

**James E. Nichols Memorial Library
Board of Trustees Meeting**

-Amended and Approved 4/26/21-

March 22, 2021

Minutes

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 10:01am via Zoom.us. Present (electronically): Chairperson Annette Nichols, Treasurer Sarah Heath, Bette Miller, Karen Ponton, Shannon Whalen (at 10:07am), A. Xavier (alternate voting for S. Whalen); Interim Library Director Lois Brady. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Chairperson Nichols declared the meeting to be an emergency and that the meeting would be held electronically.

- I. **Review/Approval of Minutes:** Motion by K. Ponton, seconded by B. Miller that: The Minutes of February 22, 2021 be approved, as written. Passed unanimously.

II. **Ongoing Business**

A. **Town Meeting 2021:** A. Nichols reported that there was only one question about the proposed Library budget at Town Meeting. A. Nichols clarified that the proposed budget was less than in prior years due to the cut back in services because of the pandemic. She announced that L. Brady was hired as interim director, and would be starting that week. A. Nichols also reported that K. Ponton was recognized for her volunteer service on behalf of the Town over the past several years.

B. **Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer S. Heath distributed her monthly Report. Expenses for February were \$2,085.85. *Salaries* includes wages for 13 hours L. Brady worked in December 2020; the \$191.25 under *Computer* was for remote repair services in February. There were no deposits into the MVSBS checking account last month. Motion by K. Ponton, seconded by B. Miller: To accept the Treasurer's Report. Passed unanimously.

C. **Report from the Library:** A. Nichols welcomed L. Brady to her first monthly meeting with the Trustees as interim director. L. Brady presented her Report (attached). The server UPS continued to have problems. After being notified by L. Brady, A. Nichols authorized purchase of four (4) new UPSs for the server and all Library computers, and updating the patron computers for \$1,195.00 through Adel-XT. This work was performed March 18th. K. Ponton and B. Miller expressed concern that this expense had not been brought to the Trustees' attention before being incurred. A. Nichols said she thought this was an emergency situation. Consensus was to postpone until April discussion of what would constitute an emergency requiring action that could not wait until the next Board meeting or for a special meeting to be called, and who would be authorized to act. Steve Jussif of Adel-XT also found the *Deep Freeze* licenses for the patron computers had expired in 2019. L. Brady explained *Deep Freeze* "cleans" each computer immediately after use by a patron. S. Jussif estimated this cost at \$175.00 including installation. Motion by K. Ponton, seconded by B. Miller: To authorize purchase and installation of Deep Freeze for the two (2) patron computers. Passed unanimously. Because of the number of computer-related issues and repairs over the past several months, the Trustees discussed purchasing a maintenance contract rather than continuing to pay for repairs at an hourly rate. Currently, the Library pays Adel-XT \$85.00/hour, plus travel at a fixed rate of \$150.00/visit. A. Xavier said she was very surprised by all the trouble the Library keeps having with its computer system. Adel-XT is proposing a monthly maintenance contract for \$170.00/month or a quarterly contract at \$340.00-\$425.00/quarter (with the same services as the monthly contract). L. Brady added that the contract excludes other licenses and does not cover equipment. K. Ponton noted that the monthly contract would be more expensive than the quarterly plan, and asked about getting other bids. A. Nichols recalled that a proposal obtained from Lakes Region Computer last November was higher in cost. Motion by S. Heath, seconded by S. Whalen: To sign a maintenance contract for 2021 with Adel-XT, beginning monthly but with the option to switch to quarterly. Passed with K. Ponton abstaining. L.. Brady recommended having Book Systems, instead of the Library, host *Atrium*.

Motion by K. Ponton, seconded by S. Heath: To migrate to Book Systems for hosting Atrium. Passed unanimously. L. Brady said she would generate a list of all the Library's technology, including, for example, equipment, software, licenses, contracts, expiration dates, etc. so that this will be less confusing and easier to track in the future.

