Marlborough Public Library Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes

January 2, 2024

Meeting held at the Marlborough Public Library

The meeting was called to order by Fred Haas at 7:05 PM.

Board Members attending:

Tom Abel

Nena Bloomquist

Fred Haas, Chair

Jason Homer

Samantha Khosla

Rustin Kyle

Janice Merk

Robyn Ripley

Also attending:

Sara Belisle, Library Director

Documents Reviewed/Referenced:

Agenda

Meeting Minutes for November 7, 2023

Trust Fund/ State Aid Reports for November and December 2023

Director’s Report

Proceedings:

1. Minutes: A motion to accept the minutes for the November 7, 2023 meeting was passed (Abel, Merk).
2. Trust Funds/ State Aid Report: Director Belisle reported that the first State Aid payment was received in November and it was $5000 more than last year so this year’s total State Aid will go up by $10,000. State Aid was used to pay Tucker for shelving and furniture. The Trust Fund quarterly interest was received. Trust Funds were used to purchase the Discovery Museum Pass, parting gifts for Annie Glaser, and the Vin Bin luncheon for the staff. A motion to accept the Trust Funds/State Aid Report was passed (Merk, Abel).
3. Election of Officers for 2024: After some discussion, a slate of officers was proposed: Fred Haas for Chairman, Bill Brewin for Vice Chairman, and Samantha Khosla for Secretary/Treasurer. A motion to accept the proposed slate of officers for 2024 was passed (Merk, Bloomquist).
4. Director’s Report:

November and December 2023 Director’s Report

Building

Sidewalk rework is complete.

New wooden doors were installed in the Carnegie Lobby, and the Local History room is almost complete. Final exterior trim is now finished. The cabinets for the local history collection have been installed and the collection shelved. The room will open for public use sometime in January. Director Belisle met with the Historical Society and they will bring over some items for the display cases and other items to decorate the room. She also spoke with them about holding their meetings, which are open to the public, at the library. Fred has asked if there might be an exhibit about the history of the library in the future, possibly by next year for the one year anniversary of the new Library.

The outside lamps on the Carnegie doorway will be finished this week.

Additional lighting for the parking lot and walkways is being worked on. The light pole is ordered and back ordered until February. The Entrance Sign to the parking lot will be done by the DPW.

Basement storage shelves arrived and staff organized the historic paintings to get them off the ground. Once the punch list items are complete, facilities will help us install the first set of paintings and other art throughout the library along with installing the rail system in the Café.

The remaining glass for the stairs was installed and millwork is now complete along with the metal cap for the glass on the stairs.

The projector lens for the Grice Community Room that was backordered has arrived and is installed.

The piano was brought back and fits nicely in it’s new home. It will be tuned on January 3 and used for a program on January 6. There will be a screening of a movie, Drive to Sing, a documentary filmed during Covid, partially in Marlborough. The film makers will be in attendance.

Two residents dropped off photographs they took during construction. One of the sets of photographs was from resident Richard Cygan and he made prints of the photographs. Adult Services staff have plans to put together an archive of the construction project and these photos will be included.

Staff discovered empty beer bottles on the courtyard stairs two mornings in December. Director Belisle reviewed the security cameras and contacted the Police Chief asking to have night patrol officers swing by the library periodically.

Staff

Lia McClain, part-time Children’s Assistant who was hired in July 2023, submitted her resignation citing her inability to juggle two jobs and school and having to keep the higher paying job. The position was posted and filled by Isabel Warner who currently works at Barnes and Noble and is switching her graduate school degree to Library Science this Spring. She started today.

Interviews for Head of Circulation and Part-Time Circulation Assistant commenced. Head of Circulation has been filled by Kara Dzindolet who is a Marlborough resident and the former Head of Borrower Services at the Grafton Public Library. She will start on January 8, 2024. The search for a part-time Circulation Assistant is continuing.

Planning for the annual winter/holiday staff party has started with the plan to have the party on a Friday after the library is closed. A motion was made and passed to authorize the use of $750 from the Whelan Fund for the staff party (Bloomquist, Ripley).

State Aid FY24

The Library was notified that we are certified for FY24 State Aid and are part of the November awards. Our initial award is $46,325. This is ~$5,000 more from last FY.

Programming

Programming is starting to ramp up now that we have use of the Grice Community Room. Adult Services staff are scheduling programs that will be held in that room. Director Belisle met with the AARP to go over the free tax help program that will be held in that room starting in February. The Program will begin on the first Saturday of the month and then continue on every other Saturday after that.

Teen Librarian, Rachel Stone, formed a partnership with the New England Innovation Academy with an Industrial Design class where they are learning to do 3D renderings of a space. They used our Training Room as their semester project with the idea of turning it into a Makerspace. Once the project is complete the class will want to do a presentation to library stakeholders to present their findings. Director Belisle will be in attendance and any Trustees that want to sit in on the presentation will be invited.

English conversation circles have started up again and are going well. There are 3 per week. Assistant Director Manzella is pursuing a potential Spanish or Portuguese conversation circle for folks who are learning those languages.

New City Administration

Director Belisle met twice with Mayor Elect Dumais and his incoming chief of staff, Ryan Egan. She gave them an overview of the relationship between the library and the mayor’s office and discussed upcoming budget priorities in preparation for budget season.

Strategic Planning:

Director Belisle has begun working on the community survey that is part of the strategic planning process. She will share the first draft with the Trustees in February with the plan to have the community respond in March or April.

Statistics:

November:

We held 51 programs with 496 people attending

Study Room Reservations: 260

Door Count: 9514

December 1-28:

Study Room Reservations: 250

Door Count: 9667

We held 54 programs with 593 people attending

Director Belisle reported that during the power outage in Marlborough in mid-December, many people came in to use the library. There have been some complaints about sound issues in the study rooms. Director Belisle is talking to the Architects about possible solutions.

1. Marlborough Public Library Foundation:

Janice Merk reported that the MPLF has raised $1, 920, 000 to date. That is 95.8% of our goal. The MPLF is planning a Donor Appreciation night for Saturday, February 10 from 6-9 Pm at the library. The donor plaques and donor wall will be installed by that date.

1. Donor Plaques:

Director Belisle showed the trustees samples of the proposed signage for the rooms and donor plaques. Most signs will be a brushed silver metallic with a palladium window logo. These signs will be used anywhere there is ADA signage. On the desks and anywhere there is not ADA signage, the signs will be plexiglass. A motion was made and passed to accept the signage as recommended by Director Belisle (Ripley, Khosla).

A second motion was made and passed to accept the following wording – “The community gratefully acknowledges the contributions of Margaret Cardello, Director 2012-2023, for her work to make this library possible” for the Margaret’s Arch plaque (Homer, Kyle).

1. Old Business: None
2. New Business:

Jason Homer requested a report from Director Belisle on how the new technology in the building is working and her work with the City IT department.

There was discussion of inviting the new mayor, Mayor Dumais, to a future meeting.

1. Adjournment:

A motion was made and passed to adjourn at 8:23 PM (Abel, Ripley).

Respectfully submitted,

Nena Bloomquist

Secretary

MPL Board of Trustees