

Dover Town Library Board of Trustees Meeting
02/08/2022 8:30 AM
Meeting Place/Location: Remote/Zoom

Call to Order: 8:31am

Attendees (Remote)

- Trustees Present: Erin Rodat-Savla (Chair), Adrian Hill, Judith Schulz, Tracy Tobin, Ameer Tejani, and Peter Hoffmann (Secretary).
- Cheryl Abdullah, Director, Dover Town Library
- Kate Cook, Friends of the Dover Town Library

Community Comments

Justine Kent-Uritam repeated her request that the library provide more adult programming.

Approval of the Minutes

The Board approved the minutes from the December and January meetings by unanimous roll-call vote.

Director's Report

The Board discussed the two most recent Director's Reports. Director Abdullah informed the Board that while she has an interview scheduled for the 18 hour position, there are not many applicants due to the current condition of the labor market. In response to queries from the Board, Director Abdullah indicated that the new staff are fitting in well, the new public access computers have been installed, and that the tech trainings are ongoing. Trustee Tejani confirmed that the tech trainings are going well. In addition, Director Abdullah indicated that traffic to the library has been good yet some people remain wary of entering the library due to the pandemic.

Friends of the Dover Town Library

Kate Cook informed the Board that the annual appeal has reached almost \$31,000, the Friends are planning events to be held in the Spring, including

the return of the tile fundraiser and a “Trails and Tales Bingo” (non-fundraising) event that combines nature and library themes, and “Cheers for Books” to be held outside the library with a tentative date of May 12th.

Trustee Tobin noted that she sent out the link to the Friends’ lapsed donor list for the Board’s review and outreach, volunteers are needed for tile painting at the library on April 6th and May 4th, and Kate Cook is the incoming President of the Friends.

Director Search

Trustees Schulz and Tobin updated the Board on their progress with the Director Search. They have not yet received any feedback from TA Dwelley who has been on vacation until today. They further understand that neither HR nor the legal department have reviewed the job description. Once the job description is ready, it must first be posted internally for 5 working days. In light of the guidance from MLBC. Trustees Schulz and Tobin have decided to limit the Director Search Committee (the “Committee”) to 6 members, including themselves, a Dover librarian, a representative from town hall, a member of the Friends of the Dover Town Library, and a person representing the Council on Aging. In addition to the Committee, there will be other opportunities for others in the community to participate in the process.

Trustee Tobin provided the latest timeline for the Director Search. The expectation is that resumes will come in and be screened by the Search Committee during March and April. The goal is to have 2-4 candidates to interview by mid-April. Judy or Tracy will conduct outreach to all candidates who have applied with a status update. In mid-to-late April, formal interviews of the top 2-4 candidates will be conducted in a community forum. Interview questions will prepared in advance by Search Committee and Trustees, asking the same questions of all and using a scoring rubric. We hope to conduct the final interviews (2 maximum) in early May with all Trustees, and extend the job offer by the middle to end of May.

The Board voted by unanimous roll-call vote to reimburse the finalists for all or some of their travel expenses from the library’s budget unless the expenses are covered by the town.

Director Evaluation Review

Trustees Rodat-Savla and Hill presented their recommendations based on their research into the best practices in the evaluation of Library Directors, noting that Dover is ahead of other small towns with respect to the evaluation process review. Trustee Tobin praised the effort and noted its potential to positively impact the Director Search, as well, by providing clarity to the process.

The four recommendations were as follows: 1) continue with a small evaluation team (Chair plus one Trustee) to work with the Director to go over feedback and goals. The goals are then presented to the Board in Open Meeting for feedback from the remaining Trustees; 2) the Board should develop their own industry-based evaluation specific to library services, rather than using the town's "generic" evaluation form; 3) work with the Director to identify and develop expanded feedback loops that will enable the Board to evaluate performance. Trustee Hill noted that other towns lack this formal feedback process, which is unacceptable. The Board agreed that this was a good idea provided that it only puts a limited and realistic burden on the Board and Director. 4) In the interim of the above steps, the committee will prepare a survey to elicit input from the Trustees, the Friends, the library team, and TA Dwelley, in order to assist in the evaluation of the Director.

Trustees Tejani and Tobin requested a copy of the town's current evaluation form. Trustee Hoffmann lauded the recommendations as aligning nicely with the Board's statutory duties of "custody and management" of the town library.

Miscellaneous

Trustee Hill is drafting a short orientation/primer for new library trustees. The deadline for the March issue of the town newsletter is February 15th. Trustees Hill and Tejani indicated that they wish to seek re-election to the Board upon nomination at the upcoming town caucus.

Meeting adjourned at 9:29am.

Documents referenced in these minutes are available upon request from the Town Clerk's Office.