

MONTAGUE PUBLIC LIBRARIES TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

Date: Monday, May 20, 2019

Time: 6:30 P.M.

Place: Montague Center Library,
17 Center Street, Montague Center, MA 01351

Attendance: Nancy Crowell, David Harmon, Tricia Perham, Gretchen Wetherby, Susan Yarmac, Polly Billiel

Montague Library Director: Linda Hickman

Also: Margot Malachowski

Absent: Vicki Valley, Karen Latka, James Martineau,

6:38 Call to Order – Nancy Crowell

- Minutes - Reading and Approval of minutes from April 29, 2019
- Move to approve Tricia Perham, 2nd Gretchen Wetherby

6:40 Corresponding Secretary's Report – nothing to report

6:40 Circulation Report

- Good news! Circulation is up at all 3 libraries, including an increase of 21% at Millers Falls. Linda went over details by category and location.

6:45 Personnel

- An employee has given 2 weeks notice, citing personal reasons. (Linda, recent hire.) Judy will continue to sub on Fridays, others will fill in hours while Linda H. advertises. Discussion consensus is to advertise position at 18 - 26 hours, in hopes of widening the possible pool of applicants.

6:48 Building and Maintenance

- Town Meeting approved all 3 Special Articles with very little discussion. Linda will check with Steve Ellis regarding bidding requirements for the approved work.
- Linda will also solicit bids for the painting work at the Carnegie.
- Linda has emailed the Highway Department for an update on the list we discussed, hasn't heard back.
- Beverly, the new custodian, asked about special instructions for cleaning at the libraries. Linda said the next priority is windows.

6:58 Special Services –

- Nancy discussed survey results, but has suggestions for the next survey - get the home village, ask their age, and put anything important on the front. Many people didn't complete the back. A one page survey would be best.
- 99% think their librarians are knowledgeable, helpful & friendly.
- The top 4 uses were similar for all libraries: Fiction, Non-fiction, picking up books, and DVDs. Millers Falls and Montague Center seem more popular for browsing and socializing, while the Carnegie is useful for copies and research, and book sales. (It was noted that the branch libraries don't offer those services.) Linda will look into the possibility of getting a copier for the Millers library.
- Nancy is still working on results.

7:07 Friends Update

- Nancy Crowell reported that there is a Book Sale coming up. (Substituting Secretary missed the date.)
- On June 8th dog trainer Elise McMahon will be at the Carnegie, 2nd floor, 10-12.

7:09 Public Relations

- An anonymous letter written on the back of an event flyer was received by the Trustees. There was no name and no return address, so there is no way to contact the author. The tone of the letter expressed dissatisfaction at the author's perception of the lack of diversity and inclusiveness at the library.
- The Trustees discussed positive ways to act on the perceived intent of the letter, as there is no way to address the author's concerns directly.
- Linda said that after an interaction with a person of color in the community and diversity training sessions that she attended she has been more conscious of buying books by and about people of non-white ethnicities.
- Discussion centered on how to increase awareness of the availability of books on diverse topics, and how to attract more patrons who might be interested in them.
- There was also discussion about adding suggestion boxes at each of the libraries, and responding to questions in a format that would preserve the privacy of the person making the request.
- There was also discussion about diversity training geared specifically to librarians; and the possibility of hosting a training session locally.

7:35 Items not anticipated within 48 hours of meeting.

- Appointed Trustee Member Polly Billiel suggested emailing Jeff Bozos (who reads all of his emails) asking him to follow in the tradition of Andrew Carnegie and support public libraries. Board agreed that she may send the email as a private citizen who is also a Library Trustee.

7:39 Next Meeting Dates: June 24, 6:30 p.m. – at the Council on Aging, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls

7:55 Move to adjourn David Harmon, 2nd Gretchen Wetherby

Tricia Perham, filling in for Vicki Valley,
Corresponding Secretary
Montague Board of Library Trustees

Approved