

Taft Public Library Board of Trustees

Minutes of October 12, 2023

Members Present: Leesa Michael, Gabrielle Porciello, Sean Nicholson, Alejna Brugos, James Thach, and Alison Chu.

Friends member: Leigh Martin

Staff Present: Andrew Jenrich and Tara (remotely)

1. Meeting called to order at 6:02PM by Leesa.
2. Motion to accept last month's minutes passed unanimously.
3. Friends
 - October 30th is their next meeting so not many updates
 - Harry Potter Lego Raffle has begun
4. Director's report
 - new staff member Jane started and is doing well. Needs additional hours to shadow staff for more training.
5. Andrew revised staff conduct policy. It will have to be tweaked again once the town staff conduct policy revision is completed.
6. Facilities – Ray Gaulin has been at the library in the last few days. He looked at the external unit that corresponds to the unit in the elevator. Switch was off, he switched it on and cool air is coming out of the unit now. Still generating air at 72 degrees. Could cut vents in the door and not need the A/C unit. Contracted with Victory but Victory has been bought by GEM. GEM charges significantly more and there are issues with billing. Victory contracts should have moved over but didn't. Contract has expired and has not been renewed. Charged \$3,000 one-time fee for maintenance instead of contracted amount. Ray Gaulin has his own company.
7. Town department head meeting happened and another one is scheduled at the end of October. Septic issue was discussed. Facilities manager position was discussed – needs funding.
8. Post Office Box – has instruction sheet from post office for placement of the box. Place near electric pole. Need large box with lock. Andrew will go to Home Depot to look at options.
9. Strategic Plan goals – hire grounds maintenance company. Monika Schmidt does spring and summer cleanup and will continue to do it. Fall cleanup is more involved and she can't do it by herself. Friends have volunteered to do the fall cleanup in the past and it worked really well. Plan it for after the first frost. Watch for poison ivy.
10. Budget
 - Running at 23.2% which is on track.
 - Salaries running low as one staff short plus vacations taken by staff.
 - Only spent 6.5% of light budget – will increase during winter.
 - Programming – 56% of the budget spent. Frontloaded during summer but will watch.

11. Programs

- ARIS report – Adults and Children’s items are lumped together. There is more interest in breakdown of onsite vs offsite/live vs virtual. Andrew created a new spreadsheet to capture this data.
- Bookclubs have all started.
- Playgroups/Storytimes are all starting up. Itty Bitty Storytime is huge.
- Clough first grade field trips are scheduled.

12. Projects

- Blackstone Valley floating collection has become a space issue so that’s been discontinued. This was a decision made collectively by participating libraries.
- Strategic plan – need technology inventory, and program options will be discussed with staff. What age groups need additional programming?
- Rectory working group meeting October 23rd. Should an invitation be sent to Jane Lowell? She has a sense of how the senior center project is coming along. Alejna would like to be looped into it as well.
- Next door neighbor wants to acquire the garage. Wants property line redrawn. There is an access easement issue as it is on a library driveway which is one way. What he is proposing is not desirable for the library. He spoke with Kathy Schofield several times about “promises” made before the library was built. Has been asked multiple times to move his items. Garage is empty but piles of his items remain behind the garage. Do we want to send a letter to selectboard? Should that include safety issue? Alejna recommends checking with town council as there are liability issues with safety. What is the best way to address these issues? Once it is a safety issue, town must address the situation. Can’t close doors to the garage due to warped doors.
- Alejna mentioned the rectory during capital planning meetings so all selectboard members are aware. Is the goal to have a proposal to present at the town meeting? James put together a Microsoft Teams group for the rectory working group.
- Financial report is completed. Well above the municipal appropriations commitment so in much better shape this year. Still open requisite number of days/hours.
- Leesa will send letter detailing garage situation. Andrew doesn’t think neighbor understands liability issue, but that is not the point. His items must be removed from town property. If items are stolen, is it library’s responsibility or neighbor’s responsibility?
- Should we start the process of having the boundaries marked? GIS maps online give a general boundary but is not exact.

13. Staff Conduct policy

- will have to revisit once the town personnel policy is updated.
- Andrew added stuff in red.
- unanimously approved Andrew’s updates

14. Strategic Plan Goals

- Some items are easy, some are hard.
- Will work on things with staff and trustees.
- Will go over job descriptions. Does the description line up with actual work? We'll review one position description per meeting.
- Still have to discuss website organizational chart. Some of it is outreach. Will discuss with staff.
- Inventory collection is ongoing.
- Hardware inventory will be done.
- Cross working with departments is happening.
- Andrew would like to reach out to Nipmuc about DECA. Mary Ann Moran said possible ways to work together with DECA.
- Strategic plan is posted on the website. Andrew will make hard copies to be posted in the library.

Dan Byer is the town webmaster. He is not often available to work on the website. Website in its present form is not sustainable. Should Andrew reach out to Bluehost? Colleen Terrell is contact at Nipmuc to look for student who might be able to update website. Students could potentially find platform that Andrew could maintain once it is set up/laid out. Current website is too busy – needs to be simplified. Conversation has been ongoing for 2 years. No staff dedicated to the upkeep of website. Can we find a town whose website we like that could share the design with us? Nipmuc is always looking for internships for students. Contact Mary Ann Moran about this. Need to rebrand. More user friendly. Looking to find more intuitive for staff.

Next meeting is Thursday November 9th at 6:00PM.

Meeting adjourned at 6:57 PM.