



Durham Public Library  
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**Durham Public Library**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**  
Thursday, July 13, 2023  
6:45 p.m.  
Oyster River Room of Durham Public Library

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In Attendance: Robin Glasser, Charlotte Ramsay, Andrew Sharp, Kim Sweetman, Erik Waddell, Susan Wagner

Board Alternates: Martie Gooze, Callie Langton

Absent: Rand O'Brien

Observers/Guests: Mary Lou Campbell (Friends Liaison); James Oshima (Eagle Scout Candidate)

Library Staff: Library Director Sheryl Bass

1. Call to order
  - a. Chair Robin Glasser called the meeting to order at 6:47 p.m. All attendees were physically present at the meeting.
2. Chair appointment of Alternate Trustee to serve as voting member
  - a. Chair Robin Glasser appointed Alternate Trustee Callie Langton a voting Trustee in Rand O'Brien's absence.
3. Approval of meeting agenda
  - a. Charlotte Ramsay moved to approve the meeting agenda, as amended below. Kim Sweetman seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.
    - i. Meeting day in header changed from Wednesday to Thursday.
4. Presentation of Eagle Scout Garden Project
  - a. Chair Robin Glasser introduced James Oshima, an Eagle Scout candidate from Troop #154 in Durham, NH, who made a detailed presentation about assisting the Library with the planning and implementation of perennial gardens as his Eagle Scout project. The proposal includes the creation of three pollinator gardens on the street-facing side of the Library building, at an estimated cost of \$1,370. Several questions were asked by Trustees, including:
    - i. Is there a backup plan to dig the soil if it can't be done by hand, e.g., DPW? Not at this time;

- ii. What additional preparation of the soil would be done? Six inches of compost is estimated, plus mulch;
    - iii. What maintenance is required for the perennials? James suggested 3 volunteer groups as maintenance options – Troop #154, Oyster River Middle School’s Service Palooza, or Oyster River High School’s National Honor Society Chapter. In addition, the significantly reduced cost of the proposed project over the commercial proposal received will allow funds to maintain the gardens over the years. Mary Lou Campbell mentioned that the Friends group could also participate in the maintenance of the gardens;
    - iv. Will the types of plants proposed thrive in shady areas? Yes, James mentioned several options for plants for shady areas. Trustees also mentioned several plants that thrive in shady areas.
  - b. Charlotte Ramsay moved to approve James’ proposal, and to allocate up to \$2,000 for the project. Seconded by Andrew. All were in favor. Motion passed.
  - c. Director Sheryl Bass will be the point of contact for James on the project since she represents the Town and operates under the Town’s tax ID number.
5. Public comments/Public Correspondence
- a. There was no public correspondence to discuss.
6. Approval of June 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes
- a. Charlotte Ramsay moved to approve the minutes without modification. Erik Waddell seconded. Six Trustees were in favor; Kim Sweetman abstained since she did not attend the meeting. Motion passed.
7. Treasurer’s Report for June 2023 — Erik Waddell
- a. See Treasurer’s Report.
    - i. The Durham Garden Club donated \$608.71 to the Library. While the Garden Club placed no restrictions on the use of the funds, it was suggested that they be deposited into the Unrestricted Funds account to be used in support of the Pollinator Garden Project.
    - ii. Charlotte Ramsay asked about \$925 in restricted donations back in March, and whether they should actually be unrestricted. The funds were donated in memory of Doug Wheeler, and at this time they have not been restricted for any particular use. Erik will move these donations to the Unrestricted Fund.
  - b. Kim Sweetman moved to accept the June Treasurer’s Report. Charlotte Ramsay seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
8. Friends’ Report – Mary Lou Campbell
- a. Holding a Children’s book sale in July has been deferred to a later date since there is so much other activity this month.

