

GREENWICH FREE LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NOVEMBER 2023 MEETING MINUTES

Regular Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, November 15, 2023

7:00 pm

Community Room

Attendees: Patrice Abate, Mary Ann Spiezio, Teri Pendergrass, Sandy McReynolds, Tony Jordan, Paul Thurston, Ellen Fronhofer, Sarah Murphy, Marge Maxwell

1. Call to order 7:00 pm
2. Board Action Items
 - a. Approval of proposed October 2023 Minutes (separate document)
Paul made a motion to approve the October meeting minutes. Teri seconds. Board approved.

3. Board Committee Reports

- a. Facilities Committee (Aaron, Dave, Paul, Teri) – Sarah mentioned that the heat stopped working in the community room. In addition to an issue with the thermostat there was an issue with the wiring. A wireless thermostat has been installed by Roland J. Down and all appears to be working. Service was very good. One of the bathroom doors wasn't latching. Mark fixed the door. Emilie Sargent noticed that the kitchen sink was clogged. Wes was able to take care of the problem for now, but it may need to be addressed again in the future.

Sarah would like to establish an hourly rate to pay Mark or Wes when they help out from time to time. Patrice will call the insurance agent to understand any liability issues. Paul mentioned that we used to have someone on payroll to take care of maintenance issues.

We have an invoice for the design of the community room project. We received a check that was deposited into the construction account. Invoice we have is for \$17,000, with \$1,500 due now for services in December, 2022 when we were applying for the grant. Teri will review the services contract. They do all of the project management, navigating the state rules, etc.

Lisa Hayes is coming to our next Board meeting and has more ideas based on our feedback for the design of renovations to the community room.

- b. Finance & Fundraising Committee (Mary Ann, Patrice, Paul) – Sarah, Paul and Patrice met with the superintendent and the business manager. They asked why and how we would present it, but they were supportive. They will provide a link to whatever we put on our website. Sarah will talk to a couple of other people and she is hoping they will point us to another library who has done something similar.

Bob Jeffords has not responded to Sarah's email about the trees. If it goes too much longer then we may ask them to hold them until next year.

There will not be a bake sale on Saturday. Patrice and Marge will still be here to allow people to come in. They will be open from 2-4 pm.

- c. Material Review Committee (Cliff, Patrice, Paul) – No report.
 - d. Policy & Audit Committee (Mary Ann, Patrice, Paul) – No report
 - e. Board Recruitment (Cliff, Patrice) – Christine Richards has filled out a Board member application. She lives in Fort Edward, but there is not a requirement to live in Greenwich. She is now retired, but has been an Accountant for years and looks forward to being more involved in Library activities.
 - f. Personnel & HR Committee (Mary Ann, Paul) – Paul revised the appraisal instrument. Everyone should complete the instrument in the next week. We would like to have our volunteer appreciation gathering, inviting our donors, volunteers and staff. It would be more of an open house concept. Invite the Friends to attend as well as the gardeners. The Friends may want to set up a table to invite new members to join. We will have the party from 5:30 until 7 and the Board meeting beginning at 7. Our new hire, Kimberly Bellamy just started yesterday. She is our new After School and Teen Programming Coordinator. Emilie Sargent is also interested in cleaning for us to get more hours. Patrice will also speak to the insurance agent about this.
4. Gill Room Report (presented by Sandy McReynolds, Historian)

FB:

Likes: 608

Follows: 661

Requests:

- Farm on Cozy Hollow Farm
- House information Spraguetown Road
- Photo of Allen Family Massacre Cabin/cairn

Other:

- New student volunteer - Aidan Waite
- Met with Sydney about the web site
- Attended a CDLC workshop on constructing archival housing

5. Friends of the Greenwich Free Library Update – Sarah said that the Friends have added another Saturday. Now the first Thursday and the third and fourth Saturdays. Their calendar is underway. Ken provided the artwork, Sydney did the layout. We will be able to sell them in December.

