

Camden Public Library Board of Trustees

Minutes of November 16, 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, Jake Gerritsen, Jennifer Gromada, Ken Gross, Dave Jackson, Elinor Klivans, Nikki Maounis, Elizabeth Senders, Kristen Smith, Susan Todd, Natalie Travia

On Zoom: Alison McKellar, John Fitzgerald, Colin Page, Betsy Perry, Jeremy Pratt, Marti Wolfe

Absent: Silvio Calabi, Ken Gardiner, Sarah Serafini

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:01 pm EST by Kristen Smith.
2. There was no public comment.
3. The minutes of the October 19, 2023, meeting were approved as submitted.
4. Nikki Maounis gave the Director's report.
 - a. This month, the Library experienced some staffing interruptions. Recently, two staff members were out almost simultaneously, with one continuing to be present intermittently as their condition allows.
 - b. Health insurance premiums are going up significantly; an annual increase of 20% is projected for the 2024 calendar year. As this is the midpoint of the Library's fiscal year, only half of this increase, about \$7,000, will be seen for this six month period.
 - c. Camden's budget committee has a new process this year. The process has started with a series of introductory meetings with all departments and entities to get parties introduced, share program descriptions, and allow for Q & A. The Library's first meeting with the budget committee is scheduled for December 14, 2023. The Library will meet with them in March 2024 to present our funding request for the upcoming year.
 - d. Library staff is in the process of sending out annual appeal letters and Millay reminders. This is a time intensive effort involving creating 800 individually signed letters, each with a personal note. The process should be finished this week and then letters will be mailed.
 - e. Nikki is investigating the purchase of an AED device for the Library. Camden Fire Department recommended a specific device with will cost about \$2,000. The FD has offered to provide training for Library staff members. It was suggested that Board members be included.
 - f. Ken Gross was invited to give a presentation about the Walsh History Center. His presentation was a short tour of the resources in and use of the Center, commencing with the Camden diorama. The most frequent reason that people visit the history center is to find out about their house in Camden. There are a variety of resources to use for this research. The Center contains the Camden Herald archives, numerous town directories, town histories, high school yearbooks, a collection of Edna St Vincent Millay documents, Peyton Place memorabilia, an extensive historic map collection, uncatalogued Camden Herald materials, a variety of glass case displays, and thousands of historic photographs.

5. Susan Todd reviewed the Library's financial reports.
 - a. The finance committee met last week with Pat Nicholas from Wipfli to go over the results of the annual financial review. Normally, an audit is conducted once every three years, with reviews performed in the other two years. This year's review went very well with no issues raised.
 - b. Through October, the Library is ahead by \$11,000 owing to the receipt of a major gift of \$30,000 and the September/October book sale. Fundraising is going well and Millay renewals have been coming in early. Electricity and waste water costs are higher than usual, likely attributable to high facility usage during Fall Harbor Arts & Books and a hotter than usual summer. The Siemens project does not seem to have helped with kilowatt hours usage or produced the savings expected. Allison McKellar suggested that a letter be sent to town manager Audra Caler requesting performance of an audit of the Siemens project.
 - c. Susan encouraged all Board members to consider increased contributions to cover staff salary increases.
6. Elinor Klivans announced the Board's slate of officers for 2024: Kristen Smith for president, John Fitzgerald for vice president, Liz Senders for treasurer, and Jennifer Gromada for secretary. Elections will be held at the January Board of Trustees meeting. At that time, nominations may be made from the floor.
7. Elinor Klivans presented three nominees for the Board of Trustees. Three members of the current fifteen trustees are leaving the board in early 2024, and Board has a limit of seventeen members. Jeremy Pratt introduced and reviewed Kendra Watkins' nomination, which was subsequently approved by the Board. John Fitzgerald introduced and reviewed Erin Donovan's nomination, which was subsequently approved by the Board. Kristen Smith introduced and reviewed Marisa Baskin's nomination, which was subsequently approved by the Board.
8. Elinor Klivans presented Jacob Gerritson as nominee for Trustee of the Centennial Committee. Jacob's nomination was approved.
9. Elinor noted that this is her last meeting as she is term limited off the Board. The Board thanked her for her six years of service.
10. Ken Gross gave an update on facilities. Work on the third-floor restroom has not yet begun. While the building permit application was submitted, no start date has been set. A new microwave was installed in the kitchenette.
11. Dave Jackson provided supplementary information to the Camden Harbor Park and Amphitheatre Report. Al Cooper will start clean-up of the overgrown thicket by the sea wall on Friday, November 17. The railing for the steps up from Atlantic Avenue won't happen until late December. Dave attended a meeting of the Camden Area Business Group and everyone is excited about Christmas by the Sea – Santa will be back in the Library this year. The lights are on in the tree in the Children's Garden.
12. Susan Todd provided an update on the Megunticook River Citizens Advisory Committee. The Committee met on Tuesday and now has a long-term action plan. The Committee has

begun providing time at the end of their meetings for public comment. An interactive flooding story map has been created and is available on the website. The library has copies of MRCAC newsletters. The next newsletter will include results from the recent survey and answer questions submitted during the survey process. Tonight, the Camden Climate Action Group is hosting a meeting on Zoom which will include perspectives from a number of surrounding communities.

13. In new business, Natalie Travia requested that draft minutes from the Board of Trustees meetings be distributed for review as soon as possible after the meeting so that members can provide timely comments and feedback to the secretary.
14. Betsy Perry reported that at a meeting today at the Outreach Committee at First Congregational Church she proposed Camden Public Library as a potential grant recipient. There was discussion but no action was taken.
15. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 5:06pm EST. The motion was seconded and passed.
16. The next Camden Public Library Board meeting is January 18, 2024, at 4:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Gromada