

# Montague Public Libraries Trustees

## January Minutes

Date: Monday, Jan 24, 2022

Time: 6:30pm

Place: Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82684188795?pwd=RmxXSC9tM0pPbmhWbWptaFA1RS9RUT09>

Meeting ID: 826 8418 8795 Passcode: 045416

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

Absent: Liz Swihart

Library Director: Caitlin Kelley

Library Staff: Angela Rovatti-Leonard

6:32 Call to order.

6:37 Minutes from 11/29/2021 approved as amended.

6:38 Director's Update. Caitlin reported that library usage is down due to the ongoing pandemic. Library staff are seeing very quick visits from patrons. The libraries distributed 90 antigen tests that were supplied by the Town. The Town has supplied employees with test kits for personal use. The Town Nurse told employees to stay home if they have any cold symptoms, and to remain at home until the symptoms resolve. No one on the library staff has contracted COVID-19.

Caitlin is applying for funding from the National Endowment for Humanities, Preservation Assistance for Smaller Institutions (<https://www.neh.gov/grants/preservation/preservation-assistance-grants-smaller-institutions>) The funds will be used for storage furniture, archival materials, and consultant fees. Awards will not be announced until August 2022. The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners will be providing moisture sensors that will help protect the archival materials. These sensors are free.

Library staff is expanding online activity. Facebook engagement increased from December to January. Caitlin is sharing more content for adult patrons. Several Trustees shared their approval of sharing information about COVID-19 testing (difference between antigen/PCR tests). Caitlin is posting information about Kanopy, a movie streaming service for public libraries (<https://www.kanopy.com/>) and NovelList, a database that suggests what to read next (<https://www.ebsco.com/novelist> )

Caitlin is exploring ideas to support the food pantry at the Millers Falls Branch. Town Administrator Steve Ellis will assist in locating funding options. Trustees suggested partnering with Montague Catholic Social Ministries and Great Falls Farmers Market. The Trustees supported the idea of a can drive to build up the supplies of non-perishable food and hygiene items.

Twenty people registered for the upcoming Genealogy program. Montague is working with the Libraries in the Woods group to provide library programs for adults. The next Community Read

will be *The Dirty Life: A Memoir of Farming, Food, and Love* by Kirstin Kimball. Partnering with Libraries in the Woods helps the visibility of the programs and attracts more registrants. Trustees agreed that online programming is a valuable part of future adult programming.

Caitlin is working on a festival to take place on Saturday, June 18 in Peskeomskut Park. The festival will include music, Friends book sale, and community tabling. Caitlin received approval from Montague Chief of Police. The Trustees recommended that Caitlin bring this to the Selectboard before proceeding further.

Lastly, Caitlin is looking into ways to streamline processes for managing staff and volunteers.

- 7:08 Children's Programs. Angela started an Instagram account. Staff member Colleen is providing photos and videos. Take-and-make activities continue to be very popular. Online programming is less popular with families. There is a sense that families are "zoomed out". Library staff will develop self-led activities, such as the recent alphabet scavenger hunt, as well as online Music and Movement and Baby Lapsit programming.

Angela is looking into getting a tent for outdoor programming for spring/summer/fall. The Youth Advisory Committee met in-person for 30 minutes. Four youth are helping to create a program for Poetry Month in April. Signups are available for Paws to Read, a program to encourage young readers to read to a therapy dog (<https://www.pawstoread.com/>)

- 7:22 Corresponding Secretary: Town elections are in May. Margot Malachowski, Karen Latka, and Nancy Crowell are ending their terms. Deb Bourbeau will let Margot know when nomination papers are available. There is an option to be nominated by the Democratic Caucus. Several Trustees talked about their experiences with this process. To learn more about the Democratic Caucus, please contact Mark Wisnewski at ([mpwisnewski@gmail.com](mailto:mpwisnewski@gmail.com))

- 7:26 Personnel. Taelour Cornett accepted the position at the Millers Falls Branch. Taelour is scheduled for 12 hours and is paid separately as a consultant for archival work. Kate is scheduled for 16 hours at the Montague Center Branch.

- 7:31 Building and Maintenance. David Dempsey is working on the bookcases for Montague Center. Alistair McMartin completed the truss repair at Montague Center. Caitlin will present information to the Capital Improvements Committee about plans to address exterior drainage and interior remediation at the Carnegie Library. The Library will hire an engineer to determine the work, and the Montague Department of Public Works will do the exterior work. This expenditure will be presented as a special article in March.

Caitlin will move ahead with getting approval for the interior work at the Carnegie. The basement walls and ceiling will be replaced, and the electrical system will be updated. Reconfiguring the ceiling will allow for more natural light through the windows. The goal is to have a cleaner, brighter space and an office with a door for the Library Director.

The Millers Falls Branch needs an updated electrical panel in preparation for the mini splits. The Trustees discussed expenditures for maintenance and repairs—when should the Library Director consult the Building and Maintenance Subcommittee, or the entire Board of Trustees? Caitlin will work on this policy.

8:06 Special Services. The Subcommittee suggested minor changes to the Community Input Survey. The survey will be available online with a paper version available. The paper version will be in English and Spanish. Caitlin is arranging to have a consultant to interview 10-12 community members without library staff present.

8:08 Budget. Nothing to report.

8:13 Borrowing Policies. Caitlin presented the updated borrowing policy. The updated policy eliminates overdue fines and offers three-year out-of-state library cards for \$30.00. Trustees discussed how to serve people who do not have a picture ID, and foster kids who have overdue/lost books on their records. Nancy made a motion to accept the policy, Gretchen seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

8:34 Upcoming meetings:

Monthly Trustees Meeting  
Mon, Feb 28, 2022, at 6:30pm  
Zoom

8:36 Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Margot Malachowski  
Corresponding Secretary,  
Montague Public Libraries Trustees