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Durham Public Library  
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, March 9, 2023  
6:45 PM  
Oyster River Room of Durham Public Library

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In Attendance: Robin Glasser, Martie Gooze, Nancy Lambert, Erik Waddell (arrived at 7:08 PM), Susan Wagner

Board Alternates: Kam Damtoft, Kim Sweetman

Absent: Charlotte Ramsay, Andrew Sharp

Observers/Guests: Beth Newkirk, Friends Liaison; Rand O'Brien, DPL Board of Trustees Candidate; John Carroll, UNH Professor Emeritus, Natural Resources and the Environment Department, Durham Agricultural Commission member, and dedicated library patron

Library Staff: Library Director Sheryl Bass; Head of Adult Services Jessica Ross; Head of Youth Services Lisa Kleinmann

1. Call to order
  - a. Chair Robin Glasser called the meeting to order at 6:46 PM.
    - i. There were no remote attendees.
2. Chair appointment of Alternate Trustee(s) to serve as voting member(s)
  - a. Chair Robin Glasser appointed Alternate Trustees Kim Sweetman and Kam Damtoft as voting Trustees in the absence of Charlotte Ramsay and Andrew Sharp.
3. Approval of meeting agenda
  - a. Martie Gooze moved to approve the meeting agenda. Kim Sweetman seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.
4. Public comments/public correspondence
  - a. None
5. Guest John Carroll – Pollinator Gardens
  - a. John provided an overview of his personal experience creating a pollinator garden on the site of an old vegetable garden. Cathy Neal, Professor Emerita and UNH Extension State Specialist, as well as both Pawtuckaway Nursery in Lee,

Approved 4/13/23

and Wentworth Greenhouses in Dover worked with the Carrolls on the project. Northern New England tolerant perennial species were purchased from Prairie Nursery in Wisconsin. Wentworth Greenhouses installed shrubs, among them dogwoods, buttonbush, spicebush, and cone-shaped hydrangea. Plants were spaced densely to deter weed growth. Wentworth will continue to assist in the garden expansion again in May '23.

The Carrolls do not rake their leaves in the Fall. By Spring some are rotted, and minor raking is done. They have employed members of the UNH rowing team to rake. All food waste is kept on the property and used as compost.

John explained that a strong pollinator system contains plants, insects, and birds. All plants should be native to Northern New England. Durham alone has 230 species of bees! It takes about 3 years to establish a garden. The first-year effort is in the roots. The second and third years bring an increase in plant size. Doug Tallamy's books on pollinator gardens (the library owns 3 titles) are an excellent resource. He is a professor at the University of Delaware and is very accessible to the public. John uses the University of Maine soil testing services. John suggests that the Library budget for good signage, and that plantings be clearly labelled, so visitors don't think some of them are weeds.

## 6. Reports from Department Heads

### a. Jessica Ross – Head of Adult Services

- i. Jess has been Head of Adult Services for the past 5 years. Her time is focused on collections, programming, and services. A priority is to maintain the core collection and keep areas up to date where information changes more rapidly (e.g., technology, science). Services have increased. Staff are checking out about 1,000 physical items/month more than before COVID (about a 20% increase). There are 6,335 active patrons, and about 400 patrons are being added per year. Many programs are offered both remotely and in person, and staff are experimenting with other activities to bring folks back into the library building, e.g., monthly art exhibits, Mahjong.

### b. Lisa Kleinmann – Head of Youth Services

- i. Lisa has been Head of Youth Services for the past 14 years. She and her two part-time staff offer lots of programming for all age groups, birth through teen. Usage did not decline much during COVID when staff put together bags of materials for patron home use. Since COVID, families have been clamoring for in person programming. After school programs are strong, and today there were about 50 people at story time. There is a strong teen advisory group. Attendance at Legos Club averages around 30. UNH sorority APO and high school volunteers are especially helpful. There is a lot of cooperation among the 3 libraries (Durham, Lee, Madbury). Lisa also coordinates a Seacoast Youth Librarians group. She

is excited about the upcoming implementation of the Family Literacy Area project in her department.

- c. When asked whether they lacked anything to do their jobs, Lisa and Jess both expressed concerns about the need for additional staffing and funding.
- d. Chair Robin Glasser expressed the Board's appreciation for all their hard work on behalf of the Durham community.

7. Approval of February 9, 2023 meeting minutes

The February 9 meeting consisted of both public and non-public session minutes.

- a. Regarding the public session minutes, Nancy Lambert requested the following two changes:
  - i. Item 12.c.ii. Removal of the word 'stylistic'.
  - ii. Item 16. Removal of the parenthetical phrase 'see my handwritten notes'.
- b. Martie Gooze moved to approve the public session minutes, as amended. Erik Waddell seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.
- c. Nancy Lambert asked about the sealing of the non-public session minutes. The February 9 non-public session minutes are not sealed since they do not meet any of the qualifications for sealing non-public session minutes.
- d. Erik Waddell moved to approve the non-public session minutes; Martie Gooze seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.

