

Groton Public Library Board of Trustees
Monthly Meeting Minutes
August 11, 2020

Approved 9/8/2020 Trustees Meeting

Attending – Via Zoom: Marilyn Dabritz, Mark Gerath, Kristen von Campe, Nancy Wilder, Jane Allen, David Zeiler and Library Director Vanessa Abraham.

Guest: Alan Hurvitz in attendance 4:30-4:45 pm.

Support and attendance by Bob Colman of Groton Cable.

M. Dabritz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

Vote Summary – All Votes were by Roll-Call

- Draft minutes from July 14, 2020 meeting approved as amended. Kristen moved and Jane seconded. Approved unanimously.
- The suspension of the use of cash and of most fines was continued until December 31, 2020. Kristen moved and Jane seconded. Approved four in favor and two against (Mimi and Mark).
- Vote to adjourn. Kristen moved and Jane seconded. Approved unanimously.

Action Items

- Vanessa to communicate with Mr. Hurvitz regarding the Trustee’s decision on the security camera.
- Mark to draft 2021 Trustee goals for consideration at the September meeting.
- Trustees to contribute their input to the Director’s annual evaluation by the end of August.
- Vanessa to reschedule the September meeting to 7 PM.
- Vanessa to explore use of Zoom for the Trustees to discuss the Director’s evaluation.
- Vanessa to meet with the Art Gallery curator in September.
- Kristen to review the Trustee replacement policy before the end of August.

Unfinished Business

Approval of Meeting Minutes from June 9 & 18, 2020 Meetings. Completed, see vote summary.

Report on Action Items from Previous Meetings Reviewed and all completed.

Review Trustees’ Calendar for Current Month

(Trustee Goals; Lib Dir Eval; FY-end reports)

New Business

Resident Request for a Main Street Security Camera on the Library

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Mr. Alan Hurvitz requested that the Trustees consider reorienting the security camera at the Main St. entrance to provide coverage of the Town Green. The request was made due to recent harassment of demonstrators on the Green. He explained that there was currently no alternative to provide security camera coverage of the Green. David explained that the camera at the front of the building was provided by a grant with the specific goal of providing footage on the library's entrances. He believes that the Trustees are not at liberty to reorient the camera as it would be inconsistent with the goals of the grant. He also noted that the tree that partially blocked the view of the entrance had been trimmed. The Trustees agreed with David and declined to reorient the camera.

Report on July 27 Select Board Meeting: Hiring Requests & Removing Shelves Furlough – Vanessa provided a summary of the library's request and the Select Board's action to approve returning the 3 shelvers to work and hiring 3 part time positions. The shelvers are back at work and 2 positions have been advertised.

Review FY2020 Annual Goals & Set New Trustee Goals for FY2021

The 2020 goals were reviewed and a preliminary discussion held on potential 2021 goals. 2021 goals will be finalized at the September meeting.

Other Business

Budget & Finance

Letter from Senator Kennedy's Office about a Grant Award for Youth Remote Programs

The letter from Senator Kennedy's office announcing a \$15,000 grant to improve remote youth programs was discussed. No other details are available at this time.

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Reports

The 2020 financial reports were reviewed. The expenditure reflects the impact of the COVID-related curtailment in services. A substantial portion of the budget will be unspent and returned to the town: 25% of the general expenditure funds and 16% of Salaries and Wages. The funds received from Trusts were fully expended as budgeted.

Request to Extend Fine- and Cash-Free through Dec. 31

A continuation of a partial fine suspension and avoidance of the use of cash until the end of the year was discussed and approved – see vote summary.

Building & Equipment

Emergency Exit & Foundation Repair Project Updates, including HDC Meeting Report

The Historical District Committee approved the use of the handrails proposed for both the north and south emergency exits. Progress on the refurbishment of the exits was discussed

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and photographs reviewed. Progress on landscape repairs and repair to the foundation on the northside of the building was also reviewed.

