

Groton Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 10, 2024, at 7 pm, Community Room

Approved, 10/8/2024

Attending in Person: Library Trustees Helena Altsman, Kate Bettencourt, Mark Gerath, Jennifer Petersen, Kristen von Campe, and David Zeiler. Also, Library Director Vanessa Abraham (left at 8:28 pm). Assistant Director Sarah Breen attended via Zoom (left at 8:28 pm).

Absent:

Call to Order

Chair Helena Altsman called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Vote Summary

- Approval of August 13, 2024, Meeting Minutes as amended. Moved by Mark, seconded by Kate. 5 ayes, 0 nays, 1 abstention (Kristen).
- Motion to approve Five-Year Goals as amended and inserted into Strategic Plan. Moved by Mark, seconded by Kate. 6 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions.
- Move to approve Director's evaluation as amended. Moved by Mark, seconded by Kate. 6 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions.
- Adjourn. Moved by Mark, seconded by Kate. 6 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions.

Action Items

- Trustee David Zeiler assigned to reach out to Jason Kauppi to ask for Mike's re-appointment
- The Building and Equipment subcommittee will meet with Vanessa to discuss priorities, delegation, and the Capital Plan
- Vanessa to continue obtaining estimates for fire sprinkler system update/replacement
- Kristen will contact the Town Clerk to clarify whether all Library Trustee candidates must be interviewed
- Vanessa will post the Library Trustee vacancy upon receipt of Kate's resignation
- Sarah will resend GrotonFest sign up.

Director's Report

- First half day of school went great; there were no wi-fi issues, and a minor vehicle-related issue in the parking lot was resolved.
- Questions and concerns regarding an upcoming Palestinian/Israeli program were shared and addressed by Vanessa via email.
- Summer Reading program had 769 participants.
- Recent promotion of the Library of Things has resulted in more use.
- Indian Food Field Trip generated lots of interest, so an extra session was added.
- Fire alarm upgrade nearly completed.
- Electronic/Audio Book borrowing up 36%.
- YA circulation is up by 20% from last year.
- The new people counter is working well, and Vanessa created a heat map using the data it generates.

Groton Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 10, 2024, at 7 pm, Community Room

Approved, 10/8/2024

- The 50+ Job Seekers Programs was a hit.
- Sarah is trying to track down the missing Groton High School yearbooks to complete the library's collection (62, 63, 75, 80, 82, 86) which Vanessa plans to digitize.
- Some library patrons were upset that registration for the arts and craft classes was opened earlier than previously announced due to the early release of the newsletter and complained that when they logged on to enroll at the originally assigned time, the classes were already filled.
- Maggy Rhineland of Tarbell Charitable Trust is stepping down after nearly 20 years and Edmund Tarbell's great-granddaughter Elizabeth Tarbell will be the new Executor.
- Assistant Library Director Sarah added that the new library staff members - the Sunday circulation assistant and the new shelver - have started working and are doing great.

Action Items

- Approval of the Minutes from August 13, 2024 Meetings
 - o Completed, see vote summary.
- Review Trustees' Calendar for Current Month
 - o All calendar items reviewed.
- Review Trustees' Action Items for Current Month
 - o All action items reviewed.
- Report on Action Items from Previous Meetings
 - o All action items reviewed.

GPL Endowment

- Michael Woods expressed a willingness to continue to sit on the GPL Endowment Trust Board, so it was agreed that the trustees should reach out to the Town Moderator to recommend that he be re-appointed to the board for another four-year term starting January 1, 2025.
- Trustee Dave Zeiler will reach out to Jason Kuappi to request Mike's re-appointment.

Budget & Finance

- Review Monthly Bills
 - o All library bills reviewed.
- Review Monthly Budget Report
 - o Monthly budget report reviewed.
- Other Budget & Finance
 - o Vanessa and Beth applied for a \$10,000 programming grant from the Community Foundation North Central Massachusetts to fund additional art classes

Groton Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 10, 2024, at 7 pm, Community Room

Approved, 10/8/2024

Building & Equipment

- Review Library Project Tracker
 - o Fire System Upgrade Update - it is 85% complete. An annunciator has been installed in the foyer.
 - o Vanessa is going to get fresh quotes for the carpet replacement.
 - o The sprinkler system is 25 years old and needs to be updated/replaced. There are 185 sprinkler heads in the library, some in hard-to-reach places and need scaffolding erected to reach. More quotes to do the work will need to be obtained. Matter will be further discussed at the B & E Subcommittee meeting.

- Review Five-Year Capital Plan
 - o The Capital Plan needs to go to the town in October.
 - o Projects need to be prioritized.

- Other Building & Equipment
 - o Front fire box which is the original from the 1890's and is hard-wired to the fire station will be removed because service to the box is no longer being maintained.

Policy, Personnel, & Planning

- Discuss and Vote Five-Year Goals & Objectives
 - o Five-year goals and objectives will remain the same and action items need to be winnowed down and paired with them.
 - o Vanessa will meet with staff to obtain further input regarding their top priorities.

- Discuss and Vote Five-Year Strategic Plan
 - o After discussion, a motion was made to approve Five-Year Goals as amended and to insert them into the Strategic Plan. Moved by Mark, seconded by Kate. See vote summary.

- Discuss Trustees Annual Goals
 - o The following five goals were agreed upon:
 1. Advocate for the 2024-2025 FY budget that fully meets the needs of the community and the GPL
 2. Develop and implement a comprehensive and thoughtful marketing initiative highlighted by a robust, dynamic, nimble, and lasting social media campaign
 3. Analyze the library's physical needs to accommodate the 21st century library patron and develop a plan to meet those needs This should including structural and hardware needs, as well as a thoughtful and prudent funding plan for these changes
 4. Continue to define the role of the GPL in the town of Groton as various civic groups continue to expand services

Groton Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 10, 2024, at 7 pm, Community Room
Approved, 10/8/2024

5. Explore alternative means of staffing to optimize services.

- Discuss Library Trustee Vacancy Policy and Process
 - o Kate anticipates submitting her resignation in the next couple days to be effective the day after the October Trustee meeting (October 9).
 - o The opening will be posted.
 - o Because in the past there have been so many candidates (some of whom were interviewed for previous openings) that it has been very time consuming to interview them all. Kristen will call the Town Clerk to determine whether all potential candidates need to be interviewed.

- Other Policy, Personnel, and Planning:
 - o None

Other Business

- none

Next Steps

- Review of Action Items from Current Meeting – see above
- Review Upcoming Meetings & Events

Discussion Director's Annual Performance

- Trustees discussed feedback received from evaluation requests.
- Draft of Annual Performance Review report was reviewed.
- Chair and two-person subcommittee will meet to discuss the report with Vanessa.
- After discussion, motion was made to approve the Annual Performance Review report as amended. Moved by Mark, seconded by Kate. See vote summary.

Adjournment at 8:46 pm – see vote summary.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Petersen, Secretary