

Groton Public Library Board of Trustees
Monthly Meeting Minutes
December 10, 2019

Approved Trustees Meeting, 1/14/20

Attending: Jane Allen, Marilyn Dabritz, Kristen von Campe, Dave Zeiler and Library Director Vanessa Abraham. **Absent:** Mark Gerath and Nancy Wilder

M. Dabritz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

New Business

Bob Garside, Clerk of the Works, reported on the progress of the library roof project.

The outside slate on the entire job is nearly complete. Two sides of the building staging, including the front, will start coming down on Thursday 12/12. The membrane on the flat roof is 99% done. Ductwork has to be moved and flashing needs to be done. The main skylights are replaced. The historic skylight replica is nearly done but will be the very last thing that they do. Expansion joint work is next. All punch list items have to be done on the roof before the corresponding staging comes down. There's a little more slate work to finish, some downspouts and copper capping to be done, and a couple of small leaks which are being fixed. Bob is still hoping by Christmas they are wrapped up or very close to it and he is ecstatic at the quality of the work that has been done. In fact, he feels GRLA should submit the roof for an architectural award. The ALA AIA Library Building Awards application is due soon and V. Abraham will insure they have the submission form.

As of right now, there are no updates to change orders. We are still awaiting bills for the ones that are outstanding. Bob is not expecting any new ones at this point and expects some contingency to be left to turn back to the town. There will be grounds cleanup to be done once the work is finished. He will withhold \$25,000 until it's complete but expects that the library/town will have a bit more to do once spring comes.

Vote Summary

- D. Zeiler moved and J. Allen seconded a consent agenda to approve the meeting minutes from the following dates as presented: 11/12/19, 11/19/19, 11/25/19 and 12/2/19. The motion was approved 3-0 with D. Zeiler abstaining.

Action Items

- V. Abraham to contact the Parks Department about increasing street/parking lot lights from the basketball court up to the playground.
- M. Dabritz will attend a PTO meeting to discuss parent chaperone volunteers in the library on half days. She will report back to the Trustees.
- M. Dabritz will email the final contract to V. Abraham.
- N. Wilder will explore catering options for the legislative breakfast.

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- Trustees will think about and be ready to submit ideas of who should be involved in the strategic planning advisory committee. The committee will be made up of 10-15 people.
- V. Abraham will submit the CPC proposal in January.
- V. Abraham will look into a small upgrade in the first floor bathroom.
- V. Abraham will get an accurate estimate for installing a sewer meter.
- V. Abraham will create a doodle poll for the Trustees to pick a date and time for the SOAR meeting with the strategic planner.
- V. Abraham will send GRLA the submission information for the ALA AIA Library Building Awards.

Standing Committee and Liaison Reports

Budget and Finance (Mark & Nancy)

The schools are asking for an over 7% increase for next year's budget and the town is projecting a \$700,000 shortfall. Mark Haddad praised the library on its budget and presentation, especially the explanatory part which was right on point. John Giger asked what the library would do if asked to decrease the budget by \$15,000. This could put us in a difficult position, and all agreed that Sunday hours need to be defended and protected.

Library foundation repairs and parking lot repaving continue to be at the top of our priority list for capital projects. It is possible that we could bond up to \$50,000 for the parking lot if needed, but Mark Haddad wants a more specific quote before he would put it in his capital budget. Capital requests were \$900,000 and the budget is \$500,000 for the Town.

Groton is looking into becoming a green community and if this happens, we may be eligible for grants that would help fund new interior lights.

The annual performance meeting for the town trusts was held, and the advisors reported that the state no longer requires towns to use the legal list. The Trust Commissioners are looking into this. Bartholomew and Company now has the expendable portion of the library's trusts and needs more direction from the town on what to do with this money so that it still earns some returns.

Building and Equipment (Dave and Jane)

The Capital Advisory Committee meeting went well with D. Zeiler presenting our capital requests. The Committee was specifically interested in our foundation problems and expressed their desire that we repair the foundation as soon as possible.

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The Sewer Commission at their most recent meeting stated that they are willing to abate our bill one last time. The abatement is \$464. V. Abraham suggested that we start thinking about installing an additional meter, which would need to be put out by Main Street. The rough estimate for this would be \$5000. V. Abraham will get a more accurate estimate.

V. Abraham is preparing the CPC application for the pocket door restoration and will get that proposal submitted in January.

Policy, Personnel, and Planning (Kristen and Mimi)

Some of the staff has been lobbying to eliminate fines. V. Abraham shared some articles with the trustees on libraries that have done this. The Trustees agreed that this was not the year to do this due to town budget issues. The library currently contributes approximately \$10,000 in fine money to the town and M. Haddad has been opposed to losing this revenue stream in the past and even threatened to decrease the library budget by that amount should we decide to take that step.

The Trustees also agreed that bringing in food to eliminate fines during Groton Reads would be difficult to manage. The staff has plenty of other good ideas to support Loaves and Fishes, and one of these would be more appropriate.

V. Abraham spoke with the strategic planner we hired and she is getting started with planning. Vanessa will create a doodle poll for the Trustees to set up a SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results) meeting with the planner.

Other Reports

The latest art exhibit is getting a lot of positive feedback. D. Zeiler reported on some banking changes for the endowment and the upcoming newsletter.

N. Wilder secured Representative Sheila Harrington to attend the legislative breakfast in February and is exploring local catering options.

V. Abraham reported that Groton Reads & Eats programs are being planned and are very exciting with support from local area businesses and restaurants.

Library Director

V. Abraham was approached by the Census Bureau about coming to the library to recruit census takers for the 2020 Census. She is inclined to deny this request and the Trustees agreed, all feeling that another building might be more appropriate for use as a recruiting site. V. Abraham also made us aware of changes in e-lending that are impacting the availability of e-books to patrons.

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K. Dunham, the Head of Children's Services will be retiring on January 5, 2020. Vanessa will begin working on hiring a replacement.

D. Zeiler expressed his desire to step back from the Groton Cultural Council soon. If anyone is interested, they can speak to him about this council position and what the work entails.

Upcoming Meetings:

Trustees: January 14th, February 11th, March 10th.

Library Legislative Breakfast: February 7th.

Adjournment: D. Zeiler moved and J. Allen seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 pm. The motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen von Campe, Secretary pro tem for Mark Gerath