

Dover Town Library Board of Trustees Meeting
3/14/23, 8:30 am
Dover Town Library

Attendees:

Trustees: Erin Rodat-Savla, Judith Schulz, Peter Hoffmann, Tracy Tobin, Ameer Tejani. Absent: Adrian Hill
Director: Bethany Klem

The meeting was called to order at 8:29 am by Ms. Rodat-Savla.

Community Comments: None

Minutes: 2/14/23; a motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Tobin, seconded by Ms. Rodat-Savla, and unanimously approved by the Trustees.

Town April Newsletter: Ms. Tobin asked if anyone had information to include; content due by 3/20 if applicable.

Meeting Room Policy Discussion: Led by policy team-Director Klem and Trustee Hoffmann.

- Before/after hours: Allow or not? Many questions emerged. Strong support for the belief that if the library is used during non-operating hours, a library staffer (or two) should be present. Does the complexity of this issue (staffing and pay) along with others lean toward just allowing meetings during posted library hours?
- Alcohol...or not? Liability was a significant concern, even with approval and a one-day liquor license. Consensus that library events should be alcohol-free.
- AV support: Should organizations have the expectation that library staff is also “tech support”? Discussed advance training (to be able to handle on own) with library staff available for troubleshooting.
- Rental fees: For organizations that would fall into the “pay” category, like the idea of a per hour vs. flat rate. A \$25/hour fee mentioned as a possibility, since similar to what other “town rental” fees are.
- Need to determine if we would treat non-profits and not-for-profits differently.
- Concern over possible public assumption/perception that events being held at the library are being endorsed by the library. Want to make our wording strong regarding this point...being at the library does not mean that the library necessarily supports the perspective of the group. The Chelmsford Public Library recently had an incident where viewpoints on gender identity became a controversy.
- All events must be free and open to the public. How does this apply to groups that might have pre-charged people to attend?

- Based on the many nuances and wide array of questions remaining, the policy team will re-group and then bring a “tighter” revision to the Trustees at a future meeting for further consideration.

Policy Waiver Vote:

- Current library policy does not allow for sales during events.
- The Council on Aging (COA) is having an author event on May 4 as part of its “Lifetime Learning” series; they would like to be allowed to sell the author’s book.
- A motion to allow selling Eugene Kogan’s book at the May 4 COA event was made by Ms. Tejani and seconded by Ms. Schulz. Ms. Tejani abstained from voting, as she is an employee of the COA. Trustees Rodat-Savla, Schulz, Tobin, and Hoffmann all approved, with Trustee Hoffmann adding that his approval was impacted by the fact that this event could not be held anywhere else in town.

Director’s Report: Trustees discussed key items of interest with Ms. Klem.

- Allison Keaney, Head of Circulation, will be taking a position at the Hopkinton Public Library (last day is tomorrow). There are internal candidates for her job.
- Excited about initial work on developing a new website and branding. Early estimates indicate that the project could run \$25,000 or more.
- Still having challenges with the Town Accounting Office. The library gift fund in the line-item budget summary is not showing turnovers totaling just over \$40,000 (update from initial report). Responses to inquiry have been uninformative.

Friends of the Dover Library: Ms. Rodat-Savla provided an update.

- Made a quarterly gift to the library for \$16,000.
- Annual appeal: Current total of \$28,933 from 153 donors. This is down \$6,500 from the same time last year and with 32 fewer donors. With direct gifts to the library, the amount is higher: \$38,758. Outreach to lapsed donors has begun; expect donations to rise from this effort.
- T-shirt design contest: Final voting now. Purchasing will be directly through the vendor.
- Cheers for Books: Now scheduled for May 11 at the American Legion Hall. Will have an auction and raffle. Coach Pete entertainment for kids available. First time this event was held was seven years ago!
- The Dover Benefit Fund, which has done fundraising for the library in the past, will be supporting two different Dover organizations this year with their Garden Tour in June.

Board Operations:

- Caucus/Election Update: There will be a contested race for the two Trustee positions this year. Neha Gaur will be running as well as current Trustees Schulz and Hoffmann.

Ms. Rodat-Savla will check in with Felicia Hoffman, Town Clerk, regarding how the elected Trustees can/cannot be involved in the campaign. Town Election is May 15.

- Quarterly calendar/agenda: We are entering the last quarter of the fiscal year. Several original board goals remain: multiple policies, in addition to a final meeting room policy; state of library finance/trust funds; long-range plan launch; Director/library evaluation; and Board evaluation. Trustee Rodat-Savla requested that trustees review the calendar and remaining items from their subcommittees and advise her on priorities and timing as soon as possible. We may convene for extra session(s), if warranted.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:09 am.

Respectfully submitted by Tracy Tobin.

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