

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Milne Public Library, 1095 Main Street, Williamstown
Wednesday, March 13, 2024 at 5:30pm

Trustees Present: Micah Manary (Chair), Bridget Spann (Vice Chair), Anna Halpin-Healy (Treasurer), Katy Evans (Secretary), Alex Carlisle, Robin Lenz (arrived at 6:16pm)

Staff Present: Kirsten Rose (library assistant director; previous interim library director), Angela Zimmermann (library director)

Others Present: Elizabeth Whitney (representative from the Friends), Jared Della Rocca

The meeting was called to order by Micah at 5:30pm.

Reports

I. Introductions

Welcome to the new library director, Angela Zimmermann. Also, welcome to Jared Della Rocca, potential new Trustee.

II. Approval of Minutes from February 7th Trustees Meeting (Katy)

Bridget moved to approve and Micah seconded. All voted in favor, except Katy and Alex, who abstained.

III. Approval of Minutes from February 13th Special Meeting (Katy)

These were the minutes from the Special Meeting held to decide on a new library director. Bridget moved to approve and Anna seconded. All voted in favor, except Katy and Alex, who abstained.

IV. Treasurer's Report (Anna)

With Timothy's departure from the Trustees, we were without a Treasurer. Micah moves to make Anna the new Treasurer, Alex seconds. All voted in favor, except for Anna, who abstained.

Currently Micah is the only signatory on the 150th Anniversary Celebration bank account, but Anna will be added.

No Treasurer's Report this month. Anna will continue with Timothy's style of monthly reports.

Bridget proposed the Trustees develop a reimbursement form and guidelines.

V. Director's Report (Kirsten)

Kirsten presented her final report as interim director and returned to her assistant director role. The Trustees are very appreciative of Kirsten's tenure as interim director.

Highlights from the Director's Report for the last month include:

- Welcome to Angie, new Library Director!
- 150th anniversary Open House on March 9 was a success. Excellent publicity – there was a nice article in the Williams Record about the event.
- Suggestion from Hale Polebaum-Freeman at the Williams College Library to get 150 Williams students to sign up for library cards in honor of the library's 150th Anniversary. Hale could be continuing to work on this.
- The phone transfer is still happening and there are some kinks to work out.

VI. Friends Report (Elizabeth)

- Good financial status and increasing revenues at Chapter Two Books
- Another Friends newsletter
- The Friends are excited to work with Angie on new initiatives
- Next meeting is next Wed, March 20

VII. Buildings and Grounds Report (Alex)

- Update on the new library sign: more designs from David Edge (designer). The committee is still deciding on preferred font and design.
- Update on pavilion installation: installation delayed due to delayed deposit payments. The timeline for installation is not clear yet.
- Update on replacement roofs for front bathrooms: the committee is still waiting on new proposals from contractors.
- The committee looked at the goals in the strategic plan for use of outdoor space and completed a walk-through to assess the new plantings and the No Mow lawn area. So far the committee has spent approximately \$1500 on the new plantings, so there is still room in the budget for some additional purchases in this area.

- Update on the conversation about a proposed access door and fence for the new pavilion: The Trustees, committee, library staff, and Friends all have varied viewpoints. Alex will write up a summary of these viewpoints and schedule a meeting with stakeholders to discuss. Bridget suggests also sending photos of the gazebo to get a sense of its openness.
- Alex Charron is collecting more information on the cost of adding screening and/or a fence along the property border (library has an obligation to screen 90% from neighbors and current plants are not accomplishing this).
- New topic of painting the library building exterior: The building is ready for painting and a darker color would better accentuate the architecture. The B&G committee is trying to narrow down a “bracket of colors” and then put up samples. Need to collect bids from three painters and the goal is to have it painted this summer.
- Paul Burnham, the contractor who is going to start working on punch list from the strategic plan, will hopefully start this summer.
- Interest from Kenny and a Williams College student (Ben) to join the B&G committee.
- Alex will re-send the report since it didn't get to some Trustees and Angie.

Old Business

VIII. New Director Orientation (Micah & Bridget)

- Using a guiding orientation document and much has been covered by Kirsten.
- Kirsten is going on vacation March 15-25 and Trustees can step in. Micah plans to talk with Angie to determine the structure of further orientation. Could Micah and Angie also orient the new Trustee at the same time?
- The work of the Interim Director support committee has concluded.
- What offices and individuals should Angie connect with? All Trustees, etc. should consider what information and connections are needed.

IX. Fiscal 2025 Budget (Micah)

- Micah and Timothy presented the budget to the Town and worked with them on its creation.
- Alex, Bridget, Micah, and Kirsten attended the Fin Com meeting a couple weeks ago to present the budget. Fin Com did not raise objections to the presented budget in the meeting.

- Side note: Micah will submit the exception request to the state to move our library into the 16% bracket for materials (savings of about \$15-16,000). Our budget ended up around 17.1% for materials.
- Library budget for the current year is still up in the air due to the retirement of the director, hiring of a new director, use of an interim director, and the staff wage increases. If the library is over budget in May / June, Trustees will be expected to cover overage. Because it's been an exceptional year, and because it was so important to make the staff wage increases happen in full, Trustees are okay with this.
- At the same time, Trustees don't want the Town to assume we will use Trustee money for wages going forward. Important to use that money for the building and to be intentional with it.

New Business

X. 150th Anniversary Celebration (Bridget)

- Movies at the Clark for the next 4 Thursdays. There is a chance at the beginning for a Trustee to say thank you, highlight other 150th events, and invite them to come to the library to check it out.
- Micah will send out an email with the schedule for Trustees to sign up for one of the movies, plus 3 talking points from Bridget.

XI. Trustee Vacancy (Micah & Bridget)

- Micah talked w/ Jared Della Rocca about joining the Trustees to complete Timothy's term. If Jared is interested, after he submits a Government Engagement Activity Form to the town clerk, his appointment will be considered at a joint meeting of the Library Trustees and the Select Board on March 25.
- Timothy was going to attend the Friends' meeting on May 15. Micah will send around the schedule of Friends' meetings so that we can rearrange the schedule to cover this meeting.

XII. Other Business (Micah)

- The Trustees will re-orient ourselves to the work of implementing the strategic plan. Micah will send around notes on next steps for implementation and we will discuss at the April meeting. Trustees should come to the next meeting with ideas about what we can help with and where we need to go next.
- Micah is proposing to write a Grounds Policy. Micah will write up a draft to discuss at the April or May meeting and then we can vote on a final

version at the next meeting. If you have thoughts or want to participate, let Micah know.

- Anna is officially on the ballot as a Trustee candidate in the May election.
- English tutor training by Literacy Volunteers of Berkshire County, funded by First Congo, will be taking place at the library.
- Announcement from MBLC about potential passing of a bill to provide \$150 million for library buildings (“Mass Leads Act”). Micah wants to create a committee to pursue any funding opportunities created by this bill. Bridget suggested including non-Trustees on this committee, including folks from Williams, community members, and the Town Manager. So far, Robin and Alex, in addition to Micah, have agreed to be on the committee.
- Review of the quarterly report to the DIRE Committee / Select Board / Town Manager (Katy): a little leaner this time, but important to document what is/is not happening, including how DEI values were integrated into the search for a new director. Micah moves to approve, Anna seconds. All voted in favor, except Katy and Alex who abstained.

Micah moves to adjourn, Anna seconds. All voted in favor.

Micah adjourns the meeting at 7:13pm.