

Montague Public Libraries Trustees

May Minutes

Date: Monday, May 3, 2021

Time: 6:30pm

Place: <https://zoom.us/j/94040702175?pwd=dWxEV2hiYmJNV2RFZVBzNHBkbFFnQT09>

Attendees: Polly Billiel, Nancy Crowell, David Harmon, Lydia Ievins, Margot Malachowski, Jim Martineau, Tricia Perham, Gretchen Wetherby

Library Director: Linda Hickman

Library Staff: Angela Rovatti-Leonard

Park and Recreation Staff: Jon Dobosz

Public: Paul Lipke, Emily Monosson, Ariel Shira, Jeff Singleton, Kate Spencer, Karen Wampole

Absent: Karen Latka

6:31 Call to order.

6:32 Trustees, staff, and members of the public introduced themselves.

6:36 Minutes from 3/22/2021 and 4/12/2021—approved with amendments.

6:41 Corresponding Secretary's Report—Lydia Ievins created a gmail account for us (montaguelibrarytrustees@gmail.com) Wendy Bogusz, Executive Assistant for the Town of Montague, removed the personal contact information on the Trustees Committee page and replaced personal email addresses with the new gmail address. Margot added the Carnegie Library's address for postal mail with Gretchen's name as the contact. This will be updated anytime we have a new Chair of the Trustees.

The Building Studies are uploaded to the Library Trustees Files on the Committee page (<https://www.montague-ma.gov/g/66/Library-Trustees>). This month's Trustee News, located on the Montague Public Libraries website, will announce that these studies are available to the public. Margot asked Wendy to edit Lydia's name to all lower case. This has not happened yet. Margot suggested that Lydia follow up with Wendy.

6:47 Personnel—the current staff person assigned to the Millers Falls branch is asking for her leave to be extended to July 1. The long-term substitute who has been covering is no longer available. Linda is working at the Millers Falls branch on Tuesdays and substitute Taelour Cornett will be filling in on Thursdays until Linda can hire another long-term substitute.

6:49 Library Programs Update—Linda ran into some snags while planning the Historical Walking Tour for May 23, 2021. The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation and FirstLight are involved because the walking tour would be on property owned by these entities. The walk will be postponed until the fall.

Angela reported that the annual life-sized Candyland event was moved outdoors this year and combined with a StoryWalk. Although the weather did not cooperate during school vacation week, twenty-five families participated. Take-and-make craft bags continue to be very popular. Angela is looking into outdoor programming for the summer that will follow state guidelines for

safety. Angela shared several ideas for indoor, outdoor, and virtual programming. Families are starting to come into the library by appointment.

Angela is taking a FLIX course offered by MIT Media Lab. The course explores STEAM programming in public libraries. She is hoping to incorporate these ideas in a STEM@Home program, creating activity bags with corresponding videos that could be viewed at a family's convenience.

The Library is collaborating with Montague Catholic Social Ministries, the Discovery Center, RiverCulture and Montague Parks and Recreation for a series of multilingual StoryWalks at Peskeomskut Park through the summer and into the fall. Angela was asked how she publicizes youth programming. She listed all the places she posts events, on websites and with fliers.

- 7:10 Buildings and Maintenance—Linda reported that when the Carnegie public bathroom was repainted, they discovered that the flooring was moldy around the toilet. She hired Booska Flooring to rip up and replace the flooring. The basement floor was repaired and painted. At one point, staff developed symptoms related to the paint fumes. Linda closed the Carnegie to let staff go home early on that day. The large furniture is back downstairs. Linda will purchase a few small rugs to protect the painted surface.

According to the Buildings Study, the Montague Center building urgently needs repairs to the roof and exterior walls. These repairs are estimated to exceed \$500,000. This would trigger the requirement for the building to be fully accessible for people with disabilities. The Trustees were reminded that this is a lot of money to spend on a building that is open just 10 hours per week to the public. Linda reported that Town Administrator Steve Ellis suggested that the Town needs to consider selling the building or finding more uses for the building. Extensive repairs would necessitate significant fundraising.

Kate Spencer voiced concern about the need for an elevator tower at the rear of the building. Her property abuts the Town's property. Jon Dobosz talked about potential uses for the upstairs. Nancy reminded us that consultant Greg Walsh suggested having a structural engineer look at the building.

Trustees talked about the need for repairs on this building in the context of the many buildings that the Town must maintain. Margot wondered if town residents would participate in a major fundraising effort to repair the Montague Center branch. Costs could run up to \$2.2 million. Trustees talked about the importance of involving the Capital Improvement Committee and the Historical Commission in any decision-making. Trustees agreed that hiring a structural engineer is the next best step.

- 7:58 Budget—Linda shared budget documents. Most of the expenditures are on-target for the end of March, the third quarter of the year. The media budget is not being used because not many movies have been released to DVD this year. Linda explained that State Aid rolls over, and the Libraries have a donation account. Linda can tap into either State Aid or the donation account to pay for a structural engineer to look at the Montague Center branch.

- 8:15 Special Services—the postponed meeting is rescheduled for May 17, 2021.

8:17 Public Relations—The Carnegie received a donation from a grateful patron who had brought her grandchildren to the outdoor StoryWalk. Patrons are very grateful for the efforts of library staff.

8:20 Items Not Anticipated—Linda reported that the Library received a very disturbing phone call. She is in touch with the police. Several town departments have received similar phone calls. Linda is still waiting for the security camera to be installed at the Carnegie.

Linda consulted the Emergency Management Team about re-opening the branches. The Montague Center branch is open for appointments on Mondays and Wednesdays. The Millers Falls branch is open for browsing with a limit of 8 patrons. No appointments are necessary.

8:32 Upcoming Meetings:

Special Services Subcommittee Meeting
Mon, May 17, 2021 at 6:30pm

Monthly Trustees Meeting
Mon, June 7, 2021 at 6:30pm

8:35 Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Margot Malachowski
Corresponding Secretary
Montague Public Libraries Trustees