

Groton Public Library Board of Trustees
Final Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2017
Approved, Dec. 12, 2017

Attending: Jane Allen, Mimi Dabritz, Mark Gerath, Kristen von Campe, Nancy Wilder and David Zeiler, with Library Director Vanessa Abraham.

David Zeiler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Vote Summary

- M. Gerath moved to accept the October 24, 2017 minutes. J. Allen seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- M. Gerath moved and J. Allen seconded that we fund up to \$5,200 for executive coaching from LIG/MEG. The vote passed unanimously.
- M. Gerath moved and M. Dabritz seconded that we expend \$1,200 to fund modifications to the historic librarian's desk from the existing furniture authorization of the GPL Endowment. The vote passed with M. Gerath, M. Dabritz, D. Zeiler, K. von Campe and N. Wilder voting for and J. Allen abstaining.
- M. Gerath moved and J. Allen seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 PM. The motion was approved unanimously.

Action Items

- N. Wilder will continue to search for a company to repair the cane chair.
- The Library Director Evaluation Committee will complete the formalities of the Library Director's Review.
- Jeff will put out a temporary camera in the parking lot area to help ward off any vandals.
- The PPP will have a recommendation for the December meeting on filming at the library.
- V. Abraham will update the budget based on tonight's discussion.
- K. von Campe will send a thank you note to Judy and John Giger for the donation of the American flag.

Tarbell Charitable Trust Proposal

The Trustees reviewed the letter V. Abraham received from Maggy Rhineland of the Tarbell Charitable Trust on the proposed program on the Boston School and its artists. The Trustees agreed with the plan to have the trust donate the amount for the program to the Town with a letter of intent to deposit the money into the Library Gift Fund. As the stewards of the Gift Fund, the Trustees would then allocate the funds for this program, which we heartily endorse. As it stands now, the Tarbell Trust cannot donate directly to an individual, so this work around will satisfy everyone.

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Standing Committee Reports

Budget and Finance: The meeting with the Trust Commissioners went well and they approved our \$60,000 request for FY19 materials expenditures from the John H. Robbins Library Fund. The Commissioners are proud of their support of the space redesign project, but were very happy with the Trustees' report that over 50% of the space redesign project is being funded through other sources.

GPL personnel vs. hours open calculations are very impressive. Our costs have only increased due to annual pay increases to staff. Our staff are working more efficiently with less personnel staffing more hours. Selectman Barry Pease had asked for documentation on Sunday hours and their value. V. Abraham has been collecting data and will present the number and types of programs offered on Sundays as well as wonderful community comments on how much these open Sundays mean to the people who come to the library and take advantage of them.

The FY19 budget is being worked on. There will be a small increase to our membership fee for MVLC, which is being driven by MVLC Membership Committee of all 36 Library Directors voting to "catch up" this library network to the appropriate level of funding for digital content, which has been underfunded for many, many years and not satisfactorily meeting the needs of our patrons. Landscaping fees are also increasing to have the service in 4-5 times per year, instead of only twice, which has proven insufficient. Budget and Finance has put an overall 2.5% average increase to Salaries & Wages as a placeholder until the exact numbers are determined, as we need to calculate our Materials expenditure requirement for the state based on the total municipal budget. For capital planning, a proposed lighting evaluation in 2022 for \$75,000 has been dropped to \$40,000. A proposal for \$40,000 for three new self checkout stations has been dropped entirely due to the high cost of replacement.

The Trustees also discussed the necessity to replace the walkway on the retaining wall side of the building as it is crumbling. An estimate for that work is approximately \$40,000. There was a request from Debbie to consider adding irrigation to the front of the building, which Budget and Finance are against. Budget and Finance will be meeting with Town Manager Mark Haddad on Monday, November 27, to present our library budget request for FY19.

Building and Equipment:

V. Abraham updated the Trustees on the space redesign project. She is planning to schedule the shelving company for a Monday, when the library is closed as the work is loud and disruptive.

The vestibule door schematics look very good and appropriate to the library.

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J. Allen recused herself at 7:48 PM so the Trustees could discuss a proposal for modification and restoration work on the historic library desk by Shattuck Wood Works, owned by Jim Allen, who is married to Jane. Shattuck's proposal is by far the most reasonable proposal for work on this desk to retrofit it for use by the teen librarian. M. Gerath moved and M. Dabritz seconded that we expend up to \$1,200 to fund this project from the existing furniture authorization of the GPL Endowment. The vote passed with M. Gerath, M. Dabritz, D. Zeiler, K. von Campe, and N. Wilder voting for and J. Allen abstaining.

J. Allen returned to the meeting at 7:55 PM.

Policy, Personnel, and Planning:

The new Assistant to the Director, Deborah Fleischman, just started. Instead of V. Abraham's plan for a gradual transition into the position, HR clarified that for benefits purposes, she would have to start at her full number of weekly hours, and so she has.

As per the Library Director's review, the Trustees are in full support of extending the executive coaching contract for V. Abraham. M. Gerath moved and J. Allen seconded that we fund up to \$5,200 for executive coaching from LIG/MEG. The vote passed unanimously.

Liaison Reports

Endowment: K. von Campe and V. Abraham reported that the Endowment newsletter went out and that Deborah Fleischman has agreed to serve as the separately contracted Endowment Administrative Assistant, whose hours and duties for the Endowment are outside of her role as the Library's Administrative Assistant.

Art Committee: D. Zeiler reported that the November 8th gallery opening with Elizabeth Goldring was well-received and brought in a full house for her poetry reading and to view this exhibit.

Library Director

V. Abraham reported that we now have three Deborah's on staff. To help avoid confusion when speaking of them, Deborah Fleishman will be Deborah, Deborah Dowson will be Deb, and Debra Ladue will be Debbie.

Judy and John Giger donated a flag to the library upon noticing that the library flag needed replacement. K. von Campe will send a thank you note to them from the Trustees.

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State Aid requirements have been tweaked to the benefit of libraries. Any consecutive 38 weeks even if they span a fiscal year will count toward compliance. Also, they've flexed the materials expenditure guidelines so that up to 10% of a library's books and materials budget can be spent for hardware for direct patron service.

October monthly statistics showed circulation activity was up 10%. Program figures have yet to be added into the statistical report, but were quite substantial this month. Mimi Matisse is working with Deb Dowson and the middle school librarian to have teens and pre-teens talking about books on the Groton Channel.

M. Gerath suggested that there be a grand opening for the new teen space when it is completed and V. Abraham reported that she would plan something with Deb Dowson and the Trustees.

V. Abraham reported that the staff is very happy about their mobile device to handle the library pull lists.

The volunteer appreciation event was a success, with many people attending to paint glasses.

Adjournment: M. Gerath moved and J. Allen seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 PM. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen von Campe, Secretary

List of Documents Distributed for Use by the Trustees at the Meeting:

1. Meeting Agenda
2. Draft Minutes for Last Months' Meeting
3. Reports & Statistics for Last Month
4. Space Redesign Project Budget vs Actual
5. Personnel v Hours Open FY12-FY18 Calculations
6. Draft FY19 Budget & Capital Docs
7. Shattuck Woodworks Quote for Historic Desk
8. FY18 State Award Letter
9. Minor Updates to State Aid Requirements
10. Sunday Comments from Patrons