

**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**  
Milne Public Library, 1095 Main Street, Williamstown  
Wednesday, April 10, 2024 at 5:30pm

**Trustees Present:** Micah Manary (Chair), Bridget Spann (Vice Chair), Anna Halpin-Healy (Treasurer), Katy Evans (Secretary), Alex Carlisle, Robin Lenz, Jared Della Rocca

**Staff Present:** Angela Zimmermann (library director)

**Others Present:** Pam Art (representative from the Friends)

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

## Reports

### I. Approval of Minutes from March Meeting (Katy)

Micah moved to approve the minutes as written, Alex seconded. All voted all in favor, except Katy, who abstained.

### II. Treasurer's Report (Anna)

Anna is still getting acquainted with the record keeping system and needs copies of our meeting minutes to verify her role as Treasurer with the bank. Micah will assist with this.

When purchasing goods, trustees should share our tax exempt form with vendors to avoid paying sales tax. Trustees should keep all receipts and share them with Anna, who will help arrange reimbursement from the town. Bridget and Anna will work on a reimbursement guide to share with those trustees who will be making purchases.

We discussed the need for a process if a trustee cannot/does not want to pay up front for an expense. Anna is compiling a list of local businesses who are willing to bill us later. There's also the possibility that a trustee could use the library's new departmental credit card and then the trustees can reimburse the library. Anna will talk further with Angie about this option.

Micah moved to approve the Treasurer's report, Alex seconds. All voted in favor, except Anna who abstained.

### III. Director's Report (Angie)

Angie reported on highlights at the library over the past month. These include: Yesterday (Tuesday, April 9) was National Library Workers Day and Angie provided lunch for the staff today.

Website updates are in progress and she would like to add her Director's Reports, as well as photos and bios of the trustees to the website.

The library is trying to create more space in the fiction section A-C by moving more authors to the Mystery section, as relevant.

We discussed how to provide more frequent press releases to local publications for happenings at the library. Jared recommended have a contact list at the ready, along with a stock paragraph about the Milne to be included with every press release. Bridget mentioned a publicity list developed for the 150th Anniversary and will work with Jared on creating the stock paragraph. Alex recommended including Jack's "Word of the Day" in the Berkshire Eagle too.

The library gave away 800 pairs of eclipse glasses.

#### **IV. Friends' Report (Pam)**

Chapter Two Books has a strong financial status and sales are continuing to increase. The Friends utilize over 50 volunteers each month between the store and the distribution center.

The Friends rely heavily on the distribution and organization center at the library, which should be kept in mind as we move forward with envisioning a new library building in the future. There is also a desire to do more collaborative events in support of the library and community-wide literacy. More outreach is being planned, both to out-of-town visitors and to local residents.

Pam raised the possibility of a joint fundraising effort between the Friends and the Trustees, as well as articulating our relationship more clearly.

#### **V. Building and Grounds Report (Alex & Robin)**

Alex circulated the leading design for the new library sign. It's a wide, squat pentagon in green with light yellow text, although white lettering was suggested. The plan is to add "est. 1874" to the bottom. Robin pointed out that the town will be designing new signs in a few years for all town buildings so this sign may be temporary. Trustees agreed that the B&G committee had done good work with moving this project forward. The B&G committee will try to get a final design for next meeting for the Trustees can vote to approve production.

Pavilion Update: looked at maps and there are no pipes underneath the pavilion site. Steve Mott from Sheds 'n Stuff is waiting on permits and will work with Galusha Excavating to move forward within the month.

Fencing Update: The committee removed the proposal to add gates to the end of fence to limit access to the pavilion. We have an initial bid for the fencing and need to secure two more bids and determine which account will cover this project. The fence will not be painted.

Basement: If we are using 10% or more of the basement, we should add a layer of drywall as a firewall. We will need to examine the contents of the basement with Alex Charron to determine if we can keep our use below 10%.

Heat Pumps: We **received** funding from Green Communities and a rebate from Berkshire Gas. These could be installed within the month. Need 6 and 4 were funded. We will not be a full capacity for heating and cooling this year, but we will apply for additional funding in next year's cycle to add two more heat pumps. Trustees will pay approximately \$25,000 for this project.

New Bathroom Roof: Alex Charron has two updated bids for a replacement roof, and he is seeking a third bid.

Ben Difly from Williams has expressed interest in joining the B&G committee. Micah nominated him, Anna seconded; all voted in favor of inviting Ben to join the committee.

Forced hot water heating system may be leaking. Starting research into where the leak may be.

Plan to open up volunteer work days in the garden to community members. Robin will talk with Angie about announcing it out to the community. We have finished ordering plants for the front beds and now need to plant them. No-mow area in the back needs to be managed well so neighbors don't mind the aesthetics.

## **Old Business**

### **VI. New Friends Meeting Schedule**

Changes are needed and Micah will circulate via email.

## **New Business**

### **VII. Other Business**

Micah moved to reimburse Angie for relocation costs from the Trustees Annual Fund. Anna seconded and all voted in favor. Anna will also check on reimbursement for Angie's travel expenses (airfare).

### **VIII. Strategic Plan Implementation (Micah)**

We reviewed the strategic plan report, focusing on the list of projects to undertake. We discussed who would take the lead on each of these projects and which have already seen progress.

For instance, there was a recommendation for a cafe at the library (7A). Given that there may be complications with health inspections, staffing, and charging money for cafe items while all other items are free at the library, we discussed shifting this to a self-service snack/beverage cart. Friends said they would be happy to fund it. Angie will talk with the staff to see what is possible, but sees it as a good way of bringing people into the space.

Under the same recommendation (7A) was a suggestion for a maker space, which is a priority of the Friends.

For financial projects, priorities include scheduling a joint meeting between the Friends and the Trustees to discuss collaborating on fundraising efforts (12A), including cultivating a shared list of major donors.

Support for English Language Learners is in the works, and support for neurodivergent and other types of learners will be discussed at the next DEI committee meeting (2B).

The Teen Advisory Board is in the works and may begin in Fall 2024 (3A).

Jared and Robin will be on a committee to explore extended evening hours (11C) with staff and Friends. Micah will send an email to schedule a meeting. Pam noted that they have funds for a pilot program.

In terms of facilitating transportation to/from the library to local community centers (1A), it was noted that the Council on Aging already has a van. An option like that, or similar, is worth looking into.

It was also noted that now that Angie is here, she may be taking action on some of the strategic plan initiatives (e.g. the "lending library of things" - 6D), or will have specific ideas about how/when/where to take action. We will continue to offer opportunities to discuss and gather her thoughts. Angie will also work on creating a timeline for completing the action items in the strategic plan.

### **Other Business cont.**

We discussed the meeting space in the library and how groups can reserve it. A question was raised about why we prevent scheduling recurring meetings and whether we want to change this policy. Micah will work on a possible policy change to allow Kirsten and other staff to use their judgment about whether to approve recurring meetings.

In the past, Trustees have gone to DIRE committee meetings and have had DIRE committee members come to Trustees meetings. Micah will reach out to see if we want to continue this and Katy will attend.

CARE Report (<https://williamstownma.gov/community-research/>) - is this something for the DEI committee to consider?

Micah moved to adjourn the meeting and Alex seconded. All voted in favor.  
Micah adjourned the meeting at 7:41pm.

The next meeting will be held May 8, 2024 at 5:30pm.