

Westwood Board of Library Trustees
Monday April 10, 2023
Islington Library
Westwood, MA 7:00pm

Trustee Chair Von Euw called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. No recording devices. Ms. Von Euw noted that this would be the last meeting for Trustee Persons, and thanked Mrs. Persons for her 13 years of dedicated service to the town, during which she was instrumental in numerous initiatives including the building of the new main library facility, the Islington Task Force and renovation/reconstruction of the Islington library, and the selection of 2 Library directors. Mrs. Persons noted her excitement about everything that has been accomplished and is planned for the Library.

In Attendance:

Library Trustees present: Mary Masi-Phelps, Maureen Von Euw, Maria Ryan, Mary Beth Persons, Nancy Donahue, Paul Fitzgerald.

Library Staff: Library Director Elizabeth McGovern

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made/seconded (Donahue/Ryan) to accept the minutes from March 13, 2023. The Library Trustees present voted unanimously in favor via roll call vote (Trustee Fitzgerald abstaining).

Director's Report:

Director's report accepted as submitted. Highlights:

- The library has submitted a grant request to perform the digitization of materials recommended by the consultant that recently completed his work, to make local history more accessible to patrons. Thanks to Abby Walsh for submitting the application. The library will learn later this year if the request has been granted.
- Staff continue to move collections so as to optimize space for patrons to sit and read; signage clearly points to each collection's new location.
- The Library is fortunate to have numerous high school volunteers to come assist with middle school students when they visit the library after school, and teen librarian Felicia O'Keefe is collaborating with Adina Swan from Youth and Family Services to provide training. The Library is also working with the DPW to arrange for sound-dampening in the teen room, including sound panels and glass doors.
- The library welcomed Sean O'Donnell as the new reference / adult services librarian.
- After the report was filed, the library received the resignation of the Head of Technology/Tech Services. The director is working with the HR department to post the position and to study interim coverage options.

Staff Development Day:

The Trustees voted to approve closing the library for one day in early May (currently planned for May 5, to be confirmed) for a full day of staff development in training, with a focus on safety in the library, including emergency preparedness and de-escalating behavior incidents. The motion was made and seconded (Fitzgerald/Ryan) and the Trustees voted unanimously in favor.

Budget update:

The Library Director attended Finance Commission meetings related to the FY24 budget - there were no library-specific questions or issues raised. The Director is closely watching expenses to manage to budget through the remainder of the FY23 budget year, which ends on June 30.

Strategic Plan, Bookmobile and 21st Century updates:

Chair Von Euw and Director McGovern have met with a consultant to discuss plans to outfit the bookmobile. Director McGovern presented her plan to fulfill initiatives in 5 areas of the plan for 2023:

1. Bookmobile
2. WiFi Hotspot upgrade
3. Library of Things expansion
4. Cultural programs
5. Marketing and communications to educate the public on the plan

Initiatives are to be funded using a combination of available budget funds, an underwriting grant to be requested from the 21st Century Fund at their next meeting, and State Aid. The consensus of the Trustees was favorable, contingent on the Library and the Fund determining a mutually agreeable plan for disbursement of funds, and suitable consideration of how to mitigate risk in the plan, including contingencies for the possibility of higher costs and/or downside financial factors in the second year.

Poet Laureate update

Trustees Ryan and Donahue reported that Lynne Viti has actively begun her work as poet laureate and has initiated several activities, including the process of selecting the youth poet laureate. Additional activities include:

- Creation of a web page with a logo for the position
- Plans for an open mic session at the library
- Workshops with the schools
- Speaking at the Friends annual meeting
- Plans for participation in the Memorial Day ceremony

Acceptances & Expenditures:

Expenditures were approved unanimously as presented (motion made/seconded by trustees Fitzgerald/Persons). Trustees voted unanimously in favor.

May Meeting date

Next meeting will be held May 15 in person at the main library.

New Business:

- Friends update: The Friends are actively working through donated books in the work room, and are considering plans for future book sales, including the traditional semi-annual sales as well as the possibility of leaving the room open as an ongoing sale. They are also considering options to move the book donation bin from its current location. The Friends seek additional members and board members.

Public Participation:

Wendy Hickey introduced herself as a candidate for Trustee.

Adjournment:

A motion was made/seconded (Persons/Masi-Phelps) to adjourn at 8:13 PM, with Trustees voting unanimously in favor.

Next Meeting:

Mary 15, 2023, 07:00 PM - in person at the main library

Handouts:

Agenda, Minutes of 3/13/2023 Trustee meeting, Library Director's Report, Departmental Expenditure Report, Trustees Accept and Expend Report, March 2023 Monthly Stats, WPL Action Plan, 21st Century poster, Strategic Plan Funding Request

Respectfully Submitted:

Mary Masi-Phelps