

KEENE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
TUESDAY OCT 27, 2020 – 5:00 PM

The meeting was called to order by President Alexander at 5:09 pm.

The Statement of Authority for conducting the meeting telephonically was read.

Roll call attendance was taken, present were: Jennifer Alexander, Paul Henkel, Ken Jue, Kathleen Packard, Judy Putnam, Bill Stroup, Kathleen Kennedy Burke, Jane Pitts Carl Jacobs, Chuck Redfern, and as a guest until confirmed as a new trustee, Yves Gakunde. Chuck Prigge joined the meeting after it was called to order due to technical difficulties.

Library Director Marti Fiske was also in attendance.

Motion - The September minutes were reviewed – Carl Jacobs moved that they be accepted with Judy Putnam seconding. Passed unanimously.

FINANCE: The treasurers report was not sent. Ken moved to accept the following gifts: an anonymous one for \$100, 2 gifts in memory of Rita Guarino, and \$250 from the Mason's. (Sec'y note: Mason's gift had been approved in September.) The motion was seconded by Paul and passed unanimously.

Ken reported that the committee has looked at and is recommending an increase in the non-resident library pass fees, which are currently \$30 for six months and \$50 for a full year. New proposed rates would go to \$35 for 6 months and \$60 for a full year. There are currently about 56 with the half year pass, and 330 for the annual. These rates have not been raised for 20 years and are still below the library assessment per taxpayer in Keene. Passes allow individuals access to all but a few streaming services limited to Keene residents. Discussion ensued – there was some concern about the timing of this during already financial hardships during COVID Ken's motion was amended by Chuck, and seconded. Motion to raise rates for non-resident cards effective July 1, 2021 passed.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS: (Engineering report and conclusion attached)

Committee did not meet. Drawing from the attached report, Paul summarized that the engineering firm methodology studying Cohen Hall indicated that the sound level recommendation had been exceeded. The city attorney will meet with the general contractor about the need for some remediation – origin of issue unclear – could be architect, sub-contractor, HVAC Co or the installer. Insurance will also be reviewed.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

No report

LONG RANGE PLANNING

No report. This will be renamed the Strategic Planning Committee and will include Jennifer, Chuck Redfern, Chuck Prigge and Yves. They will launch in January.

FINE ARTS

Judy reported that Virginia Eskin has offered to do a virtual concert from Cohen Hall on November 7.

The piano which is overdue for tuning will be ready and a damp chaser installed later in the month. Concert details will be posted on the website/Cheshire TV.

POLICY:

The group met twice. They are working on the revised manual and gift policy. Kathleen Packard moved and Carl seconded, to amend the language in the Library Rules of Order #7 from “age 5” to “age 5 or over” .The motion passed.

FRIENDS OF THE KEENE PUBLIC LIBRARY

A reminder that there will be no spring Booksale, nor are books being collected in anticipation of any future sales yet. The Friends, who applied to present at the 100+ Women Who Care of Cheshire County, has been selected (3 out of 12 are drawn at random) do so at the group’s November meeting where they will compete with two other causes for a financial contribution. Jennifer wished to convey back to the Friends that we are thinking of them during this difficult period.

HORATIO COLONY

While the museum is not open during the pandemic, the preserve and trust land does. Director Anita Carroll-Weldon is retiring and an outdoor reception is being planned for her farewell.

CHESHIRE COUNTY LITERACY COMMITTEE

Independent research is reporting academic slide for many students as a result of the pandemic. Jennifer is anxious to reactivate this committee early next year in light of that and other ongoing needs.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Smoking area update – congregating is largely dissipated, with a few assembling on the sidewalk, which is public property. Marti is concerned about the staff – and feels they need team building and morale boost – the strain on staff this last year with the virus, unfilled vacant positions including the ass’t dir, and the adjustment to a new director has been hard. Marti is hoping they can set aside a day, or at least half a day to have an in-service training day with possible sessions on mindfulness, burn out and team building. This would be done in small groups or virtually if necessary, with trouble taken to make sure they could distance and still hear. Perhaps MFS could come in/speak on the challenges of COVID-19, the under-housed, public bathroom use and an update on services that they offer. A motion for expansion of Saturday hours by 1 hour was made by Kathleen P, seconded by Chuck and passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Chuck R reported that the existing sign on West St cannot be painted. We will wait to hear from Facilities and consider need for new sign, since campus is larger.

The November meeting will be held as usual but the December meeting will be pushed up a week to Dec 15th .

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted, Kathleen Kennedy Burke, Sec’y KPL Board of Trustees