

Medway Library Trustees

March 4, 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, Audrey Snowden - Childrens/YA Librarian, Paula Belanger - retired library employee, Corinne Fahey - Treasurer of the Friends of Medway Library, Naomi Price - resident

1. Call to order - 7:00
2. Approval of the March Agenda - Approved
3. Approval of January and February Meeting Minutes - January approved with revisions, February approved
4. Citizens Speak - Ms. Mathew reported she spoke with some parents who asked about National Honor Society students holding some reading workshops at the library with younger reluctant readers. High schoolers would facilitate a book discussion with younger middle schoolers for their National Honor Society hours. Ms. Snowden reported they would look into it. Ms. Snowden reported they used to have students come and do holiday concerts and asked the Trustees for contacts to approach about some performance opportunities at the library.

Ms. Francis was present about the issue with the Friends. Ms. Francis also reported that there was no chairperson listed on the website. The Trustees asked Ms. Perkins to update the website to reflect Greg as the chair of the Trustees.

Naomi Price was present and reported that cable access videos were not working.

5. New Business
 - A. Results of Operations review & action plan for 2025

Ms. Alessandri reported that Ms. Mathew and her had recently met with Ms. Perkins. Ms. Alessandri stated there was a good discussion about ideas moving forward that will be discussed at later meetings.

B. Social media policy

Ms. Snowden was present to discuss her findings on a social media policy. Ms. Snowden found guidance through MBLC. Ms. Snowden reported the one she liked best was from Ludlow. Ms. Snowden also used a policy from a library in East Lansing for guidance. Ms. Snowden asked if there was a better way to interact with their community rather than social media products. The new website expects to have more abilities and opportunities for interactions with the community. Ms. Mathew asked if there was a way with the new website for users to sign up for a service where they can receive news automatically from the library. Ms. Snowden reported that Ipswich has a great newsletter if the Trustees wanted to see a model. Ms. Alessandri and Ms. Snowden will work together to draft a policy and report back to the Trustees.

The Trustees discussed a potential policy or language about the library and AI created resources. Ms. Snowden stated her concern about the staff needing training on dealing with ICE raids. Ms. Mathew suggested looking into guidance given to schools from DESE or the state.

C. Bylaws – MPL or MBLC for website

Ms. Mathew reported that they follow the Trustee bylaws from MBLC. Mr. Francis reported that it appears as though there are Medway specific bylaws for the Trustees. The Trustees will compare the two to make sure they are the same.

D. Long Range Plan

Ms. Alessandri and Ms. Perkins will compare the plans they found to make sure they are clear on which long range plan is posted

6. Old Business

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

Ms. Mathew spoke with the state ethics commission who redirected her to the FAQs and recommended using them to guide decisions. The Trustees expressed concern over the line between employee and Friend volunteer being blurred. Ms. Sheehan reported that she read and researched a lot about the relationship between the Friends group, the Trustees, and the library and them working together. Many libraries have a memorandum of understanding between Friends and the library. Ms. Sheehan suggested the creation of guidelines should help with the relationship between the library and the Friends for years to come. Paula

Belanger was in attendance and spoke about concerns she had when she worked in the library. Ms. Belanger believes there is a conflict of interest for an employee to be in a leadership role on the Friends and spoke to her experience as a former employee of the library. Ms. Francis stated that sometimes members of the Friends are not going to like ideas from the Trustees. Ms. Francis stated that the best way to create a good working relationship is to move past this issue. Ms. Sheehan reinforced that she wants to serve the institution of the library for the people of Medway. Ms. Sheehan expressed that developing a relationship and rebuilding trust between the Trustees, the Friends, and the library is the way to do that. Ms. Fahey reported there are active members of the Friends who actively volunteer, and there are other members who pay the fee and support the library in that way. Ms. Fahey estimated the total number of Friends members may be around 100 with varying degrees of involvement. Ms. Fahey invited the Trustees to a future book sorting and book sale to meet and talk with some of the active members of the Friends. Ms. Price reiterated that sometimes when Friends organizations are struggling to find members to fill leadership posts, library staff step up and fill those positions. As a result, she felt that a policy that there couldn't be someone that holds both positions wouldn't be helpful. Ms. Price advocated for the two groups to get together and talk more on a regular basis. Ms. Alessandri proposed reviewing the resources that Ms. Sheehan sent on the relationship between the Friends, the library and the Trustees. Ms. Sheehan also suggested looking at the Sudbury library and their experience to gather information..

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

8. Budget Report - Ms. Sheehan asked if they were leaving the line items that had gone in the red. Ms. Sheehan asked how Ms. Perkins is approaching the rest of the year for programs and operations. Ms. Perkins explained she watches the expenses and would take money from other baskets to cover any programs that need coverage. Ms. Alessandri expressed concern that if money is just being pulled from different places, it is unclear what they are actually spending. Ms. Alessandri asked Ms. Perkins to ask about having the Programs item pulled out and made into its own category before the next Trustees meeting.

9. Director's Report - Ms. Sheehan stated that when she saw the visitor numbers breakdown, she wondered what types of people were coming to do the certain things. It would be helpful to see how things are being used to see trends. Ms. Alessandri suggested a sign up at each piece of equipment in the Makerspace may help. Ms. Aguilar reported that they catalogued 10 new things for the Library of Things. They are still adding to the collection by searching through things they already have. Ms. Alessandri reported they talked with Ms. Perkins about visiting 3 new libraries. Ms. Perkins stated she planned to visit Norwood, Foxboro, and Medfield in March.

10. Adjournment - 8:33pm

Next meeting rescheduled for Wednesday, March 19, 2025.