

Durham Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 11, 2023
6:45 p.m.
Oyster River Room of Durham Public Library

In Attendance: Robin Glasser, Rand O'Brien, Charlotte Ramsay, Andrew Sharp (left the meeting at 8:15PM), Erik Waddell, Susan Wagner

Board Alternates:

Absent: Kim Sweetman, Trustee; Martie Gooze, Board Alternate; Callie Langton, Board Alternate

Observers/Guests: Nancy Schieb, Friends Liaison

Library Staff: Library Director Sheryl Bass

1. Call to Order.
 - a. Chair Robin Glasser called the meeting to order at 6:48 p.m. All attendees were physically present at the meeting.
2. Chair Appointment of Alternate Trustee to Serve as Voting Member
 - a. Six of seven Trustees were present which represented a quorum; no Alternate Trustees were present to appoint.
3. Approval of Meeting Agenda
 - a. Charlotte Ramsay moved to approve the meeting agenda, as amended below. Erik Waddell seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.
 - i. Under item 12, tabled 'Recommended revisions to the Personnel Policy' until the November meeting.
4. Public Comments/Public Correspondence
 - a. Director Sheryl Bass received comments from a patron who is concerned about the Library of Things policy of retaining a copy of a patron's ID for the duration of the loan. She is working through this issue with the patron.
 - b. Chair Robin Glasser praised both Director Sheryl Bass and Assistant Director Audra Lewis for their wonderful presentation to the Active Retirement Association about "Taking a Stand Against Banning Books!" on October 4, 2023. This was one of ARA's most heavily attended programs during the Fall semester.

Sheryl and Audra graciously agreed to fill in with only two days' notice after the scheduled Dover speaker cancelled.

5. Approval of September 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes

- a. Rand O'Brien moved to approve the minutes, as amended below. Charlotte Ramsay seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.
 - i. Under Item 13, the word 'gondola' was changed to 'gundalow'.

6. Friends' Report – Nancy Schieb

- a. At the last Friends meeting the Treasurer expressed concerns with the current M&T Bank. The Friends will be gradually moving their accounts to Seacoast Bank.
- b. As a result of the success of the summer 'Big Read' book discussion, the Friends approved paying the new facilitator a fee and engaging her for future book discussions.
- c. A book sale is planned for November 3/4. Set-up will take place on November 2.
- d. The group is discussing a possible change in nomenclature about their membership/fund drive – 'dues', 'donation' or some other term?
- e. The next meeting is Wednesday, October 18, at 1:30 p.m.; refreshments will be served at 1:00 p.m. to celebrate National Friends of the Library Week.

7. Treasurer's Report for September 2023 — Erik Waddell

- a. See Treasurer's Reports for details.
 - i. One item of note was that a lost book was found and returned, and a refund of \$9.31 was issued.
- b. Andrew Sharp moved to accept the Treasurer's Reports. Charlotte Ramsay seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

8. Director's Report –Sheryl Bass

- a. See Director's Report for upcoming items. Recently completed noteworthy items include:
 - i. The issue of walkers cutting through the path at the end of the Library parking lot continues. Town Administrator Todd Selig has decided to continue to honor a commitment he made to a fence there, and it will be put back in place.
 - ii. The Durham Fire Department and fire truck visited for story time on October 10, and 37 participants attended. They will visit again on October 12.
 - iii. The new story walk installation for the Fall season is *Mother Bruce* by Ryan T. Higgins.
 - iv. Local poet Andrew Merton performed a reading of his works on October 10. The program was well attended.
 - v. The Library has spent 75% of its operations budget compared to 85% last year at this time.

- vi. Library Assistant Kevin Maier is taking the 12-hour posting vacated by Library Assistant Debbie Jarvis. The Library has posted a 15-hour Library Assistant position.
 - vii. On October 4 Library Director Sheryl Bass and Assistant Director Audra Lewis accepted a last-minute invitation to speak to the Active Retirement Association about "Taking a Stand Against Banning Books". It was very well attended with a very engaged audience.
- 9. 3rd Quarter Budget Report
 - a. Director Sheryl Bass reviewed the Library operations budget as of September 30 and commented on the following items:
 - i. The salary deficit for the year is looking better at only \$4,706.
 - ii. The Digital Resources budget continues to be exceeded due to increased use of the Hoopla database.
 - iii. The cost of subscriptions has risen, primarily due to a 37% increase for *Foster's Daily Democrat* and the addition of *Barron's*.
 - iv. Adult programming is over budget, most likely due to the transition of staff responsibility for these programs.
 - v. At the end of Q3 the budget has been exceeded by \$3,811; however, the deficit reflects a reduction over the past 90 days.
- 10. Progress Report on Family Literacy Area
 - a. Director Sheryl Bass reported that the Children's book section has been weeded, creating additional space for fantasy & science fiction books.
- 11. Progress Report on Garden (Eagle Scout Project)
 - a. Director Sheryl Bass provided an update in Callie Langton's absence. The work appears to be completed. The plants are small, and the Library is watering them. Sheryl will follow up with Callie when Callie returns from traveling.
- 12. Personnel/Policy Committee
 - a. Recommended revisions to Gift Policy
 - vi. Rand O'Brien moved to accept the revisions to the Gift Policy, as amended below. Andrew Sharp seconded. All in favor. Motion passed. Amendments included:
 - 1. In the Real Estate section, add the words ... "in consultation with the Town" after the words "real property".
 - 2. In the Objections to Library Resources section, the first sentence was changed to, "The Library will review, consider, and respond to all comments and questions about Library 'gifts'....". The words "...materials, services, programming and policy..." were removed.
 - b. Recommended exception to the Professional Development Policy
 - i. Chair Robin Glasser and Director Sheryl Bass would like to make an exception to the current policy, allowing part-time staff member Kelly Montagano to exceed the \$1,500/yr. maximum for tuition

reimbursement. Her classes will cost about \$6,000/yr. The Policy Committee recommends that the Library pay for \$3,000/yr. No one else on staff is currently taking advantage of tuition reimbursement.

- ii. Chair Robin Glasser moved to accept the exception to the Professional Development Policy. Charlotte Ramsay seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
- iii. The Finance and Technology Committee will make a recommendation about how to replenish the Restricted Professional Development Funds in the future. The New Hampshire state RSAs will also be reviewed for any rules regarding this type of investment.

13. Approval of Annual Appeal Letter

- a. Charlotte Ramsay moved to approve the 2023-2024 Annual Appeal letter, with the following suggested changes. Chair Robin Glasser seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
 - i. Consider modifying the first sentence by changing the comma to a semicolon after the word 'books', and using an exclamation point rather than a period to end the sentence.
 - ii. Consider shortening the second-last paragraph to something like..."Make a contribution by visiting (website address), mailing the donation, or stopping by the library".
 - iii. Consider cutting any extraneous words to minimize the text.
- b. Changes were also suggested to the information on the donation envelop and to the PayPal dialogue.
- c. Chair Robin Glasser will send out a Doodle poll to see if a date can be found for a letter addressing party at the Library.

14. Adjournment

- a. Charlotte Ramsay made a motion to adjourn. Chair Robin Glasser seconded. All in favor. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Future meetings 2nd Wednesday of each month at **6:45 p.m.** November 8; December 13; January 10, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Wagner
Secretary