The Trustees' discussed L. Brady's recommendation to stop quarantining borrowed materials after they are returned to the Library. The NH State Library and six (6) out of the ten Scrooge & Marley Co-op libraries continue to quarantine for 72 hours; others quarantine for 24-hours (2 libraries) and two (2) no longer quarantine. Currently, our Library has a Board-approved procedure based upon "best practices": Returned materials are quarantined for 72 hours and then cleaned with isopropyl alcohol before being returned to circulation. B. Miller thought the 72-hour quarantine should remain in order to protect the health and safety of patrons and staff during the continuing pandemic. Other Trustees were hesitant to stop quarantine entirely. It was suggested that cleaning returns and wearing gloves could reasonably be discontinued. Motion by A. Nichols, seconded S. Whalen: To rescind the Procedure for Processing Returns (dated 7/2020) and to follow the NH State Library guidelines for quarantine. Passed unanimously.

L. Brady reported on the Town Joint Management Loss Committee meeting she attended earlier today. Panic buttons in Town buildings (including the Library) are going to be tested. Fire extinguishers should be checked to see if they are up-to-date. L. Brady plans to attend CPR training, which will be offered soon. She obtained the name of an electrician to contact about repairing the restroom light.

Discussion of the time management report that L. Brady emailed to the Trustees this morning was postponed to the April meeting. She continues to say she needs more hours. Kim Anderson may not be available to help out this summer, according to L. Brady.

The Trustees briefly discussed some of the findings from the survey of patrons (see attached). Response was very good. Sixty-five persons completed the online survey and 20 completed the paper copy that was included in the curbside pick-up bags, for a total of 85 patrons. A. Nichols observed that most of our patrons receive news about the Library from our newsletter, not the newspaper. A. Xavier asked about DVD usage, noting that computers no longer have DVD players and young people prefer streaming. L. Brady reported that there are two (2) patrons who are "heavy users" of the Library's DVDs, and about three (3) DVDS are borrowed each week. K. Ponton noted that 32% of those who answered the online survey like to borrow DVDs from our Library. Survey returns have dropped off the past couple of weeks, so K. Ponton closed the survey this morning. She hopes the responses will be helpful as the Trustees and staff consider how to best serve our community going forward.

Motion by S. Whalen, seconded by B. Miller: To accept the Report from the Library. Passed unanimously.

D. **Committee Reports:** Some Reports were postponed due to time constraints.

1. **Building Committee:** Postponed.
2. **Policy Committee:** K. Ponton and A. Xavier presented several policies found under "Library Personnel" in the current *Manual* (pages 33-36) for the Board's review and action. After discussion (see attached): motion by K. Ponton, seconded by B. Miller: That the following personnel policies be approved:
 - Hiring
 - Background Check
 - Employment, Resignation & Dismissal
 - Probation; this entire section was deleted
 - Performance Reviews
 - Pay Rates

- Reporting of Time Worked, Pay Day & Pay Periods
- Work Week & Work Schedule
- Breaks & Meal Periods, with the addition of the phrase “other than water” after “beverage”
- Emergency Closing, with the word “hourly” replaced by “part-time”
- Exit Interview, replacing “will” with “may”.

Passed unanimously. The section on *Development & Training of Staff* was not discussed. The form to request that lunch or eating period be waived is attached. Incidentally, L. Brady submitted a background check in 2019 when she was hired temporarily for the summer.

3. **Librarian Search Committee:** Postponed.
4. **IT Support:** Please see Item II.C above.
5. **Facility Maintenance:** Please see Item II.C above and attached *Report from the Library*.

III. New Business

A. **Goals for Interim Librarian:** Postponed to next meeting.

B. **Trustee Alternate:** Motion by K. Ponton, seconded by B. Miller: To recommend to the Board of Selectmen that A. Xavier be reappointed as Alternate. Passed unanimously. Term expires in 2022.

C. **Election of Officers:** Motion by S. Whalen, seconded by B. Miller: That A. Nichols serve as chairperson, S. Heath as Treasurer and K. Ponton as secretary for 2021-2022. Passed unanimously.

IV. **Other Business:** The Board briefly discussed changing their monthly meetings on the fourth Monday of each month to another time or day. Decision postponed to April meeting.

