

GREENWICH FREE LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OCTOBER 2023 MEETING MINUTES

Regular Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, October 18, 2023

7:00 pm

Community Room

Attendees: Patrice Abate, Mary Ann Spiezio, Dave Wever, Teri Pendergrass, Ellen Fronhofer, Paul Thurston, Aaron Northrup

1. Call to order 7:01 pm
2. Board Action Items
 - a. Approval of proposed September 2023 Minutes (separate document)
Paul made a motion to approve the September meeting minutes. Dave seconds. Board approved.
3. Board Committee Reports
 - a. Facilities Committee (Aaron, Dave, Paul, Teri) – Sarah emailed a week ago about an odor downstairs. This issue has been resolved by Mark and Dave now knows how to clean out the air exchange. Dave also has a key to the closet outside.

Meeting with Lisa to go over the improvements to the Community Room took place. Lisa commented that the work may not be able to happen until January, 2025. She had some rough drawings with cabinetry along the one large wall. This would take away our space for artwork. There was discussion about storage and the need to keep the space open in the Community Room. We do not necessarily want to try to store the tables in the closet. It would not be big enough. Discussion on what improvements we need to make to the kitchen. We will tell Lisa that we are not interested in the cabinetry, but would like to have a larger fridge and perhaps a dishwasher. Dave stated that no one really had an idea of what we wanted to do with this space. Lisa was pushing to modify the closet to hold the tables, but the space is currently being used very well.

We have to do windows and lighting. Door needs to be switched out to be a push out.

We will convene a meeting to include Emily Sargent and Sarah to decide what we want to do with storage.

- b. Finance & Fundraising Committee (Mary Ann, Patrice, Paul) – A meeting is set up with Troy Tyler and the new superintendent to let them know our plan to exceed the tax cap next spring. It is set for Monday, October 20th at 10 am. Bob Jeffords is willing to donate the Christmas trees again this year if we want to offer them as a fundraiser. It was decided that we will do this again this year.

- c. Material Review Committee (Cliff, Patrice, Paul) – There has been some talk at the school about book banning. Patrice is not sure if it will come here, but it could. It was only one person who attended to ask this question. Aaron attended a book banning seminar online and what it came down to is whether or not it violates the Library’s policy. We need to know our Library’s Material Selection Policy that was recently updated. Aaron said that our policy checks all the boxes and that the way we handled the public forum that one time was also exactly how he said it should be done.
- d. Policy & Audit Committee (Mary Ann, Patrice, Paul) – No report
- e. Board Recruitment (Cliff, Patrice) – We are going to reach out to our volunteers to see if any of them are interested. We all need to think about people who might be interested in serving on the Board of Trustees.
- f. Personnel & HR Committee (Mary Ann, Paul) – Last year Sarah had one-on-ones with her staff. We need to ask her if she plans to do this again. Paul will modify the appraisal tool to incorporate the items in our strategic plan and we will hold an executive session in November prior to the Board meeting to get Board member’s input. Emily Gates is leaving and we are advertising for a new person for this position. Sarah would like to discuss the COLA. We have been tracking with Social Security, which is at 3.2%. We will review the impact on the budget.

4. Gill Room Report (presented by Sandy McReynolds, Historian)

FB:

Likes: 608

Follows: 661

Requests:

- Several small queries: location of mill, photo identification correction.
- Worked mostly on tracking down location of Rock Hill, and the Gibbons Farm. Along the way found out about an old road (Rock Hill Road), and its location, along with the old name of the downhill grade given to the section of North Road that meets County Route 49. A LOT of deed searching/reading.

Other:

- Working on a program with KC and Ken Perry on the Lowber Lime Kilns in Bald Mt. Program scheduled for October 29th, 1PM.

- 5. Friends of the Greenwich Free Library Update – They are adding another Saturday book sale.
- 6. Treasurer’s Report – Review of the transaction for the month of September as well as the actual vs. budget for the first three quarters of the year. **Dave made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Transaction Report. Teri seconds. Board approves. Dave made a motion to accept quarterly report, Second Teri. Board approves.**

7. Library Director's Report –

September Statistics: Check outs – 2494; Borrowers – 445; Holds Satisfied – 543; New Cards Issued – 6; Computer sessions – 157 ; WiFi uses – 483; Cossayuna WiFi – 54 ; Libby checkouts – 332; Kanopy Plays – 109; Visitors to the library (door count) – 2400; Community service sessions – 31; Community service attendees – 231; Library programs/events (general) – 18; Library program/events attendees – 354; Early Childhood programs/services – 3; Early Childhood attendees – 59; Volunteer hours - 124; Farm 2 Library participants – 203; pounds of food waste diverted for compost – 760

September was a relatively quiet month; our children's programs were on pause during the first two weeks, and the Kindergarten Readiness session didn't start until October.