- b. There is a cart of books for sale in the Library lobby. The public seems more responsive to having a smaller selection of titles from which to choose.
- c. In response to Mary Lou's question about the timing of the next Trustees' Annual Appeal, Chair Robin Glasser mentioned that the Trustees made an earlier decision to stop actively advertising its fund drive in January so that the Friends can schedule their fund raising in the March time frame.
- d. The Friends have a new logo to be used on all their correspondence.
- e. A book sale is being planned for September.

9. Director's Report –Sheryl Bass

- a. See Director's Report. Recently completed noteworthy items include:
  - i. The Town has purchased a new EV charger for the library. The unit is consistent with industry standards and with other units in Durham, and it will be a 'pay for service' charger;
  - ii. The Library experienced water pouring into the basement on July 5 caused by heavy rains. DPW has taken steps to correct the situations causing the flooding, including caulking around conduit openings (completed), cleaning the gutters (completed), adding gutter extensions to better direct the rain water, and leveling the point of water convergence at the foundation level;
  - iii. The Youth Services summer reading program participation is on pace with last year's participation. A Foam Party in conjunction with Lee and Madbury was wildly successful with ~400 attending;
  - iv. The music at the Summer concerts has been excellent, but attendance has been hit and miss. Rain and heat seem to be affecting attendance;
  - v. The Library Assistant for Programming and Outreach position has been posted and closes on July 28. Interim Head of Adult Services Audra Lewis is settled in and has been an enormous help. Substitute Library Assistants are now trained and picking up shifts;
  - vi. Sheryl commended the Library staff for their willingness to go the extra mile this summer during periods of short staffing. Everyone has taken on a bit more work when needed and invested themselves in increasing their skills.

10. Approval of Job Descriptions

- a. Programming & Outreach Assistant.
  - i. Susan Wagner moved to accept the Programming and Outreach Assistant job description, as amended. Kim Sweetman seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
    - 1. Suggestions included:
      - a. Remove 'with' in first bullet point under Programming;
      - b. Remove the 'ings' from the first bullet point on page 2, e.g., 'answer', 'address', 'assist'.

- b. Assistant Library Director.
  - i. Charlotte Ramsay moved to accept the Assistant Library Director job description, as amended, with a few punctuation changes. Andrew Sharp seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

#### 11. Discussion of Annual Appeal

- a. Susan Wagner walked the group through Annual Appeal statistics from Little Green Light over the last 3-4 years. Discussion ensued about how to reach additional residents who have not donated to the Library. Suggestions included:
  - i. Use an A-Z Database subscription again to create a list of new Durham residents to solicit. This approach was somewhat successful for the 2022-2023 Appeal. Alternatively, request the use of Town or school records;
  - ii. In conjunction with physical mailings to residents, have more of a web-based presence for advertising the Appeals, including social media sites, and the Library web site and electronic newsletter;
  - iii. Make it easy to donate. Provide PayPal (already provided on the DPL website) and Venmo for online donations. Add a QR code to collateral directing folks to these donation sites;
  - iv. Make sure the solicitation letter answers the question 'what's in it for me' for all demographics...families, seniors, singles;
  - v. Solicit known community members to underwrite matching grants for individual donations;
  - vi. Approach local institutions like River Woods, Bagdad Woods, Church Hill, Brookdale, and Harmony Homes, for donations;
  - vii. Include a monetary goal in the solicitation letter;
  - viii. Advertise accepting charitable bequests through estate planning;
  - ix. Create an annual plan that takes into account Giving Tuesday, NH Gives, the DPL Annual Appeal, and other special 'giving' opportunities;
  - x. Create short videos for social media posting of Trustee and patron testimonials about why they love or donate to the library.;
  - xi. Special projects to be funded by donations will no longer be included in the letter.
- b. Callie Langton and Kim Sweetman will draft a letter for the '23-'24 Annual Appeal, aiming for a first draft for the August Trustees meeting.

#### 12. Adjournment

- a. Erik Waddell made a motion to adjourn. Charlotte Ramsay seconded. All in favor. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Future meetings 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month **6:45 pm**. August 9, September 13.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Wagner  
Secretary