

## Hubbard Community Forum Notes – 4.30.18

What do you want and what do you need from the Hubbard?  
How the community will help reach those goals?

### ***Brainstorm re: wants and needs from the Hubbard:***

#### **In 10 years, what kinds of things would you like to see?**

- civic discussions – political forums
- people who come to town request to help find out the history of their home and their neighborhood – they can find the information at the library
- research for classes for historical information done through library resources
- historic space; tours connected to the community and other places
- access to primary sources
- access to community and community discussions
- debate of all the people running for office for the local positions – didn't come with an agenda or political affiliation – a community place where candidates and members of the public feel comfortable. ACA sign ups – forums for help were great and the library is a good gathering place for it.
- book piece is important
- community center welcoming to all people – formal and informal meetings of people
- “The library defines our experience as parents of young children in Hallowell. It's a place in the dead of winter to meet up with other parents. The library staff know my kids' names, what kind of books they like, they will order a book for my son. My kids love the library. I love it the way it is – I hope many generations of Hallowell kids have the experience my kids have had.”
- Cotton Mill – need a better sidewalk to make it easier for folks to walk there. “I like the library because it's books. The technology is great. I would like to see educational programs there – organic farming/gardening; healthy living; age-friendly community committee would like to help.”
- The reason I love the library – it's a repository of information that others don't have. There is a viability issue: kids don't read books – financial viability of maintaining the structure. We need to have a state headquarters – genealogical society in Winslow could possibly move here. Agent for 23 and Me?
- The printed page is not dead. The Hall Dale Elementary School librarian encourage kids to go downtown to the Hubbard – especially important for children and families who don't have money.
- If we can use the Hubbard as a vehicle to bring arts and culture, but focus on what is important to kids so they know to go back there. Making the library relevant to kids their age – a place where they can go for books and other fun events.

#### **Best event/memorable kind of event for what the library could be doing:**

- Being at the Hubbard – the setting/our library is enough. Hope/what it remains lovely, it is able to host a wide variety of events, that it continues to have a physical collection of whatever is current – borrow books from other systems and that it's able to be nimble about how people access materials.
- “The Friends have supported all kinds of programming that everybody is talking about...we had many, many innovative programs and the frustration is that they're very poorly attended. There are so many different things and I think that's the problem. How are you going to get people into this wonderful space? From being there it's been very frustrating.”

- “A lot of people over the years have taken the Hubbard for granted.... The first year I served on the board our annual budget was 16k.... We appreciated what this resource was. A promotional brochure we had referred to it as The Jewel of Second Street. It still is the Jewel of Second Street. I think we have to recognize there is an expense in maintaining the library. Costs across the board have gone up. Rather than rely on a library that can serve the community at no cost we have to recognize that we have an institution here that is fundamental to the character of this town.... We have a wonderful heritage and it’s time for the community to recognize that to stand for what kind of community you want it to be – it’s time for the whole community to embrace the Hubbard.”
- How come the library was never under the City? (question that was asked)

### **Funding – what does the community do?**

- Transparency of the library’s financial situation would help – would be great to include an annual report. Quarterly included in the newsletter. Graphics not spreadsheet.
- Limiting the take from the endowment because many funding streams of an endowment have rules around what can be taken out and used. The commitment to the people who left money should be considered.
- Dept. of Interior grants? Mostly geared toward restoration of building and not around operating costs