STRATEGIC PLANNING GOALS:

Public Promotion

A1 Communications

- We are working on a social media communications plan. I've asked Sydney to help. This will allow us to analyze our current engagement, identify posting and content goals, and develop protocol for responding to inquiries or comments via social media.
- Website: Jack at SALS is doing the necessary homepage updates for Sydney to move forward; those should be done today. Sydney is meeting with Sandy on November 10 to discuss the Gill Room portion of the site to ensure a more significant presence on the site and to begin to provide accessibility.

A2 Expand patron base; A3 Outreach services:

- Emily Sargent and I tabled at the Battenkill Community Services Touch-a-Truck event. We gave away books and the last of our branded tote bags and water bottles. (If anyone has any ideas for new swag, let me know!)

Programming

B1 Programs that fulfill patron needs

- [Programs and events](#) are all listed on the calendar. Highlights include:
 - Staff member Warren Schultz is beginning a six-part workshop, "Writing and Producing a Ten-Minute Play," to begin on Oct 23rd
 - Sandy McReynolds, KC Scott, and Ken Perry are presenting a history program on the Lowber Lime Kilns on Sunday October 29.
 - Our annual Halloween Party returns on Tuesday 10/31 from 4-6
 - T-Rex Tea party returns on 11/18

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

- Our last Music at the Library event will be next Monday, 10/30 with Kevin Warren and the Bedrock Foundation. The backup location (in case of bad weather) is supposed to be the Community Room, but Kevin is interested in a larger space. We are still sorting out details.
- Laurie Miles's show will be taken down this Saturday 10/21, and we will begin to display the "thrifed ghost paintings" that workshop participants created last week. Valorie Nichols helped lead the workshop.
- We are working on three author events for December: Amy Godine will present her forthcoming book, *The Black Woods: Pursuing Racial Justice on the Adirondack Frontier* on December 6th (this is a collaborative event with the Greenwich Easton Historical Association). Elizabeth and Ethan Finkelstein, who live on Church Street, will present their new book, *Cheap Old Houses*, date TBD. Emily Sargent is welcoming back Rachel Vogel (author of the picture book, *Raccoons Go Rafting*) to a "Chapters and Cocoa" kids event on Dec 22.

Partnerships

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

- Emilly and Emily are partnering with Em's Art Shack and the Greenwich Youth Center on Saturday 10/21 on a Build your own "Scarry" Halloween costume workshop, inspired by Richard Scarry.
- As Music at the Library comes to a close, I just want to shout out our partnership with Casa Reyes. They have been delightful to work with, and people love their food. We should consider hosting them again next summer, whether or not we sponsor a music program.
- WMHT will join the T-Rex Tea Party with an "All about Dinosaurs" presentation.

Place

- See Facilities report

Preservation

- See Gill Room report

OTHER

Fundraising

- Bob Jeffords reached out to me to say that he will once again donate the tabletop trees if we would like to do the tree event again. Is the fundraising committee interested? Is there a variation on this event that we could consider? Perhaps a miniature ornament-making workshop? Ideas?

Tractor Parade

- Last year we stayed open on the afternoon of the parade until 4PM, and we hosted the school's bake sale. It was a jolly time, and over 100 people came through. I think that it generated good will. Unfortunately I am not available for the full afternoon this year, but if an outside group would like to use the space for a bake sale, I think it's worth it. Or, perhaps the Friends would like to do something?

8. Period for Public Expression – No comments.

9. Old Business – Computers have been ordered. Computer training will be done by SALS on Wednesday, November 8th.

10. New Business – Discussion of the Tractor Parade and both Marge and Patrice will be volunteers on behalf of the Library and the school will hold the bake sale again this year. Patrice will be going around to the Little Libraries to do a restock.

11. Dates of Future Board Meeting Calendar – Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 15, 2023.

12. Adjournment – Dave made motion to adjourn, Ellen seconds. Meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.