

Meeting of the Westhampton Public Library Board of Trustees
Via Zoom
Thursday, January 13, 2022

In Attendance:

Meaghan Schwelm, Anne Marie O'Reilly, Caralyn Whipple, Angela Griefen, Mikki Nevins, Brian Mulvehill (joined meeting at 6:20 pm).

Absent: Carol McMurrich

Guest: Sue O'Rourke

AGENDA

Call to order at 6:04 pm

Minutes from last meeting:

- Meaghan had a few edits. Regarding the reduced work week plan, it was written that Meghan currently does not have two consecutive days off, which is incorrect, since the Library is closed on Sundays and if Meaghan takes off a Saturday, she will have two consecutive days off.
- The ATT hotspots are not free, but costs .99 cents.
- Motion was made and seconded to approve minutes from last meeting with Meghan edits, motion approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Account Balances:

Library Building: \$3,594.48

State Aid: \$2,829.76 (first of two State Aid Payments totaling \$2,552.29 has been dispersed)

Deferred Town Monies: \$53,982.87

Gifts: \$21,114.02

Directors Report

- Meaghan reports we had lighter attendance for virtual and in person programs in December due to the holidays and perhaps the Covid surge. However, the joint teen and adult Book Club was successful and very well attended and led to a lively discussion.
- Circulations continue to be higher than last year, which is good news.
- There were fewer volunteer hours, since some of our volunteers don't feel comfortable volunteering at library because of the Covid surge.

- After meeting with the Bd of Health, Meaghan decided that all Library in person meetings, groups and events be suspended for one month. Meaghan and Trustees will reassess at next Trustee meeting. (Affected groups are: Book group, Scrabble, Knitting, Computer, Story time, etc.)
- Andy our playgroup leader asked about possibly continuing playgroup outdoors, weather permitting. (Caralyn) if kids are having outdoor recess at school, we should offer outdoor playgroup as long as the parents are interested. Anne Marie also agrees. Might have some criteria when to cancel an outdoor event. Meaghan will check with Hilltown Playgroup about criteria. Andy had only has been getting two families each week, not the same two families. Will let Andy know he can plan playgroups as long as the weather cooperates. Families are encouraged to pre-register. Andy is having some issues because he is new to the community.
- Emily not doing story time online at this time. She found virtual story time did not work very well for toddlers. She is focusing her time on other projects and getting ready for children reading programs for the Spring and Summer.
- Meghan made some changes due to the Covid Omicron spike to policies for staff and volunteers. Most are directly copied from the current CDC guidelines. Meaghan ran through some changes addressing her biggest concerns. Previous policies were drawn up when we were closed to the public and now need to be revised. Meghan requested to change the policy of quarantining and testing after a person has been exposed to the virus or show symptoms. Regardless of vaccination and boosting status, everyone needs to quarantine and test negative before coming back to work or volunteer.
- There was a discussion of which Covid tests to accept, PCR or Antigen. Antigen is not always accurate, but (Nikki) availability of PCR is an issue. (Anne Marie) we can be as conservative as we want to protect our staff and volunteers and keep them safe. Staff members will be given sick time if they need to take time off. We may have to close for a bit of time depending on severity issue. Meghan will revise the Covid policy: if anyone is exposed, they will have to quarantine and get tested. We can ask for a PCR test but if not feasible in a timely fashion will accept 2 negative Antigen tests. Meghan will share the revised policy with Staff and Volunteers.

- Meaghan has been in touch with the Director of Forbes library regarding establishing talking points for staff to deal with unruly or difficult patron behavior. There were no recent incidents except for the individual in the Library parking lot playing loud music. He has not been seen recently.
- Ella Cleary stopped by Library to drop off her Eagle Scout report. She dropped off a thank you note to the Library and gave the library a donation of \$1730.04, which was extra money from the funds she raised for her Eagle Scout project. The Trustees will set this sum aside at this time and decide how to best use it at our next meeting.

Friends Report, Sue O'Rourke in attendance

- There was an election of officers at the last Friends meeting. Renee Schultz and Becky Alexander stepped down. Judee Wayne will be Treasurer.
- Small purchases under \$25 don't need to be approved by Friends.
- The Gingerbread house activity was discussed and was very successful. Similar activities will be planned for the future.
- The possibility of Friends supporting tech purchases in the future was discussed.
- Library no longer needs Fill the Shelves money. Meghan and Emily will draw a list of needed items that people can donate money for and have it ready for the April newsletter.

OLD BUSINESS

Finalize Budget

- Emily's hourly pay rate should go up a dollar to \$18.278 reflect minimum wage in MA. She is getting the low-end salary for Youth librarians in MA.
- After discussion the Sub library salary is budgeted for \$5,824. Giving the sub a set number of hours per week means we will have a better chance of keeping a sub librarian. Hoping to get someone who subs for other libraries or a Library Science student. If one person is available and we can use them until we use of the allotted money in the budget is used up. We can make the argument we are in a pandemic, and if town wants library open would be prudent to have more staff available.
- Jared is now min wage. \$14.25, waiting for town treasure, town decides his income.

- After much discussion and several calculations, it was decided the Meaghan's salary should be increased by \$1.50 raise per hour, to an annual \$47,648. Finance will see Meghan is taking a pay decrease because her hours are decreasing to 35 hours per week, and more likely to approve a sub librarian. (Caralyn) suggested \$1.50 hour raise. (Brian) finance looks at the whole budget and the big picture. How can we push up our employees, but most people don't know what these employees do and sometimes it comes down to tax dollar. Meghan will always give more, goes above and beyond. We have to be prepared the rationale behind our director's salary. (Caralyn) our librarians are underpaid; they are below average looking at statewide stats. (Meghan) For a small town like Westhampton our salaries are in line with similar small-town communities.
- Total for payroll: \$73,973. (Brian) our payroll is a little over 5 ½ % increase from last year. (Meaghan) Our payroll increase from the previous year was 6%. We can point out to the Finance Committee that we decreased the landscape line a bit, since we got compost from the Montague farm. We used a lot of gardening volunteer hours who worked hard to keep the library grounds beautiful.
- Mandatory Purchasing Number is 23,938
- Total budget: 119,689
- Meghan will resend the final budget.
- Budge approved unanimously.

Library Staff coverage policy will be tabled and addressed at the next Trustee meeting

No New Business

Meeting Adjourned at 7:40 pm

Next Meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 10, 2022