8. Friends' Report – Beth Newkirk

- a. March is Friends membership month. Members set up an information table in the lobby to inform the public about the Friends group, and there is an ongoing bulletin board display in the lobby. About 16 people signed up to assist with Friends activities such as used book sorting and cookie baking.
- b. The next meeting is on March 15 at 1:30 PM in the Heritage Room. Everyone is invited.

9. Treasurer's Report — Erik Waddell

- a. See Treasurer's Report
  - i. Updated CD values for February were not available in time for the report.
  - ii. The restricted donations of \$40 were for children's books.
  - iii. The Town of Durham was paid \$18,043.43 for FY '22 expenses that exceeded the Library's original '22 budget. Funds were transferred from various Trustee checking accts depending on the nature of the expenditure.
- b. Nancy Lambert asked about an analysis of the past year's (22/23) annual appeal campaign. Following the closure of the campaign on March 31, 2023, Susan Wagner, Erik Waddell, and Chair Robin Glasser will prepare an analysis from records kept in the appeals database (Little Green Light).
- c. Martie Gooze moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Kim Sweetman seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

#### 10. Director's Report –Sheryl Bass

- a. See Director's Report. Recently completed noteworthy items include:
  - i. The American Red Cross presented a two-part program on March 6/7, "Be Red Cross Ready!", in observance of American Red Cross Month.
  - ii. The vacant Library Technologist position was posted on March 3. The posting closes on March 17, and interviews will begin on March 20.
  - iii. Library Director Sheryl Bass met with Town Administrator Todd Selig on February 10 for a 'check-in' meeting. Sheryl expressed concern with him that we need a full-time IT person. She is concerned about maintaining continuity in the position. Administrator Selig expressed his delight in the services being offered to the community by the Library.
  - iv. State Librarian Michael York met with the directors of Durham, Lee and Madbury libraries on February 26 to share his knowledge of cooperatives and consortia in New Hampshire.
  - v. DPL has started a Mahjong Club which meets Thursdays from 1:30-3:00 PM. Thank you to Friend and Library patron Carol Ehlen for her assistance in getting the group up and running.
  - vi. The Library acquired about 600 free COVID tests from the State to distribute free to community members.

#### 11. Personnel & Policy Committee – Robin Glasser

- a. The Committee recommended a 2% COLA for all Library staff, to be funded by the Trustees via the Library budget.
  - i. Erik Waddell again expressed some concern about the Library continually being asked to fund initiatives when we are spending more of the Trustee funds than we are taking in via fund raising, even though the Trustee budget contains some additional resources.
  - ii. Robin Glasser moved to accept the recommendation for a 2% COLA for all staff, in the amount of \$5727.72, to be taken from the Trustees Unrestricted Operations Fund. Kim Sweetman seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
- b. Recommend performance bonus for Director
  - i. Chair Robin Glasser moved to accept the Committee's recommended performance bonus of \$1,000 from the Unrestricted Operations Fund over and above the 2% COLA for Director Sheryl Bass, for her outstanding work in 2022. Erik Waddell seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
  - ii. Jess Ross, Lisa Kleinmann, and Kelly Montagano will be awarded an extra personal day at Director Sheryl Bass's discretion for their work and dedication in 2022.
- c. Follow-up to Nancy Lambert's query regarding employee behavior outside the workplace.
  - i. Chair Robin Glasser corresponded with Todd Selig about Item F.13 of the Library Personnel Policy (page 8) which states the following:

“All employees shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a professional manner, respectful of other employees and the public, as evidenced by the following. Each employee shall, at a minimum:

13. not accept, engage in, or be associated with any activity, employment, or self-employment which shall constitute a conflict of interest, or reflect discredit upon the employee, the Library or the Town of Durham, or adversely affect the proper performance of the employee’s duties in the Library’s service;”

Administrator Selig feels that this covers the issue. He also mentioned that working for the Town does not take away the employee’s first amendment right to freedom of speech as a private citizen.

12. Technology Committee

- a. Technologist Andy Clarke was able to install 2 new computers before leaving his position.

13. Special Projects Committee – Progress report on garden area – Nancy Lambert

- a. Chair Robin Glasser sent out the one proposal received thus far, from Seacoast Plant Specialists in Rochester, NH. One of the originally engaged companies declined to bid, saying they are landscapers, not designers. Nancy Lambert will try to locate two more companies from which to obtain proposals.

14. Approval of Director’s Goals for 2023

- a. the Director’s updated version of her 2023 goals, as revised at February’s Trustee meeting, were accepted by consensus.

15. Thanks and appreciation to Nancy Lambert for serving as Trustee & Kam Damtoft for serving as Alternate

- a. Chair Robin Glasser thanked both Nancy Lambert for serving as Trustee, and Kam Damtoft for serving as Alternate Trustee. Nancy will continue to be involved with the garden area special project until it is completed.

16. Adjournment

- a. Martie Goose made a motion to adjourn. Erik Waddell seconded. All in favor. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Future meetings 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month **6:45 pm**. Apr. 13, May 11, Jun. 8, Jul. 13.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Wagner  
Secretary