### **City Partnership/Ownership?**

- Way back when we wanted support from the City for the library. It’s part of the community, it’s important to the community. The City needs to have buy-in for all of us.
- “It never occurred to me that there isn’t a public-private partnership between the City and the Library. It seems like a good option.”
- Is there a process to plan for the City to take over? What else is being considered?
- “The City takes all the taxes I pay and they give them to a private land developer. How do we tell the City we want the money to go to the library?”
- Mo Cohen – Ward 1: I’ve been to many meetings in this same hall. I look around and there are a lot of faces I don’t recognize. It speaks highly to the reach of the library serves. I would be interested in hearing more about public/private and creative ways to make that happen. It’s more palatable for the City to know that they’re funding certain parts of the library (an employee, buying fuel, etc.) – are there other creative ways to partner?”
- Put the library in the context of what the City has to offer for someone who chooses to move here or stay here. Having a library that is viable and vibrant is part of economic development. There should be a context around that partnership – not just filling a hole. We have to talk about a long view.”
- Kara Walker – Ward 3 – Powerhouse of new faces – we have to engage the 82% who didn’t provide any financial support. I’m really happy to see everyone here.
- Right now, the City is getting a bargain. If the City had to run the library, they couldn’t do it at the current ask. If the City ran the library, would have to provide competitive salaries/benefits. If the City doesn’t cough up extra money. The only alternative is to close it down. I don’t think the people in the City would tolerate that. If suddenly the library board said it was done, it wouldn’t take long for the City Council to do what has happened in Gardiner and Augusta. The City ought to be more forthcoming to help out – they’re getting a bargain.”
- The larger aspect of this conversation is that everyone has to ask themselves, what does the library mean and what does it mean to the quality of life here that we have this facility? We take the library

for granted. If we ask ourselves about the quality of life in this community and what contributes to it, we should think about the library.

- If the City increases its amount, it's a way for all citizens to contribute.
- 60k is patching a hole. What we need to do is bite the bullet is say this needs to be a city institution. We need a plan to do it and start working toward making it part of the city govt.
- the public/private part is intriguing as a model. City supports operational part and the trustees would support the building and the maintenance. People can get galvanized around buildings or projects.

Thoughts/questions re moving forward and convincing the City Council:

- Have a mini campaign around "What does the Hubbard mean to you?" – people can fill out something at circulation and staff can collect them.
- Engage people on the list – how? Email people re: the City Council hearing schedule

### **Email Comments RE: Community Forum.**

Comment #1.

The forum and the HUBBARD are extremely important to me. I am unaware of the reasons that a forum has been called. And I am therefore alarmed.

I do not assume that the Hubbard has what it could freely use and deserves. but I did assume that the Hubbard was seen as a community fixture and its existence and ability to run at some reasonable level was not at risk.

The Hubbard is: a gathering place, a safe place, a literary place, a place to seek answers, a place to meet people, a place that is not a bar or an antique shop, a place that could be doing a great deal more, a beautiful place, a legacy to us and to our grandchildren ( if we take care of it).

Like Vaughan's woods or the Reservoir green space it is taken for granted and would be better if we were front and center at taking care of it.

Growing ideas: I do think that the communication from the Hubbard is sparse and could be more vivacious.

The friends of the library and the board are not clear to me and as a resident I should be able to say how the Hubbard works.

I think that the interactions with the elementary school could be more inventive and that our access to inter library loan could be increased.

We have caring and smart staff who deserve our appreciation.

Comment #2.

Our family has two young kids who love to come to the "play library" (as opposed the "quiet library, the Maine State Library). They play with the toys and games, browse books, and meet friends. We have found

the Hubbard to be a great place for families, even though we have not participated in many of the scheduled activities. I look forward to my children being able to walk there on their own as they get older. While I have all kinds of ideas about clubs and activities the library could host, I'm not sure how much participation there would be—only because of busy schedules and other activities, not lack of interest.

I am an avid reader, an English teacher by profession, and do some literacy outreach at HDES. All that to say, I have stacks of books lying around the house and use the library constantly. I find that I mostly use the Maine State Library. I try to use Hubbard if I see that a book is there, but it's much easier to search URSUS and request books at MSL. I can find almost any children's book (usually from Bangor Public Library) and fiction and nonfiction for myself either at MSL or through interlibrary loan. Is it possible for the Hubbard to connect to URSUS or Minerva? If I could request books and pick them up there, I would be there much more often.

I'm curious how the library could partner with Hall-Dale. Many students can walk to Hubbard, and the busses go right by it after school. It would be great to have programs for kids—tutoring, enrichment, Odyssey of the Mind, etc. Partnering with the school would help spread the word about programs and possibly be an avenue for grants, but mostly it would be a way to build community around books and all of the other resources at Hubbard. I know the Vaughan Homestead has looked at doing a naturalist program or other after school activities for kids. Maybe they could work with the library? As I mentioned earlier, I know families are busy with sports and other activities, so it's hard to know when people are just waiting for the right activity or if their plates are already full.