

Camden Public Library Board of Trustees

Minutes of June 15, 2023, meeting conducted in a hybrid manner, in-person in the Picker Room and via Zoom

Attendance

A quorum was in attendance.

Present in person: Penny Abbott, Silvio Calabi, John Fitzgerald, Jennifer Gromada, Dave Jackson, Nikki Maounis, Alison McKellar, Jeremy Pratt, Sarah Serafini, Elizabeth Senders, Kristen Smith, Susan Todd, Natalie Travia, Marti Wolfe,

On Zoom: Penny Abbott, Stephanie French

Absent: Ken Gardiner, Ken Gross, Elinor Klivans, Colin Page, Betsy Perry

1. The meeting was called to order at 3:59pm EST by Silvio Calabi.
2. There was no public comment.
3. The minutes of the May 18, 2023, meeting were amended to correct the spelling of Jeremy Pratt's and Sarah Serafini's names and to mark Colin Page as present on Zoom, not in person. The minutes were accepted as amended.
4. Nikki Maounis presented the Director's Report.
 - The Library is less than \$10,000 from making its fundraising goal for the fiscal year and is expected to make this target. Expenses are also well on track to finish on budget.
 - There are four outstanding facility/parks projects that are estimated to cost \$12,000 in total: caulking the steps around the rotunda; reinstallation of four benches at Harbor Park; pushing back the granite blocks in the sea wall; and new chairs for the Amphitheatre. Money for these projects not expended by the end of the fiscal years will be reserved to use as the projects are completed.
 - The Library's server requires software upgrades and new staff computers are needed. This is estimated at \$12,000-14,000. It is expected that half will be completed this fiscal year and half in the next year.
 - It was noted that Sophie Romano has not yet reported back on any research into town vs. Library responsibility for sea wall repairs.
 - Summer Harbor Arts, scheduled for July 8-9, is full with 85 artists confirmed and a waiting list. Work on the website and a brochure is in progress. Volunteers are needed to help on Sunday afternoon particularly with artist loading and traffic control.
 - Nikki Maounis followed up last month's review of recent censorship activities in libraries in the United States and Maine, with a presentation on "The Selection Process" which explains how Camden Public Library chooses and acquires materials.
 - Michael Connelly will be at Camden Public Library in conversation with two other authors on August 29, 2023 in the Amphitheatre. This may be conducted as a fundraiser. More details will be available in the future.
5. Marti Wolfe gave an update on Camden on Canvas, which will be held on July 21-23, with the auction on the afternoon of Sunday, July 23. All preparations are on schedule. Marti will be reaching out to ask Trustees to man the information tent that weekend. Accommodations have been secured for out-of-town artists. Business sponsorship

commitments are almost all paid up, with the Library realizing \$8,000 from this. Invitations and announcements have been mailed. A press release has been sent and posters are up.

6. Susan Todd highlighted some items from the financial reports that were distributed with this month's meeting announcement. We are 92% through the fiscal year and positive for the month and year. Expenses are much higher than last year. Book sales are higher than planned. May was a strong month for development. There are funds in the facility reserve. The Finance Committee met last month with Allen Agency to review our portfolio. While its performance has been volatile, our portfolio is performing satisfactorily. The fund will be rebalanced back to the original allocation.
7. John Fitzgerald reported that the Nominating Committee interviewed Board of Trustee applicant Jake Gerritsen last week and recommended that his nomination be accepted. John moved that the Board accept it; the motion was seconded and passed. It will go to the Select Board for confirmation.
8. Dave Jackson provided supplementary information to the Camden Harbor Park and Amphitheatre Report distributed with the meeting's announcement.
 - Three weddings have been performed in the Amphitheatre so far this year, with one scheduled for this Saturday. There is also a concert schedule before.
 - Walking tours start two weeks from tomorrow.
 - Susan Todd mentioned that there is a low hanging branch on Atlantic Avenue by the steps that needs to be trimmed.
 - Kristen Smith noted that the Japanese Barberry by the flagpole needs to be trimmed. Dave is trying to get that work scheduled.
 - Alison McKellar said that she is the Select Boards liaison to the Conservation Commission and asked for guidance in responding to citizen comments about the plants in Harbor Park, specifically getting rid of the Japanese Barberry, which is an invasive plant. Dave noted that it would be a major job to remove and replace the Japanese Barberry. It has been there since Harbor Park was established and is part of the original 1930 design.
9. Natalie Travia reported that the Library will hold a three-day used book sale in conjunction with Harbor Arts Friday, July, 7 through Sunday, July 9. At the same time, the sale in the Rotunda will be dismantled. Next week, the Book Sale Committee will be asking for volunteers to help set up the tent sale on July 6 and to work two-hour cashier shifts during the sale. They are also looking for movers to help transfer boxes of books from the Rotunda and the blue door book shed to the tent.
10. Susan Todd gave an update on the Megunticook River Citizens Advisory Committee. The MRCAC now meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. The MRCAC met with Save the Dam Falls this week and will meet with Restore Megunticook next month. They had tables at the S.E.A. Fair in the Amphitheatre on June 2 and at the Camden Farmer's Market on June 3. A new newsletter was released this week. The next speaker's series will be held from 4-6pm on June 27, and feature Dave St. Laurent who will take interested people via bus to see four dams in Camden and learn about their operations and maintenance. In July, there will be a talk about the Megunticook Lake Watershed and in August, Tony Grassi and Stephen Moore will discuss Megunticook damn and fish ladders. The \$1.6 million Coastal Resiliency grant to study the Megunticook River awarded by the

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and NOAA was signed this month. There is a photo contest underway.

11. There were three items of new business:

- Marti Wolfe distributed rack cards promoting Camden on Canvas.
- Susan Todd suggested that the Trustees offer a matching donation during the Camden on Canvas auction to incentivize auctiongoers to increase their donations. The Development Committee will consider this suggestion.
- Jennifer Gromada, who is a member of the Camden Garden Club, announced that this year is the Club's 75th Annual Garden Tour. To celebrate this significant anniversary, the Club is including additional features in the Tour, such as musical performances at each property. A special retrospective exhibit about the history of gardening in the United States, "Celebrate Gardening," will be on display in the Picker Room throughout July. All Trustees are invited to attend the opening reception from 2-4pm on Saturday, July 1.

12. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 5:02pm EST. The motion was seconded and passed.

13. The next Camden Public Library Board meeting is September 21, 2023, at 4:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Gromada