

Groton Free Public Library, Groton, VT

Library Trustee Meeting

Thursday, February 9, 2023 – 6:30 p.m.

The duly warned meeting of the Library Trustees was held at the Groton Free Public Library on February 9, 2023.

In Attendance:

Trustees Jenny Gaiss (remotely), Wayne Knott, Deborah Jurist, Donna Russo-Savage, and Dawn Evans; and Librarian Sarah Spira. For a portion of the meeting, Patrick Shattuck with RuralEdge.

The meeting was called to order by Jenny Gaiss at 6:36 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Deborah Jurist moved approval of the January 12, 2023, minutes. Dawn Evans seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Presentation by RuralEdge:

Patrick Shattuck, Executive Director of RuralEdge, which owns the library building, gave a presentation about the possibility of a joint grant application by RuralEdge and the Library to support capital improvements to the building. One source is part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, which provides public facilities preservation initiative grants funding for libraries. The other source is ARPA funds for capital projects for libraries.

By way of background, Shattuck explained that RuralEdge is the designated developer of affordable housing for the Northeast Kingdom (NEK). It also runs the Support and Services at Home (“SASH”) program in the NEK.

These federal grants would not be something that the Library alone could apply for, as it doesn’t own the building. Nor could RuralEdge apply for them alone as it is not a library.

RuralEdge anticipates utilizing the federal grants to replace the roof on the library building and, as funding permits, enhancing air quality through the acquisition of heat pumps and an air exchange system.

The building housing the Library is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and as such is subject to restrictions on modifications of its exterior, any of which must be preapproved by the National Park Service. Additional restrictions result from having received prior funding through the Preservation Trust of Vermont.

Sarah Spira reported that the Vermont Department of Libraries will be putting on a webinar to educate would-be grant applicants to these programs. However, as RuralEdge proposes to do the grant application process and simply seeks a letter of support from the Library, it appears that the Trustees' attendance at this webinar is not necessary.

Deborah Jurist moved that the Library Trustees support the partnership with RuralEdge to obtain grants to make capital improvements to the Library. Dawn Evans seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report:

Deborah Jurist reported that everything is running smoothly. Sarah Spira has been providing documentation about expenditures and her hours timely.

Deborah Jurist has learned that for the first five months from the date of purchasing the I-bond, no update is provided about earnings; however, once the six-month period is passed, updates are given every three months. The I-bond purchased in October 2022 will earn interest at the rate of 9.62%.

The certificate of deposit will renew shortly. The Trustees will determine at the March meeting whether to rollover the CD or to buy another I-bond out of a portion of the proceeds.

There will need to be a meeting attended by the Groton Treasurer, Deborah Jurist, and Librarian Sarah Spira to access the PayPal account operated by the Library in order to determine what must be done to close the account.

Librarian's Report:

Trustee Training

Three videos are available from the Vermont Department of Libraries that could aid library trustees in the performance of their roles.

Annual Appeal

To date, the annual appeal has brought in \$3,915.00. There are a number of returned envelopes which could be used to update the donor spreadsheet. PayPal was used for some of the donations, but there are other types of donation tools available.

Donna Russo-Savage offered to work with the Librarian in September, to prepare for the next annual appeal.

Building and Technology

Sarah Spira is hopeful that interior painting can be considered this year.

She plans to visit with Robert Little, the Community Development Manager for RuralEdge, about what can be done about a garden area behind the building and whether RuralEdge is planning to have another community cleanup day in 2023.

Volunteers and Staffing

A meeting with volunteers was held on January 20th. They will meet again in March. Sarah Spira is working with the volunteers to coordinate coverage for library hours during her planned vacation April 8-16.

Deborah Jurist moved that the April meeting of the Library Trustees be moved to April 20th, so that it will not fall during the Librarian's vacation. Dawn Evans seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Continuing Education and Meetings

Sarah Spira attended a meeting of 302 Cares, which is a partnership including the Vermont Department of Health, Northern Vermont Regional Hospital, and Blue Mountain School District, among others. It works on community health educational initiatives.

Collections and Materials

The Library has received a donation of knitting and mending books and a donation of inkpads and stamps.

Finance

Sarah Spira is facilitating the donation of a freestanding air conditioner and a window unit air conditioner for the Library.

Outreach

Sarah Spira is working with the Vermont Department of Wildlife on a hunter education program that will take place in March. There will be a 6-hour program on a Saturday and a two-hour program on Sunday, which will take place with a minimum of 15 participants. The Library will host and the Department will provide presenter(s) and any materials.

Sarah Spira is continuing to work with 4-H.

A meeting with Robert Little is scheduled for February 23 to discuss community development projects.

Sarah Spira has connected with NECKA about continuing to supply diapers and hygiene supplies.

She has also connected with Hi-Mowing Seeds about donating seeds again this year.

She is working with the Groton Historical Society on lining up a speaker in April that will talk about how to assess what is presented as news and separate the “wheat from the chaff”.

Reference

The Librarian has implemented a system for tracking reference questions.

Youth Services

The after school lounge is still a work in progress.

News & Marketing

Sarah Spira invited the library trustees to provide any thoughts or input on the website.

Discussion of the photography policy will be deferred to the next meeting.

Highway Signage

Wayne Knott reports that state highway signs used to come from Corrections Industries, but that resource has been disbanded by Vermont’s passage of the constitutional amendment prohibiting slavery and indentured servitude. A company named “Jet Services” is used by the Road Commissioner. Nonreflective signs are \$130 and reflective signs are \$135. Permission to post along the state highway must be obtained from the State.

Town Meeting – March 7

Deborah Jurist, if nominated for a three-year term as library trustee, will serve if elected.

Donna Russo-Savage intends to run for the one-year term as library trustee.

There will be an informational table for the Library at the meeting.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made by Dawn Evans and seconded by Wayne Knott.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

The next regular meeting is March 9, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Evans, Secretary