

Groton Free Public Library, Groton, VT

Library Trustee Meeting

Thursday, May 11, 2023 – 6:30 p.m.

The duly warned meeting of the Library Trustees was held at the Groton Free Public Library on April 20, 2023.

In Attendance:

Trustees Jennie Gaiss, Wayne Knott, Dawn Evans, and Donna Russo-Savage; and Librarian Sarah Spira.

The meeting was called to order by Jennie Gaiss at 6:30 p.m.

Jennie Gaiss proposed adjusting the agenda to reflect that during the Public Comment portion of the meeting Mike Gaiss will present information about a grant opportunity pertaining to the expansion of broadband access within Groton. He will also be at the library tomorrow at 5:30 p.m. to let the public know about what is going on for Groton in securing broadband.

Approval of Minutes:

Dawn Evans moved approval of the April 20, 2023, minutes. Wayne Knott seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report:

Deborah Jurist provided details regarding year-to-date numbers.

Deborah has accessed the library's PayPal account with the Town Treasurer, Lisa Hart. She suggests that we consider having Donna Russo-Savage get credentials so that she can see what PayPal offers and whether it makes sense to use it for accepting donations.

Donna will plan to visit with Lisa to learn more about PayPal.

PayPal has been used very little in the past, but it hasn't been promoted as part of the annual appeal.

The trustees and the librarian discussed what type of outdoor sign might be obtained, whether it was important to have the capacity to alter its wording on demand, and whether it needed to be out by the road or near the door. The town's electronic sign has been used for publicizing specific events. It seems that making the hours more visible would be helpful.

The sandwich board can be used to display the hours out front, as a stopgap measure until something else may be put in place.

Librarian Director's Report:

Sarah Spira is working on getting prices for computers. The next step is following up with Lisa Hart and Deborah Jurist to verify the process for making a large purchase, including securing approval through the SelectBoard, if appropriate.

She has obtained from Gary Lamberton the specs for computers to be purchased through the vendor used by the Town of Groton and is comparing them with what can be obtained from Best Buy. She believes that she can obtain equipment that will meet the library's needs by purchasing off-the-shelf computers from Best Buy and that she will be able to purchase more equipment with the same money than would be obtainable from the Town of Groton's vendor. She hopes to complete the purchase before the next trustees meeting.

A tech volunteer has assessed the library's WiFi capability and provided a report to the librarian that maps the strength of the signal in various locations within the building, highlighting places where the signal does not work at all. She will follow up with Gary Lamberton, the Town's computer person, sharing the report. The tech volunteer has made recommendations that the library upgrade to commercial equipment, as the current equipment does not have the capacity for the amount of usage it is receiving. To install a new system would probably be \$1,500.

Wayne Knott asks whether we should try to install the new computers and the new WiFi system at the same time.

This topic will be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

Tomorrow there will be a volunteer meeting at 11:00 a.m. to discuss scheduling volunteer support for the summer.

In the continuing education component, the librarian has just completed the circulation development course and is enrolled in the reference course to begin in July. She is working on applying circulation stats to managing the library's various collections. As an example, the DVD collection has just been refreshed based upon usage stats which highlighted DVDs that had low levels of usage.

The librarian has determined not to go forward in applying for the CLif Rural Literacy Grant this year because the Baldwin library is applying for that grant and she would rather not compete with a nearby library. She will, nonetheless, go through the application process with Jennie Gais as an exercise in order to be better prepared for making another grant application.

Sarah Spira has been in touch with the Northeast Parks Regional Operations Manager so that they can keep apprised of each other's schedules and upcoming events. She will be meeting soon with the new Park Interpreter at the Groton Nature Center, which opens on June 11.

Sarah Spira and Wayne Knott met with Holly Ferris, who is the 4H coordinator for several counties. They will be scheduling an informational session at the library to see if there is interest in opening a 4H chapter in Groton.

The Health Department has been another collaborator. They came recently to talk about ticks. In May they will be talking about hot weather preparedness and in June will be coming back to talk about poultry safety.

Sarah Spira has received an invitation from the SelectBoard to participate as a committee member in the Fall Foliage planning committee. She would be interested in having a trustee participate with her on the committee.

The theme of the summer reading program is “all together now.” What that means is that projects will be focused around community and civic engagement. There will be an activity about good citizenship which involves distributing a bingo card that lists some 25 activities that can be identified on the card. Completed bingo cards will entitle the holder to a raffle ticket.

Over the course of the summer, she hopes to get the sandbox painted and to have a set of bean bag toss games made.

There will be a program in June in which Sarah Spira will lay out and explain the summer activities.

She is continuing to work with Steve Hart on a summer concert series. She has looked at the community hall as a backup.

She hopes to have activities for all ages over the course of the summer.

We are included in the next round of Palace App testing, which is an online application that accesses materials, offered through the Vermont Department of Libraries.

Friends' Report

No information was received from Anne Hatch.

Photography Policy

Everyone has signed the original. Copies will be made for the manuals.

Miscellaneous

Jennie Gaiss is working on getting the engraved librarian sign updated.

Wayne Knott is working on the picnic table.

Public Comments

Michael Gaiss discussed a USDA grant opportunity – the Community Connect Grant – which is intended to identify and address the rural need for broadband access. The total grant would be \$1,000,000.00. NEK Broadband has focused on Groton because of our demographics. Securing the grant will be a competitive process. One of the requirements of the application is identification of a community setting that is accessible to the public 7 days a week and heated. If awarded, the grant provides a percentage of the funds to be earmarked for this community center. The community center would have to be maintained for a period of time of up to three years. It is possible that the library building could serve as the community center. If the library is receptive to being the community center, the zone covered by the proposed broadband could be extended to include the library.

This topic may form the basis of a specially-called meeting of the trustees prior to the next regular meeting, should any decision regarding this opportunity need to be made prior to the grant application deadline.

Adjournment:

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

The next regular meeting is June 8, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Evans, Secretary