

**BROOKLYN TOWN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
MARCH 27, 2023**

The meeting was called to order by President Wendy Harrington at 6:07 PM. Present were: Wendy Harrington, Joe Asermelly, Renee Messier, Ken Dykstra, Beverly Spink, Deneen Azzolino, Joanne Lantry, Samantha Stiles, Kerri Osborne, and Lisa Burbank. Diane Wimmer arrived at 6:33 PM. Absent: Jane Sipila, Carolyn Otto, and Desiree Burlingame. Excused absence: Charlene Hill.

Minutes of Last Meeting: Motion was made by Joanne Lantry and seconded by Samantha Stiles to accept the minutes as emailed to board members. So Voted. Thank you notes were received from Jane Sipila and family and Friends of Webster for the donation in memory of George Sipila. Letter of resignation received from Susan Lamb who wished to resign from the BTLA.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Renee Messier presented a Profit and Loss Statement from July 1, 2022 through March 27, 2023. It showed total income \$118,977.57; total expenses of \$83,669.63; interest of \$395.41 for a net income of \$35,703.15. The amount for online services was questioned; it was suggested that the Library Director investigate into patron usage for the services offered to substantiate the cost. Motion was made by Joe Asermelly and seconded by Kerri Osborne to accept the Treasurer's Report. So Voted.

Library Director's Report: Lisa Burbank was officially promoted from Interim Director to Library Director on February 16, 2023. Summer reading materials and prizes have been ordered and are arriving. The Nutmeg Book list was just released for books to be ordered from. Fourteen children participated in the Take Your Child to the Library event. Weekly Tuesday 2:30 PM story times take place with 4 children attending so far. Attendance at the Saturday once-a-month story time has been 8 children. The Adopt-A-Book program has resulted in 3 book purchases. Seeds have been picked up and the Seed Catalog is up and running. Librarian/Clerk Lisa Kallio has passed her probationary period and her continued employment has been recommended. Kerri Osborne asked about our social media following; Samantha Stiles noted we have 701 followers on Face Book. Wendy asked Lisa about attendance by Brooklyn Library patrons at the Group Book Discussions held jointly with Chaplin, Canterbury and Scotland and was told Brooklyn does not seem to attend. With another section of shelving cleared, there will soon be space in our library to host our own.

Friends of the Library: Wendy asked President Diane Wimmer to have The Friends purchase 2 replacement flower barrel planters for the front of the library and the potting soil to go in them. Diane and Beverly Spink will approach Hart's Greenhouse in hopes of a possible donation of the planters.

OLD BUSINESS:

Update on Sidewalk Project: Wendy contacted Killingly Engineering Associates and met with Norm Thibeault at the library on March 23rd about having plans drawn. A letter was sent to Archer Surveying, LLC to let them know we no longer needed their services. Lack of response by them to phone messages and emails left after they had viewed the project site in August of 2022 prompted the change in service providers.

ARPA Funds Update: The Town's ARPA Committee minutes of January 26, 2023 did acknowledge receipt of our communication to them stating the dire situation with our lights burning out. At their February 28th meeting the final approval awarded us had gone from \$10,000 down to \$7,000, which will cover our lighting project. We had been unable to give them figures for the sidewalk project. There will be forms and an agreement for us to complete. Motion was made by Deneen Azzolino and seconded by Samantha Stiles to authorize President Wendy Harrington to sign all paperwork on behalf of the library association in this matter. Ken Dykstra said not all the ARPA money has been spent and he felt we could ask for more.

Brooklyn Parks & Recreation Update: Ms. Sangermano, Director, was made aware that the library was willing to advertise in their brochure, but that we would not be willing to pay a portion of the postage for sending them.

With regard to how the practice began with the library providing materials and reimbursing the wage for the library room employee, Wendy reached out to Bucky Lohbusch, former Director. Bucky stated it was because the reading room was the library's program. The library room employee was supposed to meet with the library director to outline the reading program. Discussion as a result of this news led to Kerri Osborne suggesting that we let it be known that if we are reimbursing this person's wage, we should be in on the hiring and interviewing of this person and we would like to see that position's job description.

Ms. Sangermano had a request from a resident about the possibility of a Little Free Library being placed in Quebec Square which she referred to our Library Director. Fear of repeated vandalism to one there was a concern. Discussion led to the importance of getting books to kids in that location. If we asked someone from that area to help us build it they may take more pride in having one. Could we get someone to go read to children in that area perhaps at the community center? The time for reading could be geared toward which session of Pre-K that end of town attends. This could be a grant opportunity regarding promoting literacy there.

2023-2024 Budget: Copies of the proposed budget, as prepared by the library's budget committee, were handed out for inspection. It noted an increase of \$1,278. The proposed budget was delivered to the First Selectmen's office on February 13th. Wendy will ask the First Selectman about any further news from the Town's health insurance agent regarding the loss of coverage for our Library Director because she is not a town employee. The First Selectman will also be asked if the town will still cover insurance on the library facility as they have, considering the town does not own the building.

NEW BUSINESS:

Agreement with Mortlake Fire Company: Bill Skene from the fire company contacted Wendy to say that the fire company was agreeable to letting the library use that grassy area at the edge of the parking lot for children's outdoor programming. Paperwork was signed on March 16th. Mr. Skene stated that he does have some Boy Scouts who need a project who might build some benches to be used there.

Personnel Issue: In accordance with our library policy, the written notice to Librarian/Clerk Shannon Smith about her attendance came before the board. Library Director Lisa Burbank spoke of Shannon's strengths, but stated that attendance has been an ongoing

issue resulting in verbal and then the written warning. Shannon's probationary period will not end until April 22nd. In accordance with the Employee Handbook, the Personnel Issues Committee would meet and be in charge of deciding termination based on excessive absence from work. Members of that committee (Wendy, Joe, Deneen, and Ken) were in attendance at the board meeting; Jane Sipila was absent. The Personnel Committee meeting was therefore made a part of the board meeting and it was decided to immediately search for a replacement, hopefully have one by April 21st, and that Shannon will be terminated on April 21st.

130th Anniversary of BTLA: Kerri Osborne spoke on getting grants for programming (not for the anniversary.) With regards to the anniversary, she suggested events start on the anniversary and continue for one year thereafter. A committee needs to be formed to prepare for this and assessing the costs associated with it. So far Kerri, Diane Wimmer and Samantha Stiles have volunteered. The committee could also consist of people who could attend meetings from time to time when they were able to; Joanne Lantry volunteered for that category. To be considered: What will get the community to come out? Having a Logo- Play with the number 130 for donating- Possibly having a Go Fund Me Kick Starter- Family Events with themes. Ken Dykstra stated that we need to set an exact amount to be raised and let the public know exactly what we are raising the funds for such as library programming, kids' activities, for the future of the library. Ken also suggested that we plan to have some kind of presence at the town's upcoming Family Fun Day. Board members were asked to think about who they know to ask for a donation.

Adjournment: Motion made by Joe Asermelly and seconded by Samantha Stiles to adjourn the meeting. So Voted. Meeting adjourned at 7:37 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

Wendy E. Harrington, Secretary