

Keene Public Library Board of Trustees
Meeting November 14, 2023
Miller Vincent Room 5:00 PM

Present: Trustees Bill Stroup, Paul Henkel, Pam Russell-Slack, Don Caruso (in at 5:30pm), Yves Gakunde, Kathleen Packard, Jane Pitts, Ritu Budakoti, Judith Putnam, Justin Somma, Marti Fiske (Library Director), Susan Bloom (Assistant Director), Bobby Williams (City Council Liaison), Jenna Henderson (Library Staff)

Absent: Kathleen Baer.

Bill Stroup called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Pam Russell-Slack motioned to approve the minutes from October 24, 2023, as presented. Paul Henkel seconded the motion. Kathleen Packard requested the change of the second sentence on the second page of the minute to change from: *“Bill said the subject of late fees for books and any item is under current discussion and he moved approval of the policy.”* to *“Bill said the subject of the late fees for books and any item is under current discussion, so we should make that discussion later. He moved approval of the policy.”* With this amendment, the board approved unanimously the October minutes.

LIBRARY STAFF - GUEST

Jenna Henderson, the Collection Development Librarian, has been in this new position for about a year and a half now but has been with the library for many years. Besides purchasing various books and DVDs for the adult collection, Jenna shared about various ongoing projects, including the library gear project, cataloging the gear items, working with local English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESL) classes on the world language collection (mainly using Amazon to buy books.)

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Judith Putnam mentioned that there are no donations to accept at this meeting. She continued to note that the Finance Committee will be meeting with Alan Stroshine – Edward Jones at 3:00 PM on January 9, 2024, to review the Trustees Portfolio, and all trustees are welcome to join the meeting and learn more.

The Finance Committee held an orientation for new Trustees, with Don Caruso and Pam Russell-Slack attending the orientation session to learn more about the trustees' responsibilities. Unfortunately, Kathleen Baer was unable to participate in the orientation.

As Gail Zacharia retired, there is a need to provide Amy Kraemer with a P-Card. This will allow Amy Cramer to make purchases that Gail made for the library. It was also recommended that once the new Librarian III/Head of Youth and Community Services is hired, this person will also get a P-Card to have two people in the Youth and Community Services department just in case one person is on vacation. Judith Putnam motioned to allow Amy Kraemer to have a Trustee P-

Card. The motion was seconded by Pam Russell-Slack and passed unanimously.

The last time the Non-Residents card fees policy was reviewed and updated was at the end of 2021. The new rates were set to \$35 for six months and \$60 for one year. Research from twelve other large New Hampshire libraries showed their rates at or near their per capita tax rate, with fees ranging from a low of \$50 to a high of \$200. Half of them had rates above their per capita tax support. Two libraries had a rate twice their tax support. One had a rate two and a half times their tax support. Some offered three-month cards, discounts for seniors, or discounts for veterans.

The Library Executive Team noted several nonresidents purchased library cards for using the Henkel Room because the six-month card paid was lower than the two-hour room rental. People also buy cards to access Makerspace. The Library Executive Team recommended new nonresident card fees be set at \$40 for six months and \$75 for 12 months, with seniors (62 years+) being charged \$65 for the year. Judith Putnam motioned that the Finance Committee recommend raising the nonresident library use fee to \$40 for six months and \$75 for the year, with seniors (62 years+) being charged \$65 for twelve months starting January 2024, with Pam Russell-Slack seconding the motion- a motion that passed unanimously.

Kathleen Packard mentioned that Keene's taxes are high and should not direct the decision to increase the library card fee. It was mentioned that most people coming to the library for children's programs are nonresidents and may need library cards. Pam Russell-Slack asked if some people stopped coming to the library because of the increase in the library card fees – The Library Director, Marti Fiske, responded that said all nonresidents have access to a home library so those who come to Keene have already determined that they can pay a few for additional services above what their own libraries provide.

For information, with the increase in the cost to replace library items, the borrowing policy - the replacement schedule will be reviewed and presented to the Library Trustees soon.

