

Hamilton-Wenham Public Library
MINUTES from the Board of Trustees-December 14, 2023

Present: MJ Brown, Cara Fauci, Dede Johnson, Karen Bebergal, Bethany Yu, Director Kim Butler

Absent: Jane Kusel

Meeting Opened: 6:35pm

Statistics/Financials/DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

All spending is on track.

The town budget meeting is from 8-11am on Saturday, December 16, 2023. Kim feels her presentation will go well and did not request that trustees attend.

Kim will meet on December 12 with Town Manager Joe Domelowicz and Bill Melville from HW Cam about the Hamilton Select Board's holding meetings in the Library's large meeting room and enabling HWCam to possibly set up equipment to share the meetings live on the HW Cam TV channel.

Building:

The back door near the dumpster needed locksmith repair because of a staff member's key being stuck in the lock.

The repair of the HVAC system (outside of building) that was caused by a power surge is done.

Our memory kits and all circulating items related to the LSTA Access for All grant has a new spot near the reference desk on the second floor.

Bay State Electric tested and replaced outside lights on December 4.

HVAC (inside units) FY24 capital project: A company named B2Q will do the engineering design for the two new units for about \$34,000. The design will include checking existing infrastructure, prep of construction documents, review of contractor submittals, and monitor of progress during the project. Vicky Masone manages the procurement process, costing \$5000. Total available for the entire project is \$310,000.

Personnel: Kim will repost the Saturday/substitute position as the previously hired person has decided not to take the job.

Kim attended the AFSCME union arbitration hearing for the PT holiday pay issue on December 4. The arbitrator will likely rule in late February or March.

Technology:

Just today, Christine from Equitous finished the installation of our new switches and firewall as part of the FY23 money.

MVLC:

There has been a conflict between the library software provider and the mobile app's developer which caused the service to become permanently unavailable effective 11/27/23. MVLC staff is selecting and implementing a replacement as soon as possible. They are hopeful to have this resolved by early January.

Friends Report:

Karen Bebergal reported that total membership=\$225 with 15 new members. Membership account=\$620 (minus PayPal fees)

There will be a membership drive in January which will include email and postcard communication.

Karen suggested at the last Friends meeting to include a raffle basket as a fund raising idea. There was favorable reaction.

Trustees discussed setting up the Friends Book Corner as an honor payment system or a donation-suggested system instead of a set price. More on this later.

Other:

Our Library is in the first group of libraries approved for state aid funding on 11/21/23. We received our first checks for both towns and should receive our second payment around March or April. Wenham=\$7,286.08 and Hamilton \$9,465.58.

Kim met with Heather Ford from the Hamilton Capital Committee to talk about the FY25 Library capital request and our five-year capital plan.

Kim met with Wenham Police Department Chief Kevin DiNapoli to talk about the unexpected evacuation plan drill for Buker Elementary School. Also, Kim attended a safety meeting with more members from emergency services and the school on December 11 to firm up the Library's responsibilities when future evacuations take place.

Lorraine and Kim discussed the remaining funds in the Reinhalter Trust. It will be used to create a "calming corner" to provide a quiet spot for our patrons.

Kim has applied for a grant through the Association for Rural and Small Libraries called "Sustainable and Resilient New England Libraries." Kim requested \$6000 to fund our seed library. Notification will come by 1/31/24.

Kim was awarded a conference scholarship to the Mass. Library System Public Library Associate Conference in Ohio in April. \$2500 will be offered to 50 recipients.

Closings: December 25 and January 1 for Christmas and New Year's Day.

Old Business:

The staff holiday celebration was at the Hale Street Tavern. The Friends gave \$400 to defer costs.

New Business:

We had a short discussion about the Computer Use and Internet Policy update. Trustees will come to the January meeting with suggestions for changes and vote at that time.

Annual Town Reports-Trustees will work on their report for Hamilton and Wenham, due by 1/31 to Laurie Wilson (H) and by 1/18 to Michele McGovern (W), respectively. The report should be one page.

Informal Discussion Not Anticipated:

First amendment auditors visited our Library, and there were no problems. Our staff have frequently received suggestions and guidelines from Kim to stay calm and do their jobs in a normal manner. These suggestions came from Wenham town counsel.

There were pro-Palestine protesters outside of the Library last Saturday at the same time the Human Rights local group held an event inside the library. Assistant Director Jane Wolff met with the outside group asking them to clear the entryway for patrons.

Reports from Staff:

Jessica Furtado (Adult Services): Patrons have given positive feedback for our hands-on creative programs and Jessica will continue to increase these offerings.

January: mood board workshop, Bad Art Night, mindfulness workshop, death doula presentation called “Brave Conversations on Death & Dying.

Lorraine Der (Children’s Room): Lorraine has received three cultural council grants!

December: collaboration with PJ Library for a Hanukkah story time, collaboration with the HW Rec Department for Elf on a Shelf and Legos Galore, Baby Bookworms Drop-in, and Music and Movement sessions.

Also, an activity each day of February vacation week.

Meeting ended: 7:55pm

Next Meeting: January, 11, 2024 at 6:30pm