

# **BRAINERD MEMORIAL LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

December 4, 2023  
7 P.M. Zoom Meeting

**VIA ZOOM:** Susan Thompson, Terry Smith, Tom Piezzo, Lorraine Riess, Terry Twigg, Margaret Adams, David Neal, Pam Crum, Kaycee Blancaflor, Marijean Conrad, Lynne Cooper, Mary Karkutt-Kulak

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 P.M. by President Terry Twigg

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**PRESIDENTS REPORT AND REVIEW OF AGENDA:** Terry T. commented that the group should keep discussions to a minimum to allow adequate time for review of the serious budgetary issues of our Phase II Interiors Project.

**SECRETARY REPORT:**

- Minutes of the October meeting was approved.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

- There will be a staff holiday party Tuesday Dec. 19th at 3 PM.
- Tom held an initial meeting with new HK Youth & Family Services co-director Allison Behnke regarding outreach and joint programming.
- The supplemental state funds sponsored by Representative Christine Palm will be voted in December.
- The children's holiday event was successful, with 120+ attending.
- Giving Trees to benefit the Haddam Community Closet are on display and collecting hats, gloves, scarves, etc. until 12/31.

**NOMINATING:**

- Discussions are underway to add board members. Marijean is recommending and having discussions with two good prospects.

**PERSONNEL AND POLICY:**

- Staff holiday bonuses were approved in Executive session.

**FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY:**

Following are select contents from Kaycee's written update:

- The Friends' Committee met on 11/16/23. The Friends continue to maintain the Little Free Libraries and the Book Nook. Pop up sales have concluded. The Friends commemorated Veterans' Day with a display coordinated with the Annino brothers of the Veterans' Museum and a book table featuring books of interest to vets, who were invited to take a free book.
- Holiday book bundles have been prepared and are available. A "spend \$3 get a chocolate truffle" holiday promotion has begun.
- The Friends will support the HK Holiday Telethon with a \$20 gift certificate to the Nook. Planning for 2024 is underway; areas of focus: new initiatives for the Friends, suggestions welcome; preparation of 2023 year in review; preparation of the Book Nook for renovations - including reduction in supply of books by way of donation to other sites and use of re-sellers and a book sale (targeting early fall); planning for the future Book Nook.

#### **FINANCE:**

- Terry Smith summarized results of the financial advisor vetting process. Three advisors were interviewed and Bill Tait of Essex Financial was recommended by the hiring committee.
- Terry S. summarized reasons to hire a financial advisor. Summary needs include expertise dealing with non-profits; continuity as library board members change; assistance developing a long-term investment plan; guidance while managing cash needs for major and minor projects, regular review of investments considering changing market conditions; checks and balances with library leadership; and protection against market downside risk.
- In conclusion, Essex Financial was recommended for six key reasons. Ease of accessibility (Essex, CT); access to Bill Tait; experience; cost (lowest quoted fee at .55% of managed assets); additional support for short- and long-term capital development programs; and improved risk management of the endowment.
- The board voted to hire Essex Financial.

**STRATEGIC PLAN:** No report

#### **BUILDING AND GROUNDS:**

- There was a positive vote to replace adult toilets with tank toilets.

## **INTERIOR RENOVATION:**

- Construction, furniture and moving bids were received November 3. The bids totaled \$2,280,578. This amount exceeds our budget by \$930,577. There will be a December vote for an additional state grant of \$380k. Christine Palm is our sponsor. Christine has been a steadfast advocate for our library and for our town.
- Kronenberger was the sole bidding contractor. They have a great local reputation for historic restoration and have recently completed our beautiful front door.
- To close the gap between these bids and our budget a working session between S/PA, Kronenberger, Tom, Terry T. and Lorraine was concluded November 28 to outline several areas for cost reductions.
- The highest costs were prevailing wage requirements, millwork, electrical and phasing (time and segments of activity). Kronenberger will provide a revised bid by December 15. A key cost factor is the length of the project. A shorter timeframe reduces moving costs and project management costs, Also, construction labor is generally more productive.
- Terry T. met with Bob McGarry and Bill Warner to request the use of HES as a temporary library during construction. There is adequate space and no conflict with HES construction plans beginning in 2025. We have approval to move forward using HES.
- To maintain our grants, we must have contracts in place in time to begin construction in January.

## **PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND EVENTS:**

- The next event will be a capital campaign kick-off assuming a “go” decision.

## **CAPITAL CAMPAIGN:**

- Individual donor call lists were reviewed and expanded pending an official “go” decision. Donor materials will have to be adjusted for any scope changes.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND ACTION ITEMS:**

- None to report

**OTHER:**

- None to report

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 P.M.

The next meeting date is January 23, 2024.

Respectfully submitted:

Margaret Adams, Secretary