6. Treasurer's Report – Ellen noted that the grant money received inflates our income and it is something about how QuickBooks does it. Draft 2024 budget was reviewed. The draft shows a significant deficit, but Ellen and Sarah have not met yet to update the expenses. Sarah wants to ask the Friends if they would help us out with the food for our programming because a lot of money is spent in this area. Patrice also suggested reaching out to Comfort Food (Patrice will reach out to Kathy Hebert who heads up the Backpack program) and Paul suggested looking into federal programs that could help since most of this is for children's programming. Paul asked about grant funding for some of our programs and Sarah said she has noticed that most grant funding out there is for developing new programs, not ongoing expenses of the Library. Tony suggested reaching out to the Lions for another donation this winter. We could consider hiring someone who is a professional fundraiser in order to help us make more progress. We decided to significantly increase the budget number for our annual appeal to \$50,000. **Paul made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Transaction Report. Tony seconds. Board approves.**

7. Library Director's Report –

October Statistics: Check outs – 2461; Borrowers – 429; Holds Satisfied – 513; New Cards Issued – 18; Computer sessions – 162 ; WiFi uses – 478; Cossayuna WiFi – 32 ; Libby checkouts – 419; Kanopy Plays – 69; Visitors to the library (door count) – 3899; Community service sessions – 50; Community service attendees – 354; Library programs/events (general) – 32; Library program/events attendees – 755; Early Childhood programs/services – 16; Early Childhood attendees – 294; Volunteer hours - 132; Farm 2 Library participants – 278; pounds of food waste diverted for compost – 583.2

We achieved some highs of the year in October: community programs and attendees; library visitors; programs (general) and attendees; Libby checkouts.

STRATEGIC PLANNING GOALS:

Public Promotion

A1 Communications

- Website: the development site has some big updates: <https://grndev.sals.edu/> Sydney and I still have a long list of items to tackle, and she is working with Jack from SALS to change some fonts, colors, etc.
 - You can view the working draft of our new social media guidelines [here](#). In addition to outlining best practices for posting and sharing, Sydney also provided some analytics about our followers and posts during last week's staff development afternoon. Our followers are most active around 6PM every weekday! The vast majority are women, but they vary greatly by age.
- A2 Expand patron base; A3 Outreach services:**
- Tractor Parade day is a great opportunity to introduce our services and facilities to people both within and outside of our community who may not normally use the library. Big thanks to Patrice and Marge for volunteering to manage that event. I have agreed to serve as a judge for the parade.

Programming

B1 Programs that fulfill patron needs

- Current programs and events can be found here

B2 Give local artists, writers, creators, and experts a platform:

- Our Music at the Library series was a tremendous success. I plan to apply for a grant for a similar program next year with a few changes: I want to give away books and create a library card sign-up table in the park; I want to organize rain dates, and I want to highlight more female (or nonbinary) artists.
- As previously mentioned, we have three author visits scheduled for December: the 6th, the 12th and the 22nd
- B3 Unique programs that introduce participants to new ideas or experiences
- Looking into early 2024, I'd like to put together programming about Lunar New Year (Feb 10, year of the Dragon).
- I am in the early stages of conversation about offering ASL classes or workshops

Partnerships

C1 & C2 Local not-for-profits; Local businesses and entrepreneurs:

- I recently met with the Salem Astronomer's Club about creating programming related to the April 2024 Eclipse
- I am working with Battenkill Community Services on developing programming and resources targeted to their constituency. I am applying for an ALA grant to help rural libraries better serve people with disabilities.

Place

- See Facilities report
- Reminder that in January we will be hosting "Messages from Survivors" on our lower level. I will be looking for ways to tidy and make that area better looking and more functional.
- Library space consultant David Vinjamuri of Third Way Space provided us with an informal mini audit when he was in the area for the NYLA conference. David gave me lots of ideas for organizing space and shelving to increase circulation and patronage. I would like to enquire about a more formal audit.

Preservation

- See Gill Room report
- Sydney and Sandy had a meeting last week to discuss how the Gill Room can be more prominent on our website and on social media.

OTHER

Personnel

- Our new After-School and Teen Programming Coordinator, Kimberly Bellamy, started this week.

8. Period for Public Expression – No comments.

9. Old Business – None

10. New Business – There is talk of a farmers' market starting up and Patrice was asked if the Library would be willing to partner on this. Annual meeting in January will be an hour before the January meeting. Cliff is unable to attend some Wednesdays, so we may have to look at a different date.

11. Dates of Future Board Meeting Calendar – Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, December 20, 2023.
12. Adjournment – Paul made motion to adjourn, Tony seconds. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.