

**Groton Free Public Library**  
**1304 Scott Highway**  
**Groton, Vermont**  
**November 10, 2022 – DRAFT Minutes**

The duly warned meeting of the Trustees of was held at the Groton Free Public Library on November 10, 2022. Chair Jennie Gaiss called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

**In Attendance:**

Trustees: Chair Jennie Gaiss (remotely), Wayne Knott, Donna Russo-Savage (remotely).

Librarian: Sarah Spira.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Chair Gaiss moved approval of the October 11, 2022 minutes; Wayne Knott seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report:**

The Trustees thanked Dawn Evans and Sarah Spira for presenting the Library's proposed budget to the Groton Selectboard, and thanked Wayne Knott for being present to provide support. Chair Gaiss noted that the talking points used this year might be a template for future budget presentations.

The total proposed budget for all departments is currently greater than last year's budget. Although the Library may be asked to make some reductions, the source of the overall increase appears to be based on health insurance and COLA increases for town employees and elected officials. The Selectboard anticipates finalizing the budget no later than the beginning of January.

Sara Spira will meet with Town Treasurer Lisa Hart to reconcile some small discrepancies in attributing 2022 expenses between the Library's accounts.

**Librarian's Report:**

Aspen, the new patron-facing online catalog, is slated to launch on Monday.

Last month, Sarah Spira attended a multi-day educational program on asset-based community development, which she thinks will be a useful framework for the Trustees.

The Library has been accepted into the Massachusetts Higher Ed Consortium (MHEC), a purchasing group for higher education and libraries. Sarah Spira will research how the discounted rates on technology through MHEC compare with other avenues for purchasing technology in 2023.

Sarah Spira is working on year-end reporting for the VT Department of Libraries and the Town Report.

She is drafting volunteer job descriptions to more clearly articulate the type of help she needs.

The Library was open last Saturday and will be open on several Saturdays in December. Current regular hours were instituted many years ago to accommodate a librarian who worked alternate days at the library in Newbury. Sarah Spira would like to establish regular hours on Saturdays, provided that the Library is closed on Mondays. She does not think that Saturday hours can be regularly staffed by

volunteers. She intends to seek feedback from the community on the hours it prefers. She would like to start new, and increased, hours in the new year. She is preparing a communications plan to alert the community to any changes.

Sarah Spira requested permission to close the Library the day after Thanksgiving. Donna Russo-Savage moved that the Trustees approve closing the Library on November 25, 2022; Wayne Knott seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

On December 16, the Library will participate in a Winter Lantern Walk event with the Recreation Committee, the Historical Society, Sarkeys, and others. The event will include the SD Ireland Holiday mixer, lantern-making at the Library, hot chocolate, and possibly a visit from Santa! The event is still in the planning stages and organizers are hoping to get other businesses and organizations involved.

### **Friends Report:**

Sarah Spira reported on the Friends' behalf:

- The Friends sorted all remaining books stored in the Smiths' barn and re-homed them to the library in Newbury, the Grafton County Department of Corrections, and Tuttle's Diner.
- The Friends have purchased Montshire and Fairbanks Museum passes for the Library.
- The Friends purchased 100 books for the Library to give away at the Jazzy's Halloween event.
- The Friends have elected new officers:
  - Anne Hatch – President
  - Alyssa Smith – Treasurer
  - Janet Page – Secretary
- The Friends look forward to working with the Librarian and the Trustees to develop new fundraising events to replace the book sale.

### **Annual Appeal:**

Chair Gaiss shared several versions of the draft appeal documents during the last several weeks and incorporated Trustees' suggestions. The mailing will include a flyer with hours and services etc.

After a thoughtful discussion, the Trustees decided to proceed with the planned mail-date of November 18. Sara Spira has gathered supplies, and volunteers are ready to prepare the appeal for mailing next week.

### **Policy Updates:**

The Trustees discussed the need to adopt a policy regarding taking photographs of library activities. Sarah Spira is looking at other libraries' policies as to social media/marketing best practices. She intends to bring several policies to the Trustees for consideration in 2023. There are thoughtfully-considered policy templates available through the VT Department of Libraries.

### **Library Board Size:**

The Trustees postponed further discussion of potential expansion of the Library board until all Trustees are present.

### **Strategic Planning: Guiding GFPL into the Future**

The VT Dept of Libraries is hosting a webinar series open to all trustees

- Webinar Dates: Oct. 31, Nov. 14, Dec. 5 and Jan. 9
- Office Hours: Nov. 7, Nov. 28, Dec. 12, and Jan. 23

Sarah Spira attended the October 31 webinar. While the webinar was very good and she is invested in supporting the Trustees in the strategic planning process, she proposes that the Trustees wait until October 2023 to begin the process. In the meantime, she and the Trustees can work together to adjust to the changes that have occurred during the last year, to clarify the roles of the Trustees and the Librarian, to adopt core policies, and to do other foundational work.

**Public Comments:**

There were no members of the public present.

**Next Meeting:**

The next regular meeting is December 8, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

**Adjournment:**

Donna Russo-Savage made a motion to adjourn; Wayne Knott seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

The meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Russo-Savage, Trustee (for Dawn Evans, Secretary)