

Great Barrington Libraries Board of Trustees
July 3, 2014
5:30 P.M.
Mason Library

I. Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Holly Hamer at 5:30 P.M.

A. Attendance:

Present: Ed Abrahams (EA) Holly Hamer (HH)
 Kathy Plungis (KP) Hilda Banks-Shapiro (HB-S)
 Lauren Clark (5:38)
Amanda DiGeorgis, Director **Jennifer Tabakin, Town Manager**
Audience: 1
Absent: Adam Gudeon

B. Approval of June minutes:

HH pointed out one correction.

EA moved to accept.

HB-S seconded.

Vote: 4-0

C. Trustee Announcements:

HH displayed a poster announcing the Town Bandstand concerts this summer and asked that copies be made and placed on the main desk for patrons.

II. Special Orders:

B. Proposal for Local History Museum:

This proposal was taken out of the Agenda order.

The local Historical Commission has asked that the Trustees for consider the following: that they are proposing to ask the Town for a \$47,000 budget to prepare and use half of Ramsdell Library's main floor and part of the 2nd floor.

They propose that the back room of Ramsdell be used for storage, the middle room be used for exhibits, & the west reading room be used for display of historical items.

They are proposing that they be given 1,000 square feet of permanent space.

A question arose as to whether they would pay a rent for this space.

That it would be used to archive important historical town records, items.

A discussion ensued as to the feasibility of giving up book space in order to accommodate the historical material. Currently they use approximately 9 linear feet of shelving space on the second floor.

The back room at Ramsdell has approximately 90 linear feet of shelving space.

There is also furniture of historical value on the second floor.

Discussion continued as to allowing them to use the back room.

KP voiced concern of giving up the middle and west rooms as the middle room is

currently housing the Young Adult material and the west reading room contains the newspapers, tables, computers, and chairs for patrons reading newspapers.

The Library Director noted that there is room in Mason Library's Archival room for documents currently at Ramsdell. There would be no room for the furniture or other such items.

There was a question of just what items are on the second floor, has the Historical Society a list of items?

The Town Manager reported that a dialogue has begun with the Society and the Historical Commission. They have been brainstorming and a variety of ideas have come forward.

The Trustee's main purpose of moving the large furniture out of the second floor is so the space can be rented out for play rehearsals and plays, music, etc.

HH stated that a bigger issue is whether the people of Housatonic want a museum in their town library.

The Town Manager suggested that there be a consensus of the Trustees before the Trustees meet with the Historical Society and Commission. Future space and funding needs need to be addressed.

HH suggested that the residents of Housatonic and the Trustees address the question of where does one "see" the Ramsdell Library in the next few years.

The discussion continued.

The Society is sorting through items. What will the proposed space configurations be? Where will the funding for design and implementation of, come from?

LC also proposed the use of the back room, that the art books currently stored there, be moved to the middle room.

The Society feels that there is not enough space there for them to store the materials. The Society is proposing display cases.

The Trustees are concerned as to where the items will go in the middle and west rooms because the tables already there are used by patrons.

HH proposed that the Trustees and Library Staff come up with our own proposal.

How can the building be used in order to create a "draw" to the village? Who can we combine with to make this happen? What programs would be the best "draw"?

It was noted that the new assistant librarian that was recently hired has experience in grant writing, programming and fund raising. She may have a different perspective and offer us direction.

The conclusion reached was that either a Trustee representative or as many Trustees as can, attend a Historical Commission meeting to discuss the above.

A. Library Hours:

KP noted the number of patrons that were listed for both libraries.

A discussion ensued about the reallocating of hours at Ramsdell Library in order to encourage young parents to use the library with their preschool children.

Again, it was discussed cutting hours at Ramsdell, with a closer look at the use of the

library in the final two hours it is currently open (that 1-2 patrons may be there at the end of the Saturday hours). Is that the best use of the library?
It was again discussed keeping the library open longer on Friday evenings.

