

Groton Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 11, 2023, at 7 pm, Library Community Room

Approved, 8/8/2023

Attending in Person: Library Trustees Mark Gerath, Kristen von Campe, Kate Bettencourt, Helena Altsman, David Zeiler and Library Director Vanessa Abraham.

Absent:

Call to Order:

Kate Bettencourt, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Vote Summary

- Approval of June 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes. Moved by Kristen, seconded by Helena. 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 abstention (Mark).
- Adoption of FY2024 Trustee Goals. Moved by Kristen, seconded by Helena. Approved unanimously.
- Adjourn. Moved by Kristen, seconded by Helena. Approved unanimously.

Action Items

- Vanessa to acquire and ensure implementation of DocuSign for bills and payroll warrants.
- Vanessa will edit the Trustee vacancy posting.
- Kristen and Mark to work on a thank you for Nancy Wilder.
- Helena, Vanessa, and Mark to develop budget summary tool.
- Helena and Mark to act as the Director Evaluation Committee.
- Vanessa to develop her FY2023 self-evaluation.
- Kristen and David to consider acquisition of a statue for Katy's Garden.
- Mark to provide contact information for Lauri Smigelski to Vanessa for potential tractor and farm equipment visits.

New Business

Trustee Vacancy

- Nancy Wilder resigned from the board on June 19.
- The Trustees adopted the following schedule to appoint a replacement:
 1. The amended posting will be published during the last week of August. It will be noted that the successful candidate should be interested in running for re-election in May 2024.
 2. Letters will be due three weeks after the posting is published.
 3. Interviews will occur in late September and the Trustees agreed that not all applicants have to be interviewed.
 4. A joint meeting with the Select Board to appoint the new Trustee will be planned for their second October meeting.

Annual Trustee Goals

The FY2023 Trustee goals were reviewed.

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1. Advocate for the FY2023-24 budgets that meet the needs of the community and the library, including returning to full staffing, hours and usage.
2. Support the community in fostering diversity and inclusion.
3. Research options to improve Sibley Hall including better audio-visual systems – begin planning and consider funding options.
4. In cooperation with other community efforts, work to increase pedestrian and bicycle traffic to the library.
5. Complete the long-range planning process consistent with the state's five-year requirements.

While Goal #1 was not fully achieved under the municipal allocation, the Trustees concluded that they were effective in maintaining services during a difficult fiscal climate as well as in securing the Assistant Director position. The Trustees concluded that the Library has been an important contributor to fostering diversity and inclusion. The Sibley Hall changes were not accomplished, and only marginal progress made on increasing pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The long-range planning process was postponed.

After discussion the following were adopted as the Trustee's FY2024 goals by unanimous vote:

1. Advocate for the FY2024-25 budgets that meet the needs of the community and the library, including returning to a municipal appropriation that allows for full staffing, hours, and usage particularly Sunday hours and summer assistants.
2. Foster staff growth including beginning the evaluation of classifications and ensure integration of the Assistant Director.
3. Complete the long-range planning process consistent with the state's five-year requirements.

Unfinished Business

Approval of Meeting Minutes from June 13, 2023 Meeting

- Completed, see vote summary.

Report on Action Items from Previous Meetings

- All action items reviewed.

Review Trustees' Calendar for Current Month

- All calendar items reviewed.

Review Monthly Bills

- All library bills reviewed.

Standing Committee & Liaison Reports:

Budget & Finance

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Request to Town Manager for \$2,596 in Wages for FY2024 to Meet MAR

- The Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR) is set by the state board of library commissioners and is the average of the past 3 years of municipal budget appropriations to the library times 2.5%. It is a requirement for state certification each year. The voted FY2024 library budget following cuts made in March ended up \$2,596 under the MAR for FY2024.
- The Town Manager advised the Director to submit a memo requesting the additional amount.

Fiscal Year Wrap-Up

- The FY2023 budget was reviewed relative to actual expenditures. The budget was largely expended, and no problems were encountered.

Building & Equipment

Current Project Updates

- Vanessa reported that arrows directing traffic flow in the parking lot would be very helpful and she has discussed getting them with the Director of Public Works.
- David is working on the sign replacement on Main Street.

Policy, Personnel, & Planning

Appoint Director Evaluation Subcommittee

- Helena and Mark were appointed to the Committee. Mark will brief Helena on the process and begin soliciting input. Vanessa will prepare her self-evaluation.

PPP Updates:

- The new Assistant Director starts July 17. Sarah will be at the next Trustees meeting in August, but you can stop by and meet her before then.
- Vanessa updated the Trustees on a couple of part-time library assistant resignations. The job opening has been posted.

Other Reports:

GPL Endowment:

- 90% of the allowable endowment allocation has been spent.
- The next meeting of the Endowment Committee will be in October.

Art & Artifacts:

- Rachel Benson Fiber Art is the new exhibit in the art gallery.
- The potential to acquire a statue for the garden was discussed and David and Kristen will consider some options.

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Social Media Report & Other News:

- No report.

Other Business

- None

Library Director:

- Director / Library Updates:
- Town Updates:
- Program Updates
 - o Fanfest was a huge success.
 - o The class on etiquette for kids filled up very quickly.
 - o The “Touch a Truck” event was well attended.
 - o More than 800 people have signed up for summer reading.
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- Review Monthly Reports and Statistics
- Other Updates:

Review of Action Items from Current Meeting – see above

Review Upcoming Meetings & Events

Adjournment at 8:35 pm – see vote summary.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Gerath, Secretary pro tem