

Keene Public Library
Trustee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 23, 2024

Present: Trustees Bill Stroup, Jane Pitts, Paul Henkel, Kathleen Packard, Don Caruso, Hollie Seiler, Judy Putnam, Justin Somma and Pam Russell-Slack. (Absent: Ritu Budakoti, Yves Gakunde and Katherine Baer) Also Present: Marti Fiske, Library Director; Susan Bloom, Assistant Library Director, Scout Mercer, newly employed at KPL, and Bobby Williams, liaison from City Council.

Bill Stroup called the meeting to order at 5:03. He welcomed recently appointed Trustee, Hollie Seiler, and a new library employee Scout Mercer.

For the Finance Committee, Jane Pitts moved (Pam Russell-Slack seconded) acceptance of three donations from Rotary members: Cameron Tease, \$50; Louise Zerba, \$50; and Charles Prigge \$50; and a grant from the Cheshire County Conservation District, \$2,500. The donations and grant were accepted unanimously. Jane noted that the CCCD grant is for the Seed program and has happened annually for the last few years.

Jane presented the Q4 Treasurer's report. Jane moved acceptance and Pam seconded; the motion carried unanimously.

Judy mentioned that over the May and June meetings we will be reviewing and approving the Trustees annual budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024. The Finance Committee will find a time to meet with Hollie and have an orientation to the Trustees financial responsibilities. The Finance Committee will meet again on Tuesday, May 14, at 3:00.

For the Building and Grounds Committee, Paul pointed out that the interior shutters in the Miller-Vincent Room have been refurbished by building mechanic Brian Lloyd. The new lectern was purchased and is in place in Cohen Hall. A new karaoke machine was recently purchased and used at the Senior Center 5k race. The Tree Identification project is complete. Paul said a memo from Forrester Steve Robarge, who did some tree work in 2008, helped to identify some of the trees. Assessing of the acoustical situation in the lobby and in Cohen Hall by Eric Reuter will start next week.

Community Outreach, Long Range Planning, and Fine Arts Committees had no reports.

For the Policy Committee, Kathleen Packard moved the adoption of a new Confidentiality Policy. The motion was seconded by Pam Russell-Slack. The Trustees were satisfied with the changes made after February's discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Reporting for the Friends, Judy said that the Book Sale last weekend apparently brought in about \$15,000. The "specially priced" books brought in about \$2,000. One of the specially priced books was a first edition of a Hemmingway novel. The next book sale will be the week of October 15, 2024, set up and sale.

Horatio Colony liaison and the Cheshire County Literacy Coalition had no reports.

Director Marti Fiske reported that the agreement with the Mount Caesar Union Library in Swanzey (to use KPL resources while the Swanzey Library was under renovation) worked very well and is now ended, as the MCU Library has reopened. Swanzey residents borrowed 4,696 items, an unusually high number due to a homeschooled family who were “super borrowers.” The arrangement worked very well for both parties, thanks to a well drawn up plan based on one from a VT library.

As for the City budget process, on May 21, at 5:30, FOP will review the Library’s portion of the budget. Trustees are encouraged to attend. Only a very small increase is requested. Budget books are due out next week.

Susan Bloom has taken over reservations for meeting and event spaces. She reported on the increase in use of these spaces, and the wide variety of users, including Radically Rural (returning in the Fall), an acapella group, Sweet Adelaide in August which will rent a number of rooms over two days; Our Lady of Mercy Academy, that has reserved for various events including a graduation, an awards ceremony, a prom and a play. We are becoming a regional conference center of sorts.

Susan reported that the Library of Things and the outdoor gear will be highlighted at a field day event at Robin Hood Park on Saturday, May 11, 9:00 to noon. Hopefully two volunteers from Monadnock Outdoors will be on hand. The Monadnock Coop will provide snacks. Susan noted that outdoor gear as well as gardening tools can now be reserved on the Library’s website.

Under New Business, Bill Stroup mentioned that he would like us to nominate our library for Library of the Year in the New Hampshire Library Trustee Association annual awards program. He moved that we submit a nomination, seconded by Kathleen Packard. Among other things, we would highlight our outdoor gear lending and our library of things; our foreign language collection; being voted a favorite public space; and the Maker Space. The motion was carried unanimously.

Bill also mentioned that he will provide a sympathy card to be sent to Sharon Stout, after the recent death of her husband Nat, who served for many years as a KPL Trustee. The card will be at the Library to be signed and sent to Sharon.

Bill announced that there would be an executive session to review minutes of nonpublic sessions which have been sealed, to decide if they should be unsealed, as per our new policy with regard to nonpublic minutes.

At 6:05 Bill moved to go into a nonpublic session, Pam Russell-Slack seconded the motion. Vote on the motion: Bill Stroup, yes; Jane Pitts, yes; Paul Henkel, yes; Kathleen Packard, yes; Judy Putnam, yes; Justin Somma, yes; Don Caruso, yes; Pam Russell-Slack, yes; Hollie Seiler, yes.

(non-public session 6:05 to 6:45 p.m.)

At 6:45 p.m. the Trustees moved back into the public session.

Pam Russell-Slack then moved to seal the minutes of the non-public meeting as the discussion could adversely affect the reputation of a person other than a member of this board. (RSA 91-A:3, II(a) and (c)). Jane Pitts seconded the motion,

Vote on the motion: Bill Stroup, yes; Jane Pitts, yes; Paul Henkel, yes; Kathleen Packard, yes; Judy Putnam, yes; Justin Somma, yes; Don Caruso, yes; Pam Russell-Slack, yes; Hollie Seiler, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned by Bill Stroup at 6:45 p.m.

Judy Putnam
Temporary Secretary