Judith Putnam continued and mentioned that traditionally, only the treasurer had access to the library's online bank account and made a motion to allow the Finance Chair access to Library Trustees' bank statements. This motion was seconded by Kathleen Packard and passed unanimously.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Nothing to report - The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 17, 2023.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Nothing to report: The Committee is in the process of recruiting new members. Ritu Budakoti recognized Kathleen Packard's effort in reviewing and updating the Outreach Policy as it will be instrumental in guiding the work of the outreach committee. The new Library Youth Director will be on the Outreach Committee.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

Nothing to report.

FINE ARTS COMMITTEE

Susan Bloom mentioned that library staff are updating the library history online. The target to do this is April 2024, coinciding with the celebration of 125 years of the library's continuous service to the community.

POLICY COMMITTEE

“The Library trustees are authorized to govern the library per RSA 202-A:2 and RSA 202-A:11, I and to adopt bylaws, rules and regulations.” Kathleen Packard quoted from the Newsletter of the New Hampshire Library Trustees Association. It is essential that Trustees review and adopt the Program and Outreach Policy. Kathleen Packard moved to accept the Program and Outreach policy as presented- a motion that was seconded by Pam Russell-Slack and passed unanimously.

Kathleen Packard shared information on the Outreach Request Form with a few changes related to acquiring the information on the resources library staff would have to provide for an event outside the library. Marti Fiske noted that the contact information for the Library Staff will be added after the new Librarian III/Head of Youth and Community Services is hired.

The next Policy meeting is scheduled at the library on December 5, 2023, at 5:15 pm.

FRIENDS OF KPL

Judith Putnam mentioned that at the last Friends of KPL meeting, it was confirmed that the book sale brought in about 14k. With many books left from the book sale, Friends of KPL will hold a book sale with 50% off all books for youth ages 9-14. This book sale is scheduled for November 18, 12-3:00 pm. The next library book sale for all is scheduled for April 17-21, 2024.

Judith Putnam informed the Trustees that the Friends of KPL are working on the budget for 2024. Information on the budget will be available soon.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Marti Fiske mentioned that recently, the Library recorded a higher number of library materials not being returned to the Library. This is mainly due to: 1) some homeless families borrowing many items, and when the campsite where the families were living got flooded, the library items (including a hotspot device) were found to be in bad condition as they were left on the site. Temporary resident cardholders now can only take up to three items at once; 2) A resident with a regular cardholder borrowed about 10 DVDs and video games, and when this person became homeless, the Library lost all the items that were borrowed.

To motivate library patrons to return library items, Marti Fiske suggested that Trustees consider limiting the number of library items per card for those who have chronic issues. Patrons can borrow more when they return the items they have previously borrowed. Also, Marti Fiske mentioned that it may be a good idea to review the overdue fines to allow fine forgiveness and encourage patrons to bring

their overdue library items.

With a few recent incidents related to library patrons' behaviors, Bill Stroup mentioned that the library has a big role in the community and will continue to do its best to ensure both community members and staff are safe. Holding accountable patrons of their behaviors. Marti Fiske mentioned that incidents are reported, and reports are available and could be used to document patterns behaviors that can result in non-trespassing orders.

Pam Russell-Slack commented that library management may think about the staff being under stress because of bad behavior from some patrons.

Council Bobby Williams mentioned that the City Council would be happy to hear/receive any proposals on how to deal with the drug issues in Keene and drug-related behaviors at the Library. He added that it may not be a bad idea for the Library to be one of the places to have a police officer's hours to reduce bad behaviors from some patrons.

OLD BUSINESS

Bill Stroup reminded Trustees that an invitation to organize the 125th anniversary will be out soon.

Judith Putnam mentioned that the Friends of KPL are working on their annual newsletter and would like to add something about the work done by the trustees.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

Next meeting December 19, 2023 –Some refreshments to be provided starting at 5:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:17 PM

Yves P. Gakunde, Temporary Secretary