Library Building Envelope Project Used for Class Study at South Carolina Library School

The process of planning and executing the building envelop study and subsequent repairs served as a case study in South Carolina. The use of the GPL case was brought to Vanessa's attention by an MLS student.

Policy, Personnel, & Planning

Two Job Openings Posted

Job openings have been posted for the circulation assistant and the Adult Programming Coordinator. The coordinator position has been open since February. Strong resumes have been received and the window for applications will close on August 21. Phone and Zoom interviews are planned followed by an in-person – distanced interview of the finalist(s).

Contact Tracing

The State has asked that Libraries be prepared to provide contact tracing as part of COVID control. The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners has expressed concern about this policy as a violation of privacy and a measure that should require a Warrant. Library Directors in the area are inclined to cooperate with contact tracing if necessary because it would not divulge any specific interests or activities by the library users. The Town Manager has strongly encouraged cooperation should it be necessary. Vanessa agrees that contact tracing within reasonable bounds should be supported. The Trustees supported that policy.

Solicit Input for Library Director Evaluation

The Director evaluation committee solicits input by the end of August.

Designate a Special Trustees Meeting to Review Draft of LD Evaluation including LD Goals

A meeting to discuss the draft review will be held on September 15th.

Other Reports

GPL Endowment

Financial statements are coming together that will reflect recent changes. No other report.

Art Committee The potential for virtual shows on-line and a sculpture in Katie's Garden will be discussed with the Curator in a meeting in September.

Social Media Report The GPL's social media profile remains very high. The work of the

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college student looking after YA social media Macie was noted to be excellent.

Other Business

Other Items Not Anticipated 48 Hours Before the Meeting The setting of goals is on hold but will be considered at the next meeting.

Library Director Reports

Reopening Updates

- Most other libraries are implementing programs and limits similar to Groton's.
- Time limits on visits have been relaxed as several visitors are using the library as work space.
- The stacks remain closed with concierge service provided.
- The library work stations are not at capacity yet but an increase in use is anticipated as the school year starts.
- The local-only library cards have been in use for new patrons. Those will be upgraded to MVLC cards after September 1.
- Children's room use remains strong and is still at the window. There have been many appeals for support with school work.
- The fall newsletter is in development.
- Staff is tired but remains enthusiastic.

Program and Service Updates The Town is doing racial bias training and the library staff was trained on August 6th. The training was very good.

Patron & Staff Updates YA Librarian Deb Dowson will serve on the Town's Diversity Task Force.

Monthly Report & Statistics Statistics were reviewed. Teen and children program attendance is strong.

Other News & Updates

Wrap-Up

Review of Action Items from Current Meeting: Complete

Upcoming Meetings & Events:

Monthly Trustees Meetings – all at 7 PM: Sept 8, Oct 13, Nov 10, Dec 8

Trustee Meeting to discuss Director's Performance Evaluation – September 15 at 6 PM.

Early Fall Town Meeting: Sat. Oct. 3 at 10 am at GDRMS

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Meeting Adjourned at 5:54 PM - See vote summary.

Respectfully submitted:

Mark Gerath, Secretary

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

1. Current Meeting Agenda
2. Email Request to Board from Alan Hurvitz re: Main St. Security Camera
3. Front (and rear) Security Camera Screenshots Taken Aug. 6
4. Library Personnel Documents Prepared for SB Advocacy
5. FY2020 Trustee Action Plan
6. Draft Minutes for Previous Meeting
7. Annual Trustee Calendar
8. Letter about State Funding to Libraries to transition in-person youth programs to online
9. FY2020 Fiscal Year-End Reports
10. Patron email about fines
11. Emergency Exit, Foundation Repair, & Railings Docs & Pics
12. Thank you emails from So. Carolina MLS Teacher and Student @ our roof project
13. Library Job Postings
14. Information on Contact Tracing
15. Library Director Self-Evaluation & Evaluation Policy
16. Reports & Statistics for July
17. American Libraries article on Libraries Reclosing After Reopening