

GREENWICH FREE LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MARCH 2025 MEETING MINUTES

Regular Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

7:00 pm

Community Room

Attendees: Patrice Abate, Ellen Fronhofer, Tony Jordan, Aaron Northrup, Teri Pendergrass, Paul Thurston, Sandy McReynolds (Historian), Sarah Murphy (Library Director)

1. Call to order 7:02 pm
2. Board Action Items
 - a. Approval of proposed February 2025 Minutes (separate document)
Teri made a motion to approve the February meeting minutes. Ellen seconds. Board approved. (Paul abstains from vote)
 - b. Approval of 2025 Annual Meeting Minutes (separate document)
Ellen made a motion to approve the February meeting minutes. Teri seconds. Board approved. (Paul abstains from vote)
3. Board Committee Reports
 - a. Facilities Committee (Aaron, Paul, Teri) – Discussion of how we will pay the clerk of the works for the renovation project, John Harnett. The options are to provide John with a 1099 or to add him to the payroll. Because of the (anticipated) short length of the project, as well as the fact that payment needs to be made from the construction account rather than the general operating fund, the decision was made to pay John on a 1099 basis.
 - Teri provided an update on the project. Two firms (and their subcontractors) did the walkthrough and will provide bids. Two potential bidders are FH Alexander (who participated in the previous renovation of the lower level) and Wainschaf Associates. Bids are due back on 3/28.
 - Picture of suggested hardware for the barn doors was shown to trustees.
 - There was a discussion on options for other options to control the sound in the space. The acoustic ceiling tiles preferred by Lisa came in quite high and will likely not be feasible for our budget. Aaron is going to speak to some of his professional contacts at Adirondack Studios about alternatives that might work for our needs and be more affordable. Other suggestions made were for wall hangings or flags. Regardless of the option we select, Lisa has made it clear it needs to be to code.
 - We will likely need to apply for a building permit with the county. Cost will range from \$100-\$425.
 - The sewer odor is quite noticeable on the lower level again, so much so that we held our meeting upstairs. On a positive note, one of the subcontractors who was performing a walkthrough expressed confidence that the odor is coming from a unit in Furnace Room C. This is good news as this is the second professional that has this opinion. The drain in this space also needs to be examined.

-The dehumidifier needs to be repaired at the same time the plumbers are working on the lower level. This will be paid for out of the general operating fund (maintenance and repair account)

- b. Finance & Fundraising Committee (Mary Ann, Patrice, Paul) – N/A
 - c. Material Review Committee (Cliff, Patrice, Paul) – N/A
 - d. Policy & Audit Committee (Mary Ann, Patrice, Paul) – Sarah and the staff met with Lieutenant Greg Danio from the Washington County Sheriff's office. This will help as we craft policy regarding safety and emergency preparedness. Additionally, we will craft a policy for the cameras we have installed and Sandy will mirror that language in the Gill Room Policy.
 - e. Board Recruitment (Cliff, Patrice) – N/A
 - f. Personnel & HR Committee (Mary Ann, Paul) – N/A
4. Gill Room Report (presented by Sandy McReynolds, Historian) – Sandy has been working on a request for the new owners of the building that housed Just Meats/Washington Square Deli. Sandy is doing a presentation at Wally's on 4/17 for the Lions Club. As well, Sandy will do a walking tour and school tour for the Greenwich Class of 1975 reunion.
5. Treasurer's Report – February transactions were approved as presented.
Aaron made a motion to approve the transaction report from February. Tony seconds. Board approved.
We need to review the payroll taxes for the first two months of 2025. They are running far higher than anticipated and Ellen needs to review Jan/Feb 2025 vs Jan/Feb 2024 to see what the discrepancy is. Also, there is an outstanding check (Ck # 10301) in the amount of \$1875 written 1/3. Check was not received by Roland J Down so a replacement check was sent on 2/28 (Ck # 10323). It is recommend that the library put a stop on Ck # 10301 to protect against potential fraud.
-We have been accepted by Nexamp but have not yet been assigned to a solar farm. This can take 2-3 months.
6. Friends of the Greenwich Free Library Update – N/A
7. Library Director's Report –

Greenwich Free Library - Director's Report to the Board-February 19, 2025

February [Statistics](#)

	Visitors to the library	Community space use	Community attendees	Library programs	Library program and event attendees	Early Learning programs (ages 0-5)	Early Learning program attendees	Volunteer hours	Farm 2 Library participants	Pounds of waste diverted
February 2024	4041	55	347	23	362	13	359	131	338	517.2
February 2025	3000 (est)	51	297	29	309	10	249	140	274	458

	Check outs	Borrowers	Holds satisfied	New cards issued	Computer sessions	WiFi uses	Libby checkouts	New Libby Users	Kanopy plays
February 2024	2331	420	466	9	185	509	383		60
February 2025	2364	429	458	14	106	743	438	2	140

Door count is estimated because the front door counter was not working properly. It is fixed now.