Adjournment: Motion by K. Ponton, seconded by B. Miller to adjourn at 11:40am. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Ponton, Secretary
atts (3)

Report from the Library: March 19, 2021

Happenings in the State. The March NH Directors' Meeting focused on vaccinations and re-opening. As numbers of vaccinated people rise, patron and staff fears are lessening while the desire to re-open/expand library access is increasing. Discussed library role in educating public that vaccinations don't prevent catching or spreading COVID, just lessen the impact, and that masks are still needed. Best source for vaccine information is <https://www.nh.gov/covid19/>

Re-opening strategies and experience discussion highlights:

- Staff concerns best direct when and how libraries are re-opening. Having enough staff is a real concern, as many libraries have reduced staff, staff hours or have staff.
- A significant number of libraries have recently re-opened by appointment; other libraries already re-opened have expanded appointments/occupancy or have switched to occupancy limit.
- All libraries require masks (kids turn out to be the best mask wearers)
- Half of the libraries are continuing curbside, even after reopening.
- Staff exhaustion and burnout continues to be a significant concern.
- Staying flexible is key.

Happening in the Region. The significant takeaway from this month's Scrooge and Marley Coop meeting is material quarantine. Quarantine times of 10 libraries (1 was not in attendance): 2 have no quarantine, 2 have a 24 hour quarantine; 6 have 72 hour quarantine. The 72 hour quarantine is remaining in effect, mostly due to State quarantine of ILL materials (easy to justify to public, since state is doing it) and/or due to staff wanting to keep it. No one had any source of evidence that COVID has been transmitting from surfaces.

These libraries are all re-opening by appointment, or in some cases have been open and have stopped appointments but limit total visitors at one time. They all expressed the same concerns discussed at meeting with directors throughout the state.

Happenings at Nichols Library.

Quick updates:

- Posted Trustee Survey on website and sent link out in a newsletter on 2/26/21.
- Phil Cowles inspected the boiler on 3/3/21. He left a tag on the boiler.
- Interim Library contract began on 3/11/2021; I'm working 24 hours per week now.
- Light timers were changed on 3/13/21 for Daylight Savings.
- New library credit card arrived and Zoom account plan was purchased.

What's coming up in news for next month's report:

- I'll join the Town's monthly JMLC meetings beginning on Monday 3/22/21.
- I'll also be joining the Easter Treat Handout event on 4/3/21.

Technology Update.

Tech Support and new UPS units.

On March 10, Atrium was not working when I arrived. I was able to re-start it with tips Steve Jussif had told me last time he provided support.

On March 15, the server was not on as the UPS unit had failed over the weekend. I was able to get the server working again, but required Steve's remote assistance to get Atrium working. Note that with Atrium not running, patrons were not able to access streaming services or the online catalog/reservation during that time.

On March 18, Steve installed 4 new UPS units. Steve performed a massive amount of updates on all of the computers. He discovered that the Deep Freeze licenses on the patron computers expired in May 2019.

ACTION ITEM Deep Freeze Licenses: Purchase 2 Deep Freeze licenses for approximately \$45 each, and Steve's time to remotely install at approximately 1 hour: total estimated cost of \$175 (note that after this year, the licenses will be less in future years)

Move Hosting of Atrium to Book Systems: Steve Jussif and I both spoke with Book Systems about hosting Atrium. The advantages of this include: automatic and timely version updates that will not require Steve's assistance; Atrium will be available to our patrons even if the library's power system or server has an issue; Atrium will be accessible to staff from any computer and any location (it is still secure as it requires log-in credential information to access it); our server will be freed up and we will not have to concern ourselves with hardware updates that may be needed for future versions of Atrium. I believe that the time and money we will save by having Book Systems host Atrium will exceed the cost of continuing to host it ourselves, saving the library money over the coming years.

ACTION ITEM Migrate Atrium hosting to BookSystems.

Technical Support Contract. The technology in the library, particularly the server needs regular maintenance and the licenses need to be kept up to-date.

ACTION ITEM Technical Support Contract

Pandemic concerns: quarantine of materials and re-opening.

Due to lack of evidence that COVID is spread through surface contact and to save precious time, I recommend that we stop quarantining materials.

