was distributed for information.

Chair reviewed the purpose/charge of the Corporation and explained its relationship to the Trustees. The Director briefly explained the history and sources of the Corporation's funds.

**Old Business:**

- a) Distribution of funds – The Corporation disburses funds annually to support library services and in order to comply with regulations as a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation. At the September meeting, the Corporation asked the Director to prepare a list of needs. The Director described a list of approximately \$8K in needs presented by the staff (e.g., IT supplies, extra chairs, etc.) with any balance earmarked to purchase AV/media materials (e.g., DVDs, etc.).  
Now that the Champlin Foundation will no longer fund computer hardware purchases, the Director is developing a proposed plan to share funding for computers: one-third each from the Town, the Corporation, and the Friends of the Library. This would distribute the burden across three sources, thus saving the Town part of the expense of this fundamental expenditure. The Director will discuss with the Town Manager how to create a budget line item for computer hardware. Board members expressed a desire to better understand how computers are used in the library.

As part of its annual distribution of funds, the Board had released \$10K in 2012 to pay for new carpeting in the Children's Room; the project did not move forward and the funds were not expended.

MOTION to allow the \$10K allocation from 2012 to be used at the Director's discretion, e.g., in line with the list of needs presented above. (Motion by O'Mahony; second by Young; passed unanimously) The Board will defer release of 2013 funds at this time; may entertain future requests from the Director between now and the end of December.

- b) The fundraising subcommittee (Kaplan chair) will meet immediately after the Corporation meeting adjourns. The main agenda item is to discuss the job description of the part-time fundraiser.
- c) Legal opinion regarding transfer of restricted funds– no additional information.

**New Business:**

None

**Agenda for November 21, 2013, meeting:**

Old business:

- a) Distribution of funds
- b) Legal opinion
- c) Fundraising
  - 1) Subcommittee for fundraising (Kaplan chair)

New business:

- a) None

Meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dan O'Mahony, Secretary  
Barrington Public Library Corporation