

Groton Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at 7 pm

Approved, 4/11/2023

Attending via Zoom: Library Trustees Helena Altsman, Kate Bettencourt, Mark Gerath, Kristen von Campe, Nancy Wilder, David Zeiler and Library Director Vanessa Abraham

No absences.

Call to Order:

Mark Gerath, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Vote Summary

- Approval of January 9, 2023 Meeting Minutes. Moved by Kristen von Campe, seconded by Kate Bettencourt. 6 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstention.
- Approval of February 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes. Moved by Kristen von Campe, seconded by Kate Bettencourt. 6 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstention.
- Kristen von Campe made a motion to approve up to \$29,050 to be spent from LIG/MEG to cover the Salary and Wages expenses of the Sunday hours and the Summer Reading Program. Seconded by Kate Bettencourt. 5 ayes, 1 nay (von Campe), 0 abstention
- Kristen von Campe made a motion to accept the Holiday Schedule as presented with an amendment to close on December 21, 2023 from 10-12 for the purposes of Staff Training. Seconded by Kate Bettencourt. 6 ayes, 0 nay, 0 abstention.
- Kristen von Campe made a motion to approve up to \$250 to be spent from LIG/MEG to cover the costs associated with Susanne Olson obtaining National Certification for Notary Services. Seconded by Kate Bettencourt. 6 ayes, 0 nay, 0 abstention.
- Adjourn. Moved by Kristen von Campe, seconded by Kate Bettencourt. 6 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstention.

Action Items

- PPP and Mark Gerath to meet with Town Manager and Town HR director to discuss the Library Director's new contract.
- Altman, von Campe and Zeiler to finish Conflict of Interest training

New Business

Unfinished Business

Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 9, 2023 Meeting

- Completed, see vote summary.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from February 24, 2023 Meeting

- Completed, see vote summary.

Report on Action Items from Previous Meetings

- All action items reviewed.
- Library Director's contract is still being reviewed by the PPP committee

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- Helena Altman, Kristen von Campe and Dave Zeiler still need to finish State conflict of interest training.

Review Trustees' Calendar for Current Month

- All calendar items reviewed.

Review Monthly Bills

- All library bills reviewed.

Standing Committee & Liaison Reports:

Budget & Finance

FY 2024 Town & Library Budget: Cuts to Personnel Wages for Sunday hours & Summer Help

- \$28,500 cut, which is \$2,598 below our FY 2024 MAR of \$985,780, so we will need to apply for a waiver for state aid this fall, but highly likely will get it. The Town Manager, Mark Haddad is strongly urging the Trustees to use LIG/MEG (state aid) to cover this shortfall. There was a robust discussion of whether or not this was an appropriate use of LIG/MEG funds as they have not been used in this manner historically. Currently, we have \$95,996 banked in State Aid. While the Trustees were not happy to break this precedent, they ultimately did so. See above vote. There is a discrepancy in various communications from the Town Manager/local report as to the precise dollar amount that was being cut, so the Trustees voted to expend up to the highest amount we have been informed of.

Building & Equipment

Technology Transitions Plans

- Our Technology Librarian (Jeff Pike) is retiring imminently and for the past 6 weeks the staff has been acting as if he was not still working, instead relying on each other's tech. know-how. A few small hiccups, but for the most part, this is working as good as can be hoped, and staff do have IT help available from the Town and MVLC if help needed.
- 2 staff members (Nicole and Erica) have been trained on usage of the 3-D printer and will continue to offer this service to our patrons.
- We have received 6 new staff computers, ordered through the Town and sent directly to MVLC for setup with the standard software and applications they provide. Staff have finished with final in-house specific setups. The Town is taking over our internet management.

Building & Equipment Updates

- The new HVAC blower has finally been installed after a long delay getting the motor from the manufacturer

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- Nancy Wilder assisted with collecting quotes and information from G. W. Shaw's to replace the library's existing trash and recycling service, which Debbie and Vanessa have now been implemented at a significant cost savings to the GPL.

Policy, Personnel, & Planning

FY 2024 Holidays & Special Closings Schedule (July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024)

- The Holiday schedule was approved as presented with the additional closing on December 21, 2023 from 10-12 for a staff training workshop/event to be determined. See vote summary above.

Assistant Director Position

- The Town Hall/Library Union needs to change this position from a Union to a Contract position. As soon as this is completed, Vanessa can start the search for this position. It will be a lengthy and exhaustive process as this person will impact GPL at every level.
- Helena suggested an additional online job search service, Hireculture. She has had success finding qualified candidates for State jobs using this service.

Notary Service

- Jeff Pike was certified as a Notary Public and has been performing this service at the GPL upon request. Susanne Olson is interested in taking on this training and continuing to offer this service outside of Town Hall hours when there is a need. There is a national certification training program and she is asking the GPL to cover those costs. The Trustees agreed that this was a wise investment. See vote summary above.

Library Director Contract:

- PPP and current GPL Chair, Mark Gerath will meet with the Town Manager, Mark Haddad and the Town HR Director to discuss the new director's contract.

Other Reports:

GPL Endowment:

- No Report

Art & Artifacts:

- Mini-art kits were distributed as part of the Groton Reads program and nearly 100 mini canvases have been returned. They will be hung in the hallway into the Owen Shuman Art Gallery.

Social Media Report & Other News:

- No reported social media events.

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- Our teen Young Adult assistant filled in for Deb Dowson who was unable to host the regularly scheduled Robotics Club. The teen assistant did a great job and was appreciated by club members.
- The Trustees expressed appreciation for the Director keeping the library open during a couple of recent inclement weather days.

Other Business

- None

Library Director:

Review of Action Items from Current Meeting – see above

Review Upcoming Meetings & Events

Adjournment at 8:10 pm – see vote summary.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Zeiler, Secretary pro tem