

Medway Library Trustees

February 11, 2025

7:00 PM

Medway Public Library

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Susan Alessandri, Nutan Mathew, Lisa Sheehan, Nicole Haberman

Members Absent: Greg Peverill-Conti

Others Present: Margaret Perkins - Library Director, Pamela Francis - Friends of Medway Library and regular volunteer, Ivana Aguilar - Technical Services Librarian

1. Call to order - 7:01
2. Approval of the February Agenda - Approved
3. Approval of January Meeting Minutes - Approved with revisions
4. Citizens Speak - Ms. Francis was present to discuss the agenda item pertaining to staff of the library holding office on the Friends of Medway board. Ms. Francis stated she hoped this agenda item was listed to drop the matter. Ms. Francis stated she believed the Friends has tried to work with and find common ground with the Trustees. Ms. Francis stated she felt it was wonderful that employees of the library have so much passion for it that they are willing to also volunteer their time in addition to working for the library.
5. New Business
 - A. Welcoming of new Trustee, Nicole Haberman

Ms. Haberman was present for her first meeting and stated she was excited and thrilled to dive into the work as a Trustee. The Trustees welcomed her to the meeting.
 - B. Policy on emergency closures

Ms. Alessandri stated the library had a situation recently where it could not open due to a smell of gas that was detected before opening hours. Ms. Alessandri questioned why there was a lag from 10:00am or before until 12:30 when the Trustees were notified. Ms. Mathew stated she reviewed the safety and emergency guidelines and didn't see anything about an emergency closure, so perhaps a policy doesn't exist. Ms. Perkins stated she received the guidelines from Ms. Potter that were dated 11/12/24, and

she said the ones they have may be updated because they haven't changed in quite a while. Ms. Alessandri suggested that they add to the policy that Trustees are notified after the step where the Town Hall is notified. Ms. Perkins stated that to notify the Trustees, everyone who works at the library would need the Trustee email address. The Trustees clarified that they expect emergency services and addressing emergency needs need to happen first, but the Trustees should be notified soon after. Ms. Sheehan stated there was no issue with how Ms. Perkins managed the closing that day, but instead the Trustees wish to add notifying the Trustees of library closure earlier in the procedure. Ms. Perkins reported that notifying one Trustee by phone would be the easiest way to communicate. Ms. Alessandri will be the emergency contact going forward.

C. Operations review & action plan for 2025

Ms. Alessandri and Ms. Mathew reviewed dates of the following week to meet with Ms. Perkins. Ms. Perkins, Ms. Alessandri, and Ms. Mathew agreed on Thursday, February 20 at 9am.

D. Gift of braille children's books

Ms. Alessandri reported that a citizen of Medway contacted her directly about cataloguing some braille children's books that they had received and donated to the library. Ms. Aguilar stated they would love to have them. Ms. Alessandri will get them to the library to be catalogued.

E. Review of art policy draft

Ms. Alessandri worked with Audrey Snowden on an art policy based on other surrounding town's policies. A draft was sent to the Trustees to review.

Ms. Mathew made a motion to accept the library art display policy, seconded by Ms. Sheehan, approved by all.

F. Medicare seminars at the library

Ms. Alessandri was approached by someone who asked to use the library to hold free medicare seminars. Ms. Perkins was in favor of hosting.

G. Library of Things purchase/cataloging/marketing

Ms. Aguilar updated the Trustees on the Library of Things. Ms. Aguilar updated that the display has been up and some things that have been borrowed have been calculator, telescope, and hot spots. Ms. Aguilar reported that there are plans to grow the display once they have more items to offer. Ms. Aguilar reported they have not yet bought anything as they are working on getting tax exemptions from certain stores. Ms. Alessandri presented some items to add that have come up in her discussions such as cornhole, toddler booster seats, and pack-n-plays. Ms. Aguilar stated they had also been thinking about adding LEGO as well as Lincoln Logs and Magna Tiles. The Trustees discussed other items to possibly add to the wishlist. Ms. Aguilar stated that people have asked about older items like CD's, Walkmans, DVD's, and DVD players.

6. Old Business

A. Policy discussion: Staff holding Friends of MPL leadership roles

The Trustees discussed the idea of implementing a policy about library staff holding leadership roles for the Friends of the Library. Ms. Sheehan stated the policy should be clear, simple, and generic in order to avoid any future confusions or problems. Ms. Perkins reached out to five other libraries similar in size to ask if they have a similar policy. No libraries she contacted had a policy, but some had employees that were also on the Friends group of their libraries. Ms. Perkins reported that Holliston has a library employee that is the treasurer of their Friends group. Ms. Francis stated that in Medfield, the president of the Friends of Medfield library works in the children's department of the library. The Friends of Medway Library bylaws do not specifically state that an employee of the library can be a member of the Friends or hold office. The check writing and approvals go through the treasure of the Friends. Ms. Alessandri suggested the Trustees do some research of their own during the month, talk to individuals, and revisit at the next meeting. There was a concern expressed that often with the Friends group there are a lot of volunteers that want to help, but not many that want to hold office positions. As a result, there have been employees of the library who are on the Friends that step up into the leadership roles. The concern is that if employees cannot hold leadership positions in the Friends and no one steps up to occupy those roles, then it could hurt the Friends group.

7. Incident Reports - There were no incidents to report.

8. Budget Report - The Trustees discussed the budget report. Ms. Alessandri and Ms. Perkins discussed making the Programming line separate from Technology. Ms. Perkins will discuss separating out programming into its own line with Town Hall. Ms. Perkins stated that the Niche Academy item is what made the programming line go red when combined with other programs. It was previously in a different spot in the budget. Ms. Perkins thought it may have been in donations in years past. Ms. Perkins stated they are having more children's programs this year. The Trustees advocated for keeping the Niche Academy expenditure in

the same line item every year. Ms. Mathew requested the more detailed breakdown of the budget line items to see what items are being paid from which line items. Ms. Perkins clarified that Niche Academy was paid in August with the Programs/Technology line item budget. Since then, there have been more programs held at the library, which is what caused the line item to be in the red. Ms. Mathew asked why the Niche Academy payment did not come from the Donations/State Aid line item like previous years. Ms. Perkins stated at the time, she wasn't expecting to have as many programs as they ended up having. Ms. Mathew requested that going forward, the Trustees would like to be sent the more specified and transparent budget breakdown that Ms. Perkins has. Ms. Haberman stated that the buckets for recurring subscriptions that the library knows about each year could be planned for ahead of time.

9. Director's Report - Ms. Aguilar updated the Trustees on the new website. They just received the sample, and they've added and changed some things. The library has shared books with the middle school. The books will be returned back to the library by the middle school. Ms. Mathew asked about the plan for the social media policy. Ms. Alessandri will follow up with Ms. Snowden about the social media policy.

10. Adjournment - 8:15pm

Next meeting rescheduled for Tuesday, March 4, 2025.