ACTION ITEM Change quarantine time on materials

Library Services Patron Questionnaire
SUMMARY
March 16, 2021

Surveymonkey.com Online Questionnaire

1. **Completed by:** 65 persons
2. Residence
43 (66%) were either year-round (45%) or part-time Center Harbor residents (22%)
20 (31%) were not. Of these, most (8) were from Moultonborough; then Laconia (4)
, Holderness (3), Meredith (2), Sandwich (1), CT (1) and VA (1)
3. Age
47 (72%) were 65 years of age or older. Of these, 28 (43%) were between 65-74
years of age; 19 (29%) were 75 years or older
4. Pre-pandemic Use of Library
42 (65%) used the Library at least a couple of times a month or more
Only 8 (12%) rarely used it
5. Curbside Pick-up
17 (26%) use curbside pick-up at least a couple of times a month or more
42 (65%) rarely or never use curbside pick-up

Comment: Given how much the respondents used the Library pre-pandemic, I was surprised to see how few are using curbside pick-up now, especially since nearly every one lives locally.

6. Like to Borrow:
51 (78%) - Adult fiction
39 (60%) - Adult non-fiction
21 (32%) - DVDs
16 (25%) - Audiobooks
12 (18%) - Magazines or newspapers
7. Download materials using *Libby* or *Overdrive* apps:
29 (45%) Never or rarely
13 (20%) A couple of times a month

Comment: There doesn't seem to be much interest in having the Library rent or loan Kindles/e-readers. Perhaps nearly half of our patrons just prefer reading from actual books?

8. *Kanopy* or *Hoopla* Usage:
39 (60%) - Never use
15 (23%) - At least a couple of times a month
Mostly for: Movies & documentaries on *Kanopy*; rarely for TV series; eBooks &
eAudiobooks on *Hoopla*

Comment: Given the limited use, maybe we don't need to cap downloads at 7 per patron per month. Might we consider increasing or even eliminating the cap?

9. Sources of Library News

- 48 (74%) - Library email/newsletter
- 29 (45%) - Library website
- 13 (20%) - Newspapers
- 11 (17%) - Facebook

Comment: This suggests to me that priority should be given to publishing our e-newsletter on a regularly scheduled basis, perhaps at least quarterly, and keeping our website reasonably up-to-date. It also makes me question whether writing weekly articles for the Meredith News and Laconia Sun is the best use of staff time. Instead of weekly, perhaps the same schedule as the e-newsletter? I think it should be relatively easy to put the e-newsletter information into a newspaper article format and kill two birds with one stone.

10. Interest in Online Programs

- 30 (46%) - No interest
- 25 (39%) - Author talks
- 23 (35%) - Book groups/discussion

Comment: Although there isn't a tremendous amount of interest, there is some. Maybe we could talk with Moultonborough Library (or other libraries) about allowing our patrons to participate in their virtual programming. It would be a start.

11. Importance of Services:

- By far, both online reservation (85%) and online renewal of books & materials (82%) were rated of highest importance
- Curbside pick-up was rated next in highest importance (66%)

Followed by:

- 60% - Downloadable books; only 26% thought it was highly important to offer Kindle/e-reader rental or loan
- 52% - Home delivery to homebound
- 48% - Audiobooks
- 42% - Free WiFi
- Online reviews of new acquisitions
- 35% - Open by appointment to browse
- Online streaming services like Hoopla & Kanopy
- 34% - DVDs
- 30% - Open by appointment to use computers
- 28% - Online magazines & newspapers
- 26% - Kindle/e-reader rental or loan
- Large print books
- 14% - Music CDs

Comment: Some thoughts – Promote our online reservation and renewal services. Maybe have a short video tutorial on how to reserve and renew online, as well as how to log into and use *Hoopla* and *Kanopy*. Continue offering curbside pick-up even after fully reopening the Library. Altrusa volunteers deliver library books to the homebound. Publicize this community service, especially since so many of our patrons are older, as is much of Center Harbor's population.

Publicize our free Wi-Fi and how to access it. Consider starting to offer Library access by appointment on a limited basis as a trial, maybe just on Saturdays (?) for a couple on months as survey suggests demand might not be high initially.

