

MINUTES
West Tisbury Library Board of Trustees
Thursday, June 11, 2009
at the West Tisbury Public Library

In Attendance

Trustees: Hal Garneau, Melissa Hackney, Linda Hearn, Hermine Hull, Ginny Jones, Dan Waters

Director: Beth Kramer

Public: None

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

Minutes

Ginny Jones moved that the minutes from the meeting of April 30, 2009 be approved as submitted. Dan Waters seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with the abstention of Mr. Waters, who was not present at that meeting.

No Friends being present, there was no Friends Report.

Librarian's Report

Beth Kramer reported a 12% year-over-year increase in patron visits (up 687); a 19% increase in circulation; an increase of 50% in library programs (whose attendees are up 162%); and an increase in total patron activity of 8%. She said there are four new summer shelvers, including two young adults. There has been a great deal of outreach in the past two weeks with Mother Goose on the Loose in the Oak Bluffs and Vineyard Haven libraries, and the Summer Reading Program outreach in the Charter School and West Tisbury School. Paul Karasik has designed this year's Summer Reading t-shirt. Nelia Decker has recorded her second MVTV program in the "Nelia's Picks" series.

Beth reported that with one staff member absent on extended medical leave, the staffing budget is underspent approaching the end of the fiscal year. Ginny moved that the board approve paying overtime for the Director (time she has been putting in anyway), overtime for staff needed to fill in for the sick employee, and additional pay for staff work on the library web site. The motion was seconded by Hal Garneau, who noted that employees should be fairly compensated for their work. The motion passed unanimously. Ginny suggested that a copy of each month's Librarian's Report be forwarded to the Finance Committee, so that they may be continually reminded of the steadily increasing public demand for library services.

Beth reminded trustees of the upcoming Trustee Orientation with Cheryl Bryan on Wednesday, June 17th at 5:30 p.m. at the Vineyard Haven Public Library. Also, there is a Friends Gathering Thursday, June 18th, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Beth circulated a copy of assistant director Colleen Morris's program schedule titled "Starship Adventure @ Your Library."

Director Review

Linda Hearn distributed copies of the annual review for the Director. Hermine Hull moved to approve it, and Ginny seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.

Day Change

Citing conflict with his work schedule, Hal moved that the board change its meeting day to the second Tuesday of each month, at 7 p.m. Ginny seconded the motion. Hermine noted that trustee meetings were traditionally held on Tuesdays for many years prior to the more recent Thursday date. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Bylaw Changes

Noting inconsistencies between Library Bylaws and the current board practice of electing a vice-chairperson, and also that there has been discussion of establishing the permanent position of treasurer, Dan suggested that the Bylaws be re-worded to incorporate these positions along with a description of their duties.

Hal recommended that the description of treasurer be kept as simple as possible, and that the duties be more in the nature of oversight rather than of bookkeeper. Beth said she envisioned the treasurer to be a person against whom the Director might bounce ideas for grants, planning, and future financing, and who is comfortable learning about these things. "A second pair of eyes," she said, would always be welcome. At the moment, the person who most closely fulfills this function is the Town Accountant, who however has many other responsibilities.

Dan said he would formulate and circulate proposed wording for bylaw changes at least ten days before the July board meeting, in accordance with current requirements for bylaw revisions. Melissa moved that the board appoint Hal as acting treasurer until the bylaw modifications take effect and a treasurer may be formally elected. Ginny seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Computer Policy

Dan led a discussion of a proposed library policy for "Provision of New Technology for Public Use." However, it soon became evident that the wording in question needed to be organized into: 1) policy, 2) staff procedure, 3) rules of patron conduct, and 4) disclaimer of library responsibility for loss of privacy, property, or innocence. Melissa said she would work with Beth to help make these distinctions. Hal said he would research the on-screen agreement currently required of patrons by the Vineyard Haven Public Library.

No vote was taken. Discussion of computer policy, as well as the Patriot Act policy, were tabled till the July meeting.

Volunteer Committee

Beth recommended that further work be done outside the meeting before discussion of volunteers is brought before the board.

Committees

Linda said that traditionally the chair would appoint committees to cover: Programming, Fund-raising, Personnel, Maintenance, Art, and the Budget. In the general discussion which ensued, it was agreed that there is no need at present for a Programming committee, and that the Fund-raising Committee work would be taken up when the library foundation takes shape. Ginny and

Linda will continue to serve as the Personnel committee. Hermine will continue to serve as the Maintenance committee. Leslie Baker and Hermine will continue to serve as the Art committee. The Budget committee will consist of Ginny and the treasurer.

Town E-Mail Regulations

In the spirit of a gentle reminder, Ginny distributed copies of the town's "E-Mail Policy Under the Open Meeting Law and the Public Records Law," which cautions members of governmental bodies against communicating via e-mail in ways that might constitute unlawful deliberation.

Long-Term Goals

Dan opened a discussion of long-term library goals, this time focusing on the idea of a library foundation. This concept has been the subject of general conversation for some time, most recently at the February workshop led by Cheryl Bryan of SEMLS. With a new board in place, Dan said, it might be time to make the first concrete steps in the direction of forming a library foundation that would establish, fund, and administer an endowment fund and a capital improvements fund.

Melissa, whose law practice work gives her considerable experience and expertise in the field of non-profit foundations, asked the board to consider several questions: What would this foundation hope to accomplish? Are there known donors who would contribute to the foundation who would not otherwise contribute? Does the board have some idea of how the foundation's board would be constituted (how many members, and which individuals)? She said that some foundations incorporate a two-tiered structure in which there are perhaps seven administrative (working) board members, and a larger number of advisory (casually connected) members. She recommended that the membership incorporate considerable "overlap" between the trustees and the foundation, to assure firm control of finances.

Noting that it can take many months to establish 501(c)3 status, Melissa said that in the meanwhile she would research Island foundations, especially library foundations, and help to draft articles and bylaws. She asked her fellow trustees to spend the next few weeks identifying possible foundation members. Ginny suggested that Beth, with her constant exposure to summer patrons, might be in a good position to help compile a list.

Correspondence

Linda distributed copies of a letter she had received from the American Library Association. The intent of the letter was unclear, and no action was taken.

A motion to adjourn, duly seconded, was made at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dan Waters
Clerk