

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Milne Public Library, 1095 Main Street, Williamstown
Wednesday, June 12, 2024 at 5:30pm

Trustees Present: Micah Manary (Chair), Bridget Spann (Vice Chair), Katy Evans (Secretary), Robin Lenz, Jared Della Rocca, Anna Halpin-Healy (Treasurer; arrived 5:50)

Trustees Absent: Alex Carlisle (resigned)

Staff Present: Angela Zimmermann (library director)

Others Present: Elizabeth Whitney and Pam Art (representatives from the Friends)

The meeting was called to order by Micah at 5:32pm.

Reports

I. Approval of Minutes from April Meeting (Katy)

Bridget moves to approve minutes, Robin seconds. All voted in favor, except Katy, who abstained.

II. Director's Report (Angie)

Angie highlighted that patrons attending programs may be going down because it's the end of the school year and graduation season (a busy time outside of the library).

Angie also highlighted recent staff changes, including those who have retired and those who have been hired (part-time and interns).

The Library of Things is officially now the Thingdom, with funding from the Friends for initial investment in things.

There will be a Narcan training at the July staff meeting (July 12 at 9am). Trustees are invited; let Angie know if you're planning to attend.

Trustees agree that we're loving the staff report section of the Director's Report. What type of feedback would staff like to receive (if any)?

Angie is extremely happy that Remedy Hall will have a self-serve satellite location at the library. Angie will be meeting with the Fire Chief about a safe location for it.

III. B&G Committee Report (Robin)

Robin is now chair of the B&G committee after Alex's resignation. Robin said she can share minutes of B&G committee meetings in lieu of monthly reports.

Alex was instrumental in moving forward items on the Centerline Report and Strategic Plan, as well as convincing the Town that they need to take responsibility for the building (as a Town building). DPW has now taken the Centerline Report and will manage it going forward, with Angie and library staff.

Members of the B&G committee walked the property in February and marked trees/shrubs that needed to be removed. Tree warden walked the property too and said they don't need permission from him to take out shrubs (only large trees). The Garden Club, Robin, Alex, and the Bee Friendly committee have been doing the work on the grounds, especially for the 150th Anniversary.

Committee is looking for ways to keep Garden Club and Bee Friendly involved going forward.

Ben Difley (interested in public policy) has joined the committee and has been asked to take responsibility for the "west side" of the building to create a sustainable landscaping plan (minimize mowing, blowing, weed whacking). Ben is coming up with 3 possible plans.

Micah said the B&G committee is our most robust committee and needs a second trustee to help carry the load. Trustees should let Micah know if they want to join the committee.

Angie is developing a flow chart of processes: who makes what decision, who needs to be informed, who needs to be involved in the decision-making process.

All heat pumps (8) are installed. Wiring needs to be re-done and Rickert is coming to do that soon.

The library sign will be installed by the first week of July and the privacy fencing will go up in mid-July. The foundation for the pavilion has been laid and it will start to be erected in July.

IV. Friends' Report (Elizabeth)

At their June meeting today, the Friends voted to approve the Director's budget proposal request for FY25, including \$30,000 for The Thingdom (new library of things).

Financial standing of Friends is solid and funds are designed to be used by the library. There are a few items requested (digital resources, etc.) that the Friends feel should be covered by the town's library budget. Very excited about the initiatives Angie is making happen!

The Friends are hoping to come up with a longer-term plan for supporting the library. They would like to provide the Director with a number she can count on each year to fund library needs to facilitate planning.

Part of the Friends' role is to advocate for more support from the town for the library over time.

They would also like to create a plan with the Trustees for working collaboratively to support the library. Perhaps we could plan an open house in the fall (joint effort w/ Trustees and library) to educate town on all the things the library does.

There was also discussion of a joint annual fund drive (Friends and Trustees). Donors are not thinking about giving to the Trustees or giving to the Friends - they are just giving to the library.

The Finance Committee tried to identify what financial responsibilities are for Town, Trustees, and Friends. Most financial responsibilities fall to the town (building) or Friends (library services/programs), with few falling to the Trustees. What if the Trustees moved their money into a Friends' account and we combined our fundraising efforts?

Discussion about the challenges and potential issues with this arrangement ensued. It was agreed that we need to create a committee to explore this relationship and discuss specifics. Jared and Anna volunteered, with Micah, to form an ad hoc committee to liaise with the Friends to discuss what this financial arrangement could be. Will need a strong written agreement and the sub-committee can meet with a lawyer.

Friends strategic planning meeting on 7/17 @ 4:30.

V. Treasurer's Report (Anna)

No report this month.

VI. Bulletin Board Policy (Micah)

Micah moves to approve the bulletin board policy, Robin seconds. All voted in favor.

VII. Programming Policy (Micah)

Micah met with Kira and Angie to discuss the policy.

A concern was raised over photography and video recording of programs, especially children's programs. Others may also have privacy concerns for other reasons. Should we have an opt-in rather than an opt-out policy?

There was concern that we won't have promotional materials if we ask for permission every time the staff wants to take a photo at a public event.

It was agreed that if photographing an individual child with the aim of identifying the person, staff should ask permission. Group shots without identifying individuals in the caption do not need explicit permission.

NEW BUSINESS

VIII. Library Hours Changes

The sub-committee (Jared, Robin, Angie, Kirsten) met to discuss different permutations, including Sunday hours and extended evening hours.

Angie asked staff and explored the current process to identify what's possible. Discussed Sunday hours - staff is not in favor of opening on this day.

The most feasible proposal is to extend hours on Tuesday and Thursday (along with Wednesday) and close 1 hour earlier on Fridays. That one hour could be added on elsewhere, if desired (e.g. Saturday morning).

The new hours will start after Labor Day (September 3). The cost of staffing these additional hours will be small and will be covered by the Friends.

Discussion ensued about whether we will eventually be open on Sundays. Although there should be a day off, there's concern that keeping Sunday as this day is reinforcing Christian nationalism. At the same time, for members of the community, it can be healthy and helpful to be off on a day that others are also off.

Staff in the library industry are not historically expected to work on Sundays so this would be a culture shift. Could Sundays become part of the library culture going forward?

Since the library has met the minimum number of open hours required of a library our size, the specifics of staffing can now be at the Director's discretion. Trustees can vote in support of the proposal, but we don't need to approve it.

Bridget made a motion that the Trustees are in support of the Director's proposal, Robin seconded. All voted in favor.

IX. Officer Elections

Bridget nominated Micah to be Chair again - continuity is helpful and he's doing an excellent job. Jared seconded.

Bridget has served as Vice-Chair and said it's a helpful position for learning about being Chair.

Micah nominated Katy to continue as Secretary and Anna to continue as Treasurer. Micah also nominated Jared as Vice Chair.

Bridget seconded this slate of officers.

All voted in favor.

X. Trustee Vacancy

Anyone in the community can fill out the [government engagement form](#) to indicate their interest in finishing out the remainder of the open Trustee term.

We discussed posting it in the library newsletter and making announcements at different town committee meetings.

Micah moved to adjourn, Anna seconded. All voted in favor. Micah adjourned at 7:27pm.

Micah re-opened the meeting at 7:29 to discuss the 4th of July Parade. Trustees should walk with the Friends and library staff. Micah will be in touch to gauge interest.

Micah moved to adjourn again and Jared seconded. All voted in favor. Micah adjourned again at 7:30pm.

Next meeting July 10, 2024 at 5:30pm.