The Town Manager stated that there should be a meeting with Housatonic residents concerning this. Are more or less hours needed? What does the Staff hear from Ramsdell patrons about the hours? (The Library Director stated that the Staff hears that patrons would like earlier hours.)

The Director stated that the hours should not be changed yet because of the summer reading program that is going on on Saturdays and that programming has already been scheduled for certain days, hours.

There was a discussion about the shifting of hours and what would be going on during that time.

The Director and HH stated that beginning a morning play group for preschoolers could be a positive draw to the library.

LC asked that the Staff be asked for their ideas on this and the types of programming that would be beneficial.

HH stated that a general meeting date will be decided upon in early fall (probably held in the Housy Dome) in order to get the residents' input. Notices of the meeting date will be posted around Housatonic in the next couple months.

C. Building Maintenance/Repair :

EA stated that the drain outside of the downstairs entrance to the children's library has not yet been enlarged. The Library Director stated that flooding of that section of the building continues as the drain is too small and the water quickly builds up and seeps under the door. A couple of weeks ago, the water was so high that it also seeped under the second door on that level, sending water into the back area of the library. In addition, the hallway carpet to the children's library again became saturated with water.

The floors of both Mason and Ramsdell Libraries have not yet been resealed. These projects were to have been completed this past winter.

The Town Manager will meet with the DPW head regarding these issues.

The projects and the time line that was drawn up in late fall will be reviewed by all parties.

III. Reports of Officers, Boards and Standing Committees:

A. Chair's Report:

HH noted that in late October a Volunteer Fair will be held in the Mason Library in order to expose residents to the various town committees that one can serve on.

B. Director's Report:

ADiG: See attached report.

C. Friends Report:

Four films have been placed on the Friend's and library calendar for September through December.

The Ramsdell film nights have been taken over by J. Erickson, replacing H. Hamer.

D. Buildings and Grounds:

Was discussed under Building Maintenance and Repair.

IV. Unfinished Business:

A. Policy Review:

ADiG reported that the remaining policies are being reviewed. The revisions will be presented to the Trustees at a later date.

V. New Business:

A. Halloween Party:

The response to the welcoming party for the new Director was so positive that a similar gathering should be attempted in the late fall. It was noted that the Friends and the Trustees are proposing a Halloween party, Saturday, November 1st. The proposed hours are 5 to 9 pm, with beer, wine, and food. People will be encouraged to come in costume.

KP made a motion to have the Trustees cosponsor the Halloween party with the Friends.

HH seconded the motion.

No discussion.

Vote: 5 - 0

VI. Adjournment:

EA made a Motion to Adjourn.

HB-S seconded.

The Board voted (5-0) to adjourn at 6:56 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kathleen Plungis, Secretary

Statistics: June

	Total Patrons	Adult programs	Children's programs	Computer use +iPad	Quiet/ study	Meeting room	Items added
Ramsdell	654	7 programs 22 attending	3 programs 25 attending	34	9	-	157
Mason	12,104	8 programs 87 attending	10 programs 215 attending	1640 (400 Kids) + 2 iPad	150	35	383

News, Projects and Proposals:

-FY 2014 has finished and we are now officially in FY 2015. An accounting of the last year will be available once I get back from vacation in mid-July.

-I have started doing the research into the eBook platforms and will hopefully have some trials coming my way in the coming weeks.

-Summer Reading has started for the children at both Mason and Ramsdell. The theme is science this year and both Laurie and Leslie have some great activities planned.

-The re-useable bags Laurie in Children's put together have come in and are being used for welcoming new families and the start of Summer Reading in the Children's Room. I was thinking of offering some of the bags for sale at the Adult Circulation desk for patrons who need/want bags. I'm not looking to make money off of them – just to help cover the cost of the bags and provide a service that we provided before the plastic bag ban.

-I have made the edits on the policies voted at the last meeting and standardized their look. I am chipping away at the next set of policies.

-We are going to be ordering new library cards soon and I would like to change the front of them to reflect our new logo.