Curbside Pick-up Hard-copy Questionnaire

1. **Completed by:** 20 out of 36 questionnaires were completed for a return rate of 56%. Including the online surveys, 85 people have participated in our survey. The information below refers only to the hard-copy questionnaires.
2. Residence
 - 9 (45%) were either year-round (35%) or part-time Center Harbor residents (10%)
 - 11 (55%) were not. Of these, most (9) were from Moultonborough; 2 were from Meredith
3. Age
 - 19 (95%) were 65 years of age or older. Two (2) were between 55-64 years old
4. Pre-pandemic Use of Library
 - 19 (95%) used the Library at least a couple of times a month or more
5. Curbside Pick-up
 - 14 (70%) use curbside pick-up at least a couple of times a month or more
 - 6 (30%) use it once in awhile
6. Like to Borrow:
 - 17 (85%) - Adult fiction
 - 15 (75%) - Adult non-fiction
 - 11 (55%) - DVDs
 - 7 (35%) - Audiobooks
 - 5 (20%) - Magazines or newspapers
7. Download materials using *Libby* or *Overdrive* apps:
 - 18 (90%) Never or rarely
8. *Kanopy* or *Hoopla* Usage:
 - 15 (75%) - Never or rarely use

9. Sources of Library News

- 10 (50%) - Library email/newsletter
- 7 (35%) - Library website
- 7 (35%) - Newspapers
- 2 (10%) - Facebook
- 2 (10%) - Posters

10. Interest in Online Programs

- 15 (75%) - No interest
- 4 (20%) - Author talks
- 1 (5%) - Book groups/discussion

11. Importance of Services:

- Curbside pick-up was rated of highest importance (90%)
- Both online reservation of books & materials and DVDs were next at 65% each
- Then, online renewal of books & materials (60%)

Followed by:

- 40% - Audiobooks
- 35% - Home delivery to homebound
Online streaming services like *Hoopla & Kanopy*
- 25% - Open by appointment to browse
- 20% - Downloadable books
Large print books
Free WiFi
- 15% - Online reviews of new acquisitions
Kindle/e-reader rental or loan
Online magazines & newspapers
- 10% - Open by appointment to use computers
Music CDs

James E. Nichols Memorial Library

LIBRARY PERSONNEL

HIRING

Pursuant to NH RSA 202-A:15 and RSA 202-A 16, the Board of Trustees hires the Librarian and all other Library employees. The Librarian recommends candidates for all other Library positions to the Board of Trustees for consideration.

Although the Town of Center Harbor's administrative staff handles payroll and benefits, the employees of the James E Nichols Memorial Library are not Town employees. They are Library employees.

Approved by Board of Trustees 3/22/21 (Replaces policy dated 8/22/11)

BACKGROUND CHECK

All employees are subject to a background check as a condition of employment, the cost of which is paid by the Library.

Approved by Board of Trustees 3/22/21 (Retained section of policy on Hiring dated 8/22/11)

EMPLOYMENT, RESIGNATION & DISMISSAL

A Library employee may resign from his/her employment at any time, for any reason. As a matter of courtesy, the Librarian is asked to give the Board of Trustees at least six (6) weeks' notice in writing of his/her intent to resign. All other personnel are asked for at least two (2) weeks' (14 calendar days) notice.

The Board of Trustees complies with NH RSA 202-A: 17 *Employees; Removal* regarding the dismissal of a Library employee, which states that:

No employee of a public library shall be discharged or removed from office except by the library trustees for malfeasance, misfeasance, or inefficiency in office, or incapacity or unfitness to perform the employee's duties. Prior to the discharge or removal of any such employee, a statement of the grounds and reasons therefor shall be prepared by the library trustees, and signed by a majority of the board, and notice thereof shall be given to the employee not less than 15 days nor more than 30 days prior to the effective date of such discharge or removal. Upon receipt of said notice and within 30 days thereafter, but not otherwise, the employee may request a public hearing. If such request is made, the library trustees shall hold a public hearing on such discharge or removal. The hearing shall be held not more than 30 days after receipt of the request for the hearing, and if the trustees, upon due hearing, shall find good cause for discharge or removal of the employee, they shall order the employee's discharge or removal from office. There shall be no change in salary of such employee during the proceedings for discharge or removal nor until the final effective date of the order for discharge or removal.

