

Minutes for Dover Town Library Trustee Meeting  
May 27, 2022  
Selectmen's Room, Dover Town Hall

In Attendance: Trustees - Erin Rodat-Savla, Chair; Peter Hoffman; Ameer Tejani; Adrian Hill; Tracy Tobin; Judy Schulz  
Community Members - Kate Cook; Janit Greenwood; Chip Spalding

Meeting called to order at 9:35 am

Welcome from Trustee Chair, Erin Rodat-Savla

1. Ms. Rodat-Savla thanked the Director Search Committee, library staff and the public for their time and efforts
  - a. She requested continued confidentiality and respect for the process as it is a public record
  - b. She restated that a professional and thorough vetting of the Finalists is the goal of the meeting
2. Ms. Rodat-Savla called a straw poll for each of the three Finalists in the order of dates interviewed
  - a. By show of hands, the Trustees gave unanimous approval to Finalist, Bethany Klem
3. Each Trustee was asked to summarize their evaluation of Ms. Klem using specifics garnered from her resume, letters of reference, reference phone calls, interviews, interview scorecard feedback/data from trustees, staff and public
  - a. The Trustees were impressed by Ms. Klem's education, experience and leadership
    - i. See her as a "rising star" in the library world
    - ii. See a deep commitment to library profession in her role as current Vice President and incoming President of the New England Library Association
    - iii. Cited her longevity at the Bedford Free Public Library (9 years)
    - iv. Cited her ability to successfully work under difficult circumstances at the Saugus Public Library
    - v. Had flawless references and follow-up reference phone calls
  - b. The Trustees were impressed with Ms. Klem's analytical, interpersonal and communication skills
    - i. Makes a great impression; is articulate and poised, as well as a careful listener
    - ii. Would be a strong "face of the Dover Library"
    - iii. Would work well with current trustees, staff, town administration and the public
    - iv. Cited thoughtful Dover-specific cover letter and email sent to trustees after interview which referenced projects and challenges
    - v. Knows how to approach complex and nuanced issues, clearly explaining both the "how" and the "why" in order to build consensus
  - c. The Trustees were impressed by Mr. Klem's passion for the job, creativity and vision for the library
    - i. Liked that she calls herself a "pragmatic dreamer"
    - ii. Spoke of supporting and empowering the staff as a cornerstone
    - iii. Liked that she uses data to inform her work and decisions
    - iv. Would bring the library and new and fresh set of eyes in interpreting/responding to community needs
    - v. Received additional positive feedback from staff after interviews and meetings – "has the passion and the moxie to be the Director of the DTL."

4. A motion to name Bethany Klem as the next Director of the Dover Town Library passed by a unanimous roll-call vote
  
5. The Trustees took a moment to express their appreciation for the other two Finalists
  - a. Charleen Belcher, current Assistant Director and Youth Services Librarian, Holbrook Public Library, MA
    - i. Is very friendly and approachable with many strong skills
    - ii. Would serve as a dynamic, engaged “face of the library”, has great empathy and ability to “see” people
    - iii. Her peers hold her management style in high regard
    - iv. Has been a longtime public library trustee and understands the symbiotic relationship between trustees and directors
  - b. Allison Keaney, Head of Circulation, Dover Town Library, MA
    - i. Her extensive institutional knowledge of the Dover Town Library and perceived devotion to the community is an invaluable asset
    - ii. Has excellent professional experiences with a wide variety of library services across all age groups
    - iii. Is very highly regarded by patrons and staff, who refer to her as “part of the family”
    - iv. Is seen as an approachable and collaborative team member with a calm, quiet insightful style of leadership
    - v. Has been part of the innovation team at the library; one of the creators of SAFT
    - vi. Library should do everything it can to retain and support her in her career
  
6. Transition concerns
  - a. Trustees acknowledged and discussed the nature of such a significant change for the library team, including the dynamics of appointing an external vs. internal candidate
  - b. The Board expressed faith that both Ms. Abdullah and Ms. Klem will be cognizant of those dynamics and lead accordingly
    - i. Multiple board members expressed a desire to share with Ms. Klem some of the feedback collected during the search, as well as explicitly encourage her to prioritize career planning, compensation review and professional development for the team
    - ii. Others expressed caution about over-prescribing solutions and over-weighting any perceived concerns - the team’s engagement, feedback and enthusiasm was predominantly very positive throughout the search
  - c. Ms. Rodat-Savla will synthesize and transfer key feedback themes from the community questions and interview feedback forms to supplement the stakeholder survey and other context for Ms. Klem
  
7. The Trustees discussed transition, timeline and process
  - a. Mr. Hill and Ms. Tobin will be point people for negotiations
  - b. Ms. Rodat-Savla and Ms. Tejani will be point people for transition

A motion to move the meeting into Executive Session in accordance with “MA G.L. c.30A, Sec 21(a): To conduct strategy session in preparation for negotiation with non-union personnel” was approved by a unanimous roll call vote. The Executive Session began at 11:06 am and ended at 11:40 am.

The meeting adjourned at 11:41 am.

The next meeting is June 1<sup>st</sup> at 9:00 am in the Selectmen’s Room, Town Hall

Respectfully submitted by Judy Schulz

