

Groton Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 10, 2023, at 7 pm, Library Community Room
Approved, 11/14/2023

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

Call to Order:

Kate Bettencourt, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm

Vote Summary

- Approval of September 12, 2023 Meeting Minutes. Moved by Mark, seconded by Kristen. 5 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstention.
- Approval of September 26, 2023 Meeting Minutes. Moved by Mark, seconded by Kristen. 3 ayes, 0 nays, 2 abstention.
- Approval of September 27, 2023 Meeting Minutes. Moved by Mark, seconded by Kristen. 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 abstention.
- Reappoint John Konetzny to the GPL Endowment Board for another four-year term starting January 1, 2024. Meeting Minutes. Moved by Mark, seconded by Kristen. 5 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstention.
- That \$200 be allocated from the Gift Fund for the entry fee for a Library team to participate in the Prescott Community Center's spelling bee. Moved by Mark, seconded by Kristen. 5 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstention.
- Recommend to the Endowment Trustees that the annual stipends for both the Groton Reads Coordinator and the Adult Programs Coordinator be increased. Moved by Mark, seconded by Kristen. 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 abstention.
- Adjourn. Moved by Mark, seconded by Kristen. 5 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstention.

Action Items

- Vanessa to forward Jennifer's letter of interest to the Town Manager before the joint meeting of the Trustees and the Select Board.
- Budget and Finance to do the monthly budget reconciliation.
- Vanessa to confirm the time and location of the meeting with the Trust Commissioners.
- Trustees to attend Town Meeting on 10/28.
- Vanessa to seek proposals to help with the indexing of the Groton Herald and the Town Diaries.
- Vanessa to pursue the following related to the Strategic Plan: a) schedule a Zoom meeting with the Trustees to discuss the plan and a SOAR exercise; b) schedule a meeting with the SPAC including Kate as the Trustee representative; and c) implement the youth survey.
- Helena, Kate, and Mark to meet with Vanessa to review the Library Director's annual evaluation at 12:30 on October 17 in the Historical Room.

New Business

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Public Records Request

- Vanessa reported on a Freedom of Information Act request for records regarding book challenges and complaints that might have occurred at the Groton Public Library since Jan. 2021. The matter was discussed, but there weren't any challenges to report. Vanessa worked with the Town Clerk to let the requester know.

Community Spelling Bee

- The Prescott Community Center is hosting a team spelling bee as a fund raiser. Many Town organizations are participating and Vanessa suggested that the GPL might provide a team. She requested that the \$200 entry fee be provided from the Gift Fund. After discussion, the expenditure was approved – see vote summary.

Unfinished Business

Approval of Meeting Minutes from September 12, 2023 Meeting

- Completed, see vote summary.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from September 26, 2023 Meeting

- Completed, see vote summary.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from September 27, 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

State Financial Report

- The financial report provided to the state was shared with the Trustees and discussed.

Budget & Finance Updates

- The Town's budget situation and the schools' request for a substantial increase in funding was reviewed. The implications for the library budget were discussed. The schedule for budget preparation and various meetings was presented. Vanessa was

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asked to estimate the Municipal Appropriation that would be necessary to fulfill the state accreditation requirements.

- Vanessa described that the projects to complete the digitizing and indexing of the Groton Herald and the Town Dairies need additional effort and funding. Vanessa would like to explore using a contractor to set up the databases that would then be populated by library staff. Vanessa asked for a sense of the board whether a \$5,000 expenditure for such contract work would be supported. The Board agreed and Vanessa will seek proposals and bring them to the Trustees for a vote.

Building & Equipment

Roof Inspection

- The roof inspection found that a few small repairs were necessary, and the contractor has proposed \$5,000 to replace a small number of tiles. Vanessa worked with Greenwood to reduce their original repair quote including asking the fire department to provide a ladder truck to provide access to the roof. She plans to fund this project from the existing maintenance budget but may need additional funds.
- A potential oil leak was discovered in an exhaust fan unit on the roof and checked by HVAC technician, but discovered the rubber membrane in the “sunken garden” on the roof will require patching, which will be covered with the above roof repairs.

Building & Equipment Updates

- The committee is still exploring options for a Main Street sign replacement.

Policy, Personnel, & Planning

Strategic Planning

- The strategic planning process is getting underway. Meetings with the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC) and Staff and Trustees will be scheduled to perform a SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results) exercise. A youth survey with raffle prizes for participation will take place. Three focus groups are planned with a) teens including the YA advisory council; b) the Council on Aging; and c) parents.

Director Evaluation

- A meeting to review the completed evaluation was scheduled with the Chair, the evaluation committee, and the library director.

Other Reports:

GPL Endowment:

- The Trustees voted to reappoint John Konetzny to the GPL Endowment Board. See vote summary.

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- Vanessa proposed asking the Endowment Board for increases to the stipends for the Groton Reads Coordinator and the Lifelong Learning Coordinator positions if acceptable to the Library Trustees. After discussion, the proposed increase was approved – see vote summary.

Art & Artifacts:

- A new exhibit has been installed in the gallery.

Social Media Report & Other News:

- None

Other Business

- None

Library Director:

- The Trustees were provided with the following reports:
 - o Director / Library Updates
 - o Town Updates:
 - o Program Updates
 - o Review Monthly Reports and Statistics

Review of Action Items from Current Meeting – see above

Review Upcoming Meetings & Events

- Fall Town Meeting: Sat. Oct. 28 at 9 am – PFAS, Consent Agenda with \$2,6K for GPL MAR
- Mon., Nov. 6 at 7 pm: Joint Library Trustees & Select Board Meeting to Appoint Jennifer
- Trustees Meetings: Nov. 14, Dec. 12, & Jan. 9, 2024

Adjournment at 9:00 pm – see vote summary.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Gerath, Secretary pro tem