Approved by Board of Trustees 3/22/21 (Replaces policy on Employment At Will dated 8/22/11)

PROBATION

Policy dated 8/22/21 deleted by Board of Trustees 3/22/21

PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

The performance of every employee is reviewed annually, no later than November 1st, and whenever deemed necessary. The Board of Trustees reviews the performance of the Librarian. The Librarian reviews the performance of all other Library employees, and forwards the reviews to the Board for approval. Employees have the opportunity to comment on and sign their performance reviews. Signature on the performance review form indicates that the employee has seen the evaluation; it does not indicate agreement or disagreement with the content of the evaluation.

A performance review is not a contract or a commitment to provide a compensation adjustment, a bonus, or continued employment.

Approved by Board of Trustees 3/22/21 (Replaces policy dated 8/22/11)

PAY RATES

The Board of Trustees determines the pay rates for Library employees. Pay rates are reviewed annually in conjunction with the employee performance reviews. Rates may be adjusted as part of the Library budget for the following year.

Approved by Board of Trustees 3/22/21 (Replaces policy on Salaries dated 8/22/11)

REPORTING OF TIME WORKED, PAY DAY & PAY PERIOD

Each employee is required to accurately report the hours that he/she works on a time sheet. No one is authorized to complete a time sheet on an employee's behalf, and falsification of time records will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including being discharged. Time sheets are due to the Town of Center Harbor Selectmen's Assistant by Monday.

Employees are paid on a weekly basis on Friday for all hours worked during the prior week.

Approved by Board of Trustees 3/22/21 (Replaces policy on Paydays dated 8/22/11)

WORK WEEK & WORK SCHEDULE

The Library's work week begins on Saturday and ends at the close of business on Friday.

The Board of Trustees determines the days of the week and hours that the Library is open. The Librarian schedules employees for work and submits the schedule to the Board of Trustees for approval. Due to the nature of Library programming and services, schedules may vary on occasion.

Approved by Board of Trustees 3/22/21 (Replaces policy on Schedules & Work Periods dated 8/22/11)

BREAKS AND MEAL PERIODS

An employee may take a paid fifteen-minute break for every four hours worked.

According to RSA 275:30-A *Lunch or Eating Period*, "An employer may not require an employee to work more than 5 consecutive hours without granting them a ½ hour lunch or eating period, except if it is feasible for the employee to eat during the performance of his or her work, and the employer permits him or her to do so." Every Library employee working for at least five (5) consecutive hours is expected to take a 30-minute unpaid meal break for which he/she must sign out. The employee is not required to leave the Library premises during this time. An employee may request to waive the lunch or eating period requirement by filling out the *Request Waiver Form* (see attached). Requests are approved by the Board of Trustees upon the recommendation of the Librarian.

No food or beverage other than water is allowed at the circulation desk.

Approved by Board of Trustees 3/22/21 (Retained section from policy on Schedules & Work Periods dated 8/22/11)

EMERGENCY CLOSING

Employees are expected to work during inclement weather. However, due to concern about the safety of its patrons and employees, the Library may be open for limited hours or be closed during severe weather situations or community emergencies. The Library may also be closed on other occasions because of unavoidable circumstances. Part-time employees are not paid for emergency or unavoidable closings.

If such an emergency or unavoidable circumstance occurs, the Librarian contacts the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees (or designee) to discuss closing and then notifies staff of the decision. The Librarian (or designee) also:

- Changes the recorded greeting on the Library's voicemail to inform callers of the closing
- Posts a closing notice on the Library website www.centerharborlibrary.org and the Town website www.centerharbornh.org/james-e-nichols-memorial-library
- Sends notice to WMUR-TV when closing is due to severe weather
- Posts a closing notice on the Library front door, if possible.

Approved by Board of Trustees 3/22/21 (Retained sections from revised policy dated 12/20/19)

EXIT INTERVIEW

An employee who terminates his/her employment may be asked to participate in an exit interview with the Board of Trustees. The purpose of the exit interview is to discuss any relevant separation benefits and benefit continuation, and to receive feedback from the employee on ways in which the Library can improve operations and retention of employees.

Approved by Board of Trustees 3/22/21 (Retained section from policy dated 8/22/11)

