

Pawlet Public Library  
Meeting of Board of Trustees

MINUTES

April 9, 2024

Present: Trustees in attendance: Harley Cudney, Grace Larson, Kathryn Lawrence, Joni Lee, Lauren Herbert

Community Members:

Adelle Santwire, Linda Lynton, Lyndsi Barnes, Sue LaPorte, Eve Schaub, Cori Rail, Am Wilt, Ruth Lampi, Elizabeth Gibson, Linda Welch, Janine Saub, Carol Schreawetre, Pence T Showltz, Joane Van Metor, Robert L Shoenemann, Martha Shoenemann, Rhonda Schlanger, Bob Herbert, Hannah Herbert, Harry Van Meter, Martin Kravitt, PEGTV

5:31 Call to order

Kathryn reads the operating norms.

Public Comment:

- Grace: There was a question raised last meeting about how the Board “feels” about what is going on, there was no response. She personally felt put off by the wording – she does not “feel” good about everything going on, but stands by the fact that the Board made a very though out, very hard decision, and stands by it.
- Joni: The Board came to a unanimous decision that evening, it was carefully weighed out, very carefully done, she was not pleased with the decision but it was the right decision. She would make the same decision again. We are all happy to have community dialogue and opinion regarding this.
- Ruth – do you feel confident that you have all the information needed from sources you trust, the decisions made were not based on information from only one party, was there a firm consensus?
- Joni – Yes. It was an entire grouping of facts, it was not flippant or based on one fact. It was very grounded in multiple sources. It was definitely not one person pushing to make a decision, it was four individuals discussing this for hours about the best way to move forward, and this was the decision that we made.
- Rhonda – What processes were followed? In regards to performance review and feedback?
- Sue asks why questions such as this are not answered.
- Rhonda asks why some questions are answered but not others.
- Harley points out that this is an open comment period, any comments are welcome but questions are not required to be answered.
- Sue wants to ask questions.
- Lauren wants to answer questions. This is a public forum.
- Harley responds that it is not a public forum, it is a Board meeting, with room for public comment.
- Kathryn reiterates that the Board was advised not to answer questions.
- Sue – has discovered that the library has paid Kupferer’s bill (about \$3,500) and the town has paid Merrill Bent by the town, about \$7,000 in total combined.
- Carol – if we can’t answer these questions now then when can we?

- Harley – when legal action is concluded.
- Joanne: regarding online book business, she is concerned that it is being done by one person who receives a commission, she would like it to be done by a committee.
- Harley points out that these are rare books only, by donation.

5:46 Public Comment ends

Approval of minutes:

January regular meeting, February special meeting, March regular meeting:

- Joni motions to approve, Kathryn seconds, motion carries.

Agenda – Harley adds comment re: book sale to agenda, Lauren adds discussion of legal fees/payments.

- Grace motions to approve, Joni seconds, motion passes.

Secretary's Report – nothing to report.

Treasurer's Report – nothing to report.

Director's Report – Adelle gives a comprehensive regarding library usage and programs.

- Harley asks about circulation reporting regarding hard copies vs. electronic – Adelle will look into it.
- Joanne asks if there is a summer reading program, Adelle reports that she and Nina are working on it.
- Joni makes a motion to approve Adelle buying a new light vacuum for the library (limit \$600), Lauren seconds, motion carries.
- Joni will check with her vacuum purveyor to see if they have a good deal.
- Kathryn motions to ask library staff to sell old safe, get rid of old printer, Lauren seconds, motion passes.

No committee reports.

Unfinished Business:

Vt Dept. of libraries will no longer travel for meetings, but is open to doing training virtually, hopefully with board members from other libraries. We are looking at the first week of May, probably 2 hours on an afternoon.

- Cori asks for a synopsis of this.
- Lauren and Harley report that they have taken useful online classes/videos.
- Harley has emailed the Board generic rules procedure, we will discuss this next meeting.
- Lyndsi – this will involve changing the Library Bylaws, as “Rules and Procedures” are not separate from Bylaws.
- Grace will include a draft “Rules and Procedures” as an attachment to next meeting's agenda.
- Director Hiring:
  - Harley – we need to staff the library in a sustainable way. We need to move forward. Harley suggests we need to select 2 board members to lead the job search.

- Lauren maintains that she is not comfortable with this.
- The Board will have a special meeting in the weeks before the next regular meeting to discuss this.
  - Joni reiterates that we need to do the hiring process and policy review in tandem.
  - Sue wants to know if this meeting will be tonight or in future.
    - Harley states that it will be a future meeting.
    - Harley shows a list of critical documents/policies from NYS Public Libraries as a reference.
    - Joanne – NYPL is different from VT
    - Grace and Lauren will meet and assemble an action item list based on reference from VT Dept. of Libraries
    - Lauren points out that current Bylaws and Policies are on the library's website.
- Booksale:
  - Book sorting will start on 4/23
  - Clean up day will be 4/18
  - Joanne – Maybe add a sorting day on a weekend so more people can participate?
  - Linda asks if the library has a special collection?
  - Lauren states that the library has to have a policy re: donations.
  - Marty asks about rare book sales.
  - Lauren asks about rare book sales.
    - Kathryn affirms that the library gets a monthly check for books that have been sold online, she has spoken to a library in Bennington that does the same thing, and concur that they get more money from these books than they would if placed in the book sale.
    - Lauren – are books itemized and what is the accounting?
    - Joanne asks this same question.
    - Lauren – wants to create a “Friends of the Library” to deal with this.
    - Kathryn – Jano tried to do this, there was no interest.
    - Eve – asks if all the money going to the library? Harley answers No, there is a commission for selling online (packaging, researching, etc.).
    - Lyndsi – Book donations should only be sold at the library sale.
    - Lauren – why can't we just sell online after the book sale?
    - Monica – always looks forward to the book sale, patrons of the sale should have first pick, not online buyers.
    - Linda – The library needs to keep rare books and have special collections that will bring scholars to visit, she sees nothing to respect in the current collection.
  - Lauren makes a motion to make a requirement for 5 column accounting (title, copywrite, gross, cost, net), Joni seconds, motion carries.
- Harley asks if we can table discussion of Kupferer payment until next meeting, all agree.
- Cori Rail states that Grace and Joni had no right to speak as members of the public.
- Eve states that there needs to be a policy for non-book donations as well.

- 7:40 Joni motions to go into executive session, Kathryn seconds, all agree.
- 10:01 Harley leaves executive session.
- 10:25 Joni motions to leave executive session, Kathryn seconds, all agree.
- No decisions were made.
- 10:26 Grace motions to adjourn, Kathryn seconds, meeting adjourned.

Next meeting: May 7, 2024, 5:30pm at the Pawlet Library

Dated April 14, 2024, Grace Larson, Secretary