

Groton Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

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

Approved, 5/9/2023

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

Call to Order:

Mark Gerath, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Vote Summary

- Nancy Wilder moved and Kristen von Campe seconded to approve the March 14th minutes as presented. Passed unanimously.
- Nancy Wilder moved and Kristen von Campe seconded to spend up to \$4,000 from Chris Christie fund to pay for trial YA assistant. Passed unanimously.
- Nancy Wilder moved and Kristen von Campe seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 pm. Passed unanimously.

Action Items

- David Zeiler to complete Conflict of Interest Training
- Nancy Wilder to coordinate staff appreciation breakfast event
- Trustees should attend Spring Town Meeting 4/29 at 9AM at the Groton-Dunstable Middle School
- Building and Equipment to look into replacing or refurbishing the furniture in Katie's garden
- PPP to draft a flag policy
- Building and Equipment to assess the flag pole
- Mark Gerath and Kristen von Campe to meet with Vanessa Abraham on contract finalization
- Mark Gerath will look into purchasing DocuSign for the GPL and will consult with the Town Accountant on it.

New Business

Unfinished Business

Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 14, 2023 Meeting

- Completed, see vote summary.

Report on Action Items from Previous Meetings

- All action items reviewed.

Review Trustees' Calendar for Current Month

- Waiting for a date from the Commissioners of Trust Funds for financial status meeting with investment advisors
- Endowment request full draft is not complete yet but there will be \$131,000 to spend in

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the next fiscal year.

- Start planning staff appreciation possibly for Friday, May 5th as a breakfast. The staff meeting starts at 8:30, so an 8:00 am start works best. Nancy Wilder will coordinate with the Trustees and Library Director.

Review Monthly Bills

- All library bills were reviewed.

Standing Committee & Liaison Reports:

Budget & Finance

FY 2024 Library Budget: Updates

- Current thinking is there will not be an override as the schools approved the balanced budget. If there is no override, Sundays and summers will be funded by state aid as voted at the March Trustees Meeting.

FY 2024 Funding for YA Assistant

- Mark Gerath proposed that Deb Dowson help promote the value of the YA Assistant, so that this trial position can transition into a funded FY25 position. Nancy Wilder moved and Kristen von Campe seconded to approve up to \$4,000 from the Chris Christie gift to fund the YA Assistant stipend through FY2024.

Other Budget & Finance Updates

- Vanessa Abraham reported that the second State Aid payment of \$13,319 had been received., totaling \$26,590 for this fiscal year.

Building & Equipment

Front Sign Project

- The sign was falling down and Mark Gerath and Dave Zeiler helped staff member Phil Aiello to remove it. Building and Equipment reached out to three sign companies. The sign needs to be refurbished and a new post needs to be put in. Ray Ciemny volunteered to polish and refurbish the copper for the 99. HDC should not be an issue, but they will need to approve the lighting. Kate Bettencourt proposed that any lighting being considered be kind to local animal and insect life.

Outdoor Furniture

- Kristen von Campe reported that the furniture in Katie's Garden has peeling paint and is looking worn. Building and Equipment will look into replacing or refurbishing the furniture.

Groton Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

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

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Policy, Personnel, & Planning

Crisis Communications Workshop

- Vanessa Abraham and Mark Gerath recently attended this workshop and Vanessa reported taking copious notes on this timely topic. Mark and Vanessa received a lot of information which will help the GPL in creating policies and scripting consistent answers when issues arise. They also reported that having people in the community ready and willing to speak on the library's behalf that are not the Trustees is worth putting in place.

Older Library Bills

- Patron Purge. Vanessa Abraham reported that inactive patron accounts should be purged every year, as required by the state. Some patrons cannot be purged because they have bills attached. Directors in the MVLC want to do a sweep for cleaning out accounts. MVLC made a proposal for this based on the number of years an account is inactive and a baseline dollar amount. MVLC libraries can opt out by the end of this month and make their own library-specific decision of what to purge. The Trustees charged the Library Director to decide with her team how to handle this.

Juneteenth Flag

- The PPP will come up with a flag policy, but for Juneteenth, all agreed that the Library Director should hang the flag inside and host a display in the library similar to last year. No flags are being flown outside the library currently as the flag is in poor shape as is the flagpole. Building and Equipment will work on fixing the flagpole.

Library Programs

- A patron asked about why one of the weekly storytimes was called Strega Mama after the performer when the main focus was storytime for kids. Trustees reviewed the current naming and advertising practices for children's library programs to ensure all were in alignment with each other, not too heavily promoting one presenter over another. The Library Director will work with the Children's Librarian to review for balance and appropriateness.

Other PPP Updates:

- The Assistant Director position is posted until May 8th. Five resumes have come in already.
- The Library Director's draft contract with edits will go to the Director this week for review.
- Vanessa shared about some upcoming library programs.

Other Reports:

Groton Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

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

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GPL Endowment:

- The GPL requests \$6,500 from the town Lecture Fund each year for programs. This year the library is asking for \$5,500 more for Adult Programs Coordinator Beth Dalal's to expand her popular monthly concert series to year-round. This year's request is for a total of \$12,000 for adult, teen, children's/family, and art programs

Art & Artifacts:

- Outside Sibley Hall is the tiny art show on 4x4" canvases. This is a beautiful and impressive display. It was all orchestrated by Beth as part of the community activity celebrating Groton Reads & Gardens.

Social Media Report & Other News:

- No report.

Other Business

- Mark Gerath reported that he has been speaking to the town Accountant about DocuSigning bills and payroll so that the Chair does not have to physically go to the library every Tuesday. The library would have to purchase DocuSign, though. Mark will follow up with Patricia Dufresne to get the process started.

Library Director:

- Director / Library Updates
- Vanessa shared on the record-breaking month of March programs, with over 100 programs attracting over 2,300 participants – double the highest March programs statistics ever recorded! Groton Reads Coordinator Beth worked with staff, other libraries, and town groups to pull off an amazing 53 programs for adults.

Review of Action Items from Current Meeting – see above

Adjournment at 8:50 pm – see vote summary.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen von Campe, Secretary pro tem