STRATEGIC PLANNING GOALS:

Public Promotion

A1 Communications Thanks to Patrice for providing a great quote for the newspaper release announcing the Community Room project. I also got input from Lisa Hayes. The release was published in the most recent Greenwich Journal.

Programming

B1 Programs that fulfill patron needs

- Current and upcoming programs and events can be found [on our website calendar](#).
- Kris and Emily report on their goings on [here](#).
- After weather delays, Dungeons & Dragons started at the end of February.
- Reading Buddies also started on Thursday afternoon. We currently have 9 kids in grades 1-4 coming to read with 6 teen volunteers. Lauren Beane, reading specialist at the primary building, has been incredibly helpful, and Jen Sharp and Lola the therapy job have continued to come during that time.

B2 Give local artists, writers, creators, and experts a platform:

- We received LARAC Community Arts Grants for another year of Music at the Library (at the park!) and for a ukulele series for adults over 60. Eric Kufs has agreed to curate the music series, and has already been in touch with a variety of bands and musicians. Chelsea Henderson will return in the fall to teach ukulele.
- One of the bands who performed at the Gazebo last summer, Northern Born (of Cambridge) will be performing as a duo in the Community Room later in April.

Partnerships

C1. C2 Local not-for-profits and businesses

- I have spoken with Chris at Elsassers about the possibility of hosting an evening event there during the period when the Community Room will be unavailable for construction. I think this is a nice opportunity to expand our partnerships with other local for-profit businesses.
- We received a grant from Poets & Writers to collaborate with Bonnie Hoag on a Summer Solstice writing workshop at Dionondehowa on June 21.

Place

- See Facilities report
- Last Friday Lieutenant Greg Danio from the Washington County Sheriff's office came to our staff meeting to discuss hazard prevention and emergency preparedness. It was a very positive meeting, with assurances that he will provide assistance as we develop and implement related procedures and policies. He complimented the library for seeking this out proactively, rather than in response to an emergency situation.
- A week earlier I met with muralist and artist Kendra Farstad about the possibility of a commission for our stairwell. She is brainstorming ideas, and is open to ours.
- Cliff, KC, and I visited Hannie Varosy and selected one of Gyula Varosy's pieces for installation in the library. We are grateful for this donation.
- Greenwich was awarded 4.5 million in state funding for the NY Forward initiative. Many proposed projects were included in the initial application, including the backyard here at the library. Another call for proposals will go out soon, and a committee will choose between all of them to send along to the state. The state will then choose what to fund. This could be an opportunity to get funding for some of the aspects of the community room or downstairs projects that we have deemed as alternates.

Preservation

- See Gill Room report

OTHER

Fundraising and financial

- In addition to the LARAC and Poets and Writers awards mentioned above, we also received a \$700 donation from Stewart's to go towards Summer Reading.
- We did not get the grant from United for Libraries and Penguin Random House to support the Aging in Community Series.
- We have not heard about pending applications from Better World Books and WGY Christmas Match.

Volunteers

- JA (Joint Automation) has announced the beginning of multifactor authentication at all SALS and MVLS libraries. We believe that an already cumbersome system for volunteers will become more so, so we are limiting circulation access to a short list of longstanding regular volunteers and transitioning to a different model for others.

An Executive Order seeks to eliminate the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Here is what I wrote in my March/April newsletter about the EO:

You may have heard that President Trump has issued an executive order seeking to eliminate, among other federal agencies, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). IMLS is the main source of federal funding for libraries and museums. New York State is second only to California as a beneficiary of IMLS funding, receiving about 20 million dollars in all. Of that figure, \$8.1 million goes directly to the New York State Library, which in turn helps serve over 7,000 libraries, including ours.

In its statement responding to the EO, the American Library Association says, "To dismiss some 75 committed workers and mission of an agency that advances opportunity and learning is to dismiss the aspirations and everyday needs of millions of Americans. And those who will feel that loss most keenly live in rural communities." According to IMLS, our library fits the definition of a rural library, and for this reason, we have been eligible for specific grants and opportunities earmarked for communities like ours. ALA further notes that all library funding constitutes 0.003% of the federal budget.

It is still unclear exactly how this executive order will affect our library, but there can be no doubt that this is a grievous move with devastating consequences for libraries and museums generally. If you would like to advocate for these institutions, check out action items at American Library Association and at Every Library. Remember that every time you visit the library or use one of our services, you are not only benefitting from what we do, you are also helping us. The more you use the library, the more we can show how essential we are to the community.

You are what makes our library strong.

8. Period for Public Expression – No members of the public present.
9. Old Business – None
10. New Business –None
11. Dates of Future Board Meeting Calendar – The next monthly Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 16, 2025 at 7 pm.
12. Adjournment – **Patrice made motion to adjourn. Teri seconds. Meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.**

Digitally signed by Patrice M. Abate