

## Trustees of the Keene Public Library

Meeting February 25, 2025

Present: Trustees: Paul Henkel, Judy Putnam, Don Caruso, Hollie Seiler, Bill Stroup, Pam Russell Slack, Kathleen Packard, Karthik Gowda, Jane Pitts, Justin Somma and Sam Temple

Visitors: Journalism students from KSC Alana Perry, Lillian Hendel; Marti Fiske, Library Director and Susan Bloom, Assistant Library Director; Bobby Williams

The meeting was called to order by President Bill Stroup at 5:02.

Minutes: a motion was made to approve the minutes of the January 28, 2025 meeting by Karthik Gowda, and seconded by Pam Russell Slack. Judy Putnam noted that the annual donation from the Jacob Lichman Trust is restricted to the purchase of books. With that correction the minutes were approved unanimously.

### Committee Reports

FINANCE : the Treasurer received \$50 donations from Charles Prigge and Cameron Tease for the Rotary bookshelf; and a donation of \$60 from Elizabeth Friedman. Pam moved and Paul seconded the motion to accept the donations. The motion passed unanimously. Jane reported that \$325 of year end gifts from the Lipsky family was transferred and invested in the restricted Lipsky Book Fund.

The Treasurer has also received the annual NHCF Keene Public Library Endowment Fund distribution, this year it amounts to \$6,213.

The finance committee met with the new City Finance Director, Kari Chamberlain, and the Assistant Director, Robert Constable, to begin to formulate a plan for the City to include the Library Trustees' finances in their audit, at the direction of the new auditors for the City. For this year it was

decided that the Trustee Treasurer will submit to the finance department copies of our quarterly treasurer's reports, our bank statements, our cash flow spread sheets and monthly p-card documentation. At the end of the fiscal year we will review the process to determine if anything further needs to be done.

Bill asked the Finance Committee, and all the Trustees, to look at bylaws as regard to anything related to finance, as next month the Policy Committee will begin a review of the Trustee bylaws.

#### **BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS:**

Paul reported that three chairs in the lobby are being reupholstered.

In the Cohen Hall sound remediation project, an RFP has been issued, and Scott Martin invited possible vendors to view the room.

In the Lobby, there has been some leakage around a skylight. Brian, the facilities manager reported that there is ice over the skylight and the problem likely will go away as the ice melts. Marti said ice dams on the roof caused some leakage into the lobby and the recycling room. Minor damage was sustained. The theory is that leakage came through the HVAC system and skylight panes, and further investigation is ongoing.

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH** Amy Kraemer, Karthik and Kathleen have met and reviewed programs to identify where the committee can pitch in. Karthik is helping the Friends pull together their web site. He is working to shift website access to himself so that he can make changes to the site which has not been very usable since the person who designed it died.

#### **LONG RANGE PLANNING—no report**

**FINE ARTS** Judy reported that Ken Dassau of Marlow has offered the Library a giclee print of an illustration by Caldecott Award winning illustrator David Wiesner. The illustration was created for the cover of an edition of the NYT Children's Literature Supplement, and depicts children reading under a tree,

with falling leaves being pages from various books. Hollie Seiler moved to accept the gift, and Kathleen Packard seconded the motion. Mr Dassau has filled in the appropriate gift paperwork. The Trustees voted unanimously to accept the donation. The Fine Arts Committee will have it framed, and it will hang in the Youth Department.

**POLICY COMMITTEE** Kathleen presented a new Staff Membership in Organizations policy. Kathleen moved approval of the policy and Pam seconded. The new policy allows the Library to have institutional memberships in appropriate organizations, and lays out the process and criteria for such. It also provides guidelines for staff participation in organizations connected to their field of expertise. The motion to approve passed unanimously.

The Policy Committee will soon begin a review of trustee bylaws. Kathleen asked committees to review any part of the by-laws that may pertain to their committee and to make any suggestions for changes by March 11, the date of the next Policy Committee meeting.

**FRIENDS OF KPL** No report, Friends cancelled February meeting. Booksale will be the weekend of April 26.

**HORATIO COLONY** no report

**CHESHIRE LITERACY COALITION** no report

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT** The software, Encore, that the Library and Keene State College use for their joint catalog is ending in 2026. The two institutions have shared a joint catalog and borrowing privileges for 30 years. KPL and KSC are meeting to consider how to go forward. Times have changed, and all NH residents now have borrowing privileges at the College Library. Bill pointed out that a shared catalog is a special asset to anyone searching for material. Marti will keep the Trustees informed as plans moves forward. The Historical Society will also be included in the conversations, although not a part of Keene Link.

The City of Keene has new software for its website. The Library will stay a part of the City Website to see how well the new software works for us. But the Library uses the website differently and we may want to eventually create our own website.

Marti has begun the annual budget process with the City. She presented and reviewed the Revenue and Expense categories, noting the changes proposed for the FY26 budget. She is trying to keep the materials line at a flat level. Kathleen said she hopes that will be the case. A flat line budget for books is not holding the line and meeting the cost increases for materials.

The big change is the requested increase in Part-Time and Hourly staff. There have been budget deficits over the past two years which still have not fully been explained despite analysis by city and library staff.

To cover staffing needs usually met by part-time and hourly staff, full time staff have been used more on public service desks, which is inefficient use of their time and skills, and money. The City supports the increased requests, and we hope the increased budget lines will be approved in the FY26 budget.

Pam asked for assurance that this work was truly accurate and had been well documented, and Marti assured her that it had been reviewed by herself and the head of HR.

Pam moved to endorse the draft budget and Paul seconded. The vote to endorse the budget was unanimous. The FOP meeting to review the Library portion of the budget will be May 20.

OLD BUSINESS none

NEW BUSINESS The New Hampshire Library Association has communicated with libraries about pending legislation in the NH Legislature. Of particular concern is House Bill 143 with reference to trespassing. In its present form it would require a unanimous vote by a board to institute a no trespass order. That may not be fast enough in a threatening situation. HB 273 refers to parental access to library records of minor children. The age designated is of concern, as older teens might want their privacy.

Both bills are causing some concerns to libraries. Discussion followed. Pam suggested that it was more effective to register individual input on specific bills, than to write a letter from the Trustees as a whole.

A motion was made by Bill and seconded by Justin to move into executive session to discuss the minutes from the January 28, 2025 meeting concerning an RFP (RSA 91-A:3 is relevant statute) at 7:37. The motion was approved unanimously.

After returning to public session the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Judy Putnam

Acting Secretary