

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Milne Public Library, 1095 Main Street, Williamstown
Wednesday, July 10, 2024 at 5:30pm

Trustees present: Micah Manary (**chair**), Bridget Spann, Anna Halpin-Healy (treasurer), Katy Evans (secretary), Jared Della Rocca (**vice chair**), Ben Lee-Cohen

Trustee absent: Robin Lenz

Staff present: Angela Zimmermann (library director)

Others present: Elizabeth Whitney (representative from the Friends)

The meeting was called to order by Micah at 5:31pm.

Reports

I. Introductions

Welcome, Ben!

II. Approval of Minutes from June Meeting (Katy)

Micah moved to approve the minutes, Jared seconded. All voted in favor, with Katy and Ben abstaining.

III. Treasurer's Report (Anna)

\$150 of donations was deposited to the annual fund in the last month. Also, the honorarium to Dusty Griffin was returned to the 150th Anniversary account.

Anna opened a discussion about what info would be helpful to include in the monthly Treasurer's Report.

As part of the discussion, it was indicated that it's not essential that we receive monthly updates on Trustee funds when balances aren't changing, but it would still be helpful. The treasurer can request the balances on our funds from the Town at the start of each month. It may also be helpful to include a list of the funds and what they're for. It's helpful for Trustees to be knowledgeable about our funds and about the library budget generally so we can be advocates.

IV. Fundraising Update (Micah)

Micah, Anna, and Jared met with Elizabeth and other Friends to explore next steps in building a more robust financial connection between the Trustees and the Friends. They created a list of questions and next steps, including meeting with the Town Manager and reaching out to MBLC to ask questions.

Micah and Anna met with the Town Manager to gauge his thoughts on the Trustees not doing our own annual appeal. Trustees do not necessarily have financial responsibilities that couldn't be covered by the Town or the Friends.

The Town Manager seemed supportive and encouraged the Trustees to draft a list of questions related to a financial partnership with the Friends, including shifting our \$300,000 bequest to a Friends account, which we could take to legal counsel. Micah is also asking MBLC what our financial relationship with the Friends can be, given we are elected officials.

The Town Manager also encouraged the Trustees to take the lead on fundraising for a new library building. Would it make sense for the Trustee to shift our fundraising from an annual appeal to fundraising for the building this year?

Discussion ensued about how to handle the current \$300,000 in the Trustee funds. It may be too late in the year to do anything with it now. Also, if the Trustees leave it with the Town, one approach could be to use it on things that support the Strategic Plan – things the Friends would normally fund, but if the Trustees cover these expenses, it would allow the Friends to hold on to those monies in interest-earning accounts.

Given the timing, the Trustees decided to move forward with the usual annual appeal this year because we need to draft the appeal letter for the August meeting. The Trustees then need to determine next steps for launching a capital campaign for a new library building, including what bank account we will use for this fundraising.

It was noted that it's important that communication about the capital campaign is part of an overarching plan and that we communicate with major donors proactively. Angie also raised the point that capital campaigns benefit from an external advisor/consultant.

Micah and Anna will draft an appeal letter to review at the August meeting. Micah will communicate with Pam and Bob that we're on an extended timeframe to changing the annual appeal process.

V. Director's Report (Angie)

Angie noted that the Zoning Board will consider the WCMA building project at its next meeting, July 18 at 7pm.

Next staff meeting includes a Narcan training and is on Friday - Trustees are invited.

Today was the last day to submit invoices for FY2024. Angie will bring a budget update to the August meeting.

The Thingdom is live and going. Thanks to the Friends for funding!

Subscriptions added include Little Pim (language learning) and the NY Times.

The interns are doing well. Douglas (from Williams) is offering one-on-one tech help sessions and a coding week at the end of July. Bridget suggested a Tech in Spanish session.

Angie spoke with David and Joyce Milne in anticipation of creating a new logo. They are enthusiastic about keeping their names in the logo. They also registered their disappointment not to be more involved with the 150th Anniversary celebrations. It was a missed opportunity to include them and there may be other events we could invite them to, whether a 150th Anniversary event or another event this fall. Angie will consider options and let Micah know whether the Trustees should take the lead on communicating with the Milnes, although it's likely Angie will continue to be the primary point of contact.

The Friends have also funded the creation of the new coffee station. Angie will move this forward after her vacation.

The Trustees love the staff reports, but also don't want staff to feel they have to produce anything that's burdensome or overly detailed, or feel they need to justify their daily work.

Regarding the upcoming move to expand library hours - Trustees have heard from others that Sunday hours would be nice. Right now, since no current staff are willing to work on Sundays, Angie will try the expanded weekday hours and see how it goes.

VI. Friends' Report (Elizabeth)

Elizabeth noted that it's helpful to acknowledge when funding comes from the Friends because it makes people excited about the Friends (and giving to the Friends), which allows them to raise more money for the library.

The Friends meeting in July is set aside for strategic planning. They will be looking at long-term sustainability. The next meeting that a Trustee should attend is in September (Robin is scheduled).

VII. B&G Committee Report (Angie)

The gazebo is in!

The committee is also exploring the installation of a hearing loop in the meeting rooms.

We need to look into whether the **Capital** funds can be used to pay for the \$4,458 bill from Countryside for tree removal. Angie will email the Town Manager and the head of DPW to ask if money from the fund set aside for the Centerline Report items can cover it. If not, the Trustees can pay for it out of the annual fund.

Micah moved that, pending the discussion with the DPW and Town Manager, Trustees cover the \$4,458 bill (preferably out of the \$300K set aside for the Centerline projects, otherwise from the Trustees' Annual Fund). Bridget seconded. All voted in favor.

We also received a high bill for the multiple heat pumps installed in the library. There's confusion over who authorized these heat pumps and what fund will cover this. This could potentially come out of the funds set aside by the Town for the Centerline Report.

There is now a project management spreadsheet for B&G projects. This could fulfill the discussion we had in May about creating a manual and clarifying the decision tree for B&G projects/tasks.

Spigot: Can move forward with this because it's only a couple hundred dollars and Trustees pre-approved money previously for beautification.

VIII. Celebrating 150th Anniversary

We would like to give a thank you gift to Judy Ensign for coordinating the 150th Celebration committee. Bridget suggested 5-10 books donated to the library with

a nameplate thanking Judy. Bridget will look for suggestions and come back for payment. The final book list will be approved by Angie since they will be added to the library materials in circulation.

IX. Programming Policy

We reviewed the changes in the language of the policy regarding photographing patrons at library programs. The purpose of the changes was to protect patron privacy and give them a chance to decline having their photograph taken. Some edits were integrated into the language.

Micah moved to approve the policy with the edits. Anna seconded. All voted in favor of approving policy as amended.

X. Circulation Policy

Micah encouraged everyone to read the policy carefully and let him know if you have concerns.

Anna raised questions about the policy of placing a patron's library card on hold before lost/overdue items are charged to a patron account, and suggested that it would be good to include that step in the library's response in the written circulation policy.

XI. Other Business

We need another trustee to serve on the B&G committee - Ben volunteered.

Micah moved to adjourn and Jared seconded. All voted in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:27pm by Micah.