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Library Trustees Minutes 04-13-2004

Robbins Library Board of Trustees
April 13, 2004

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM. Attending were trustees David Castiglioni, Patricia Deal, Katharine Fennelly, Barbara Muldoon, Frank Murphy, Joyce Radochia and Susan Ruderman. Also attending were library director Maryellen Loud, assistant director Cynthia Diminture. Present for a portion of the meeting were guests Brian Sullivan, Town Manager and John Deyst, the library's liaison to the Finance Committee.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the March 9th meeting were approved as corrected, on a motion by Ms. Ruderman; seconded by Ms. Deal.

Communications

Ms. Loud received a request from Elaine Shea to attend the next trustees' meeting to discuss the possibility of a memorial to Margaret Spengler.

Author Program

Ms. Loud will contact Anita Diamant's representative. She will also get in touch with Perri Klass.

Annual Report Flyer for the Public

Ms. Loud distributed a draft of the flyer. Trustees made changes in wording and syntax and re-ordered the bulleted items on the inside. A request was made to include a notation about the source of the figures in the table. Completed flyers will be distributed at Town Meeting.

Meeting with the Town Manager

Brian Sullivan, Town Manager, gave an update on the town's budget situation. The deficit appears to be less than originally predicted. Ms. Fennelly and Ms. Radochia reported on the work of the committee that is planning the tenth anniversary celebration. They showed the manager the timeline of activities. Ms. Diminture talked about the Friend of the Library and Ms. Ruderman reported on the trustees' fundraising activities. Mr. Sullivan asked the board members about the most pressing issues for the library. Many issues were raised, among them the loss of Sunday hours, decreases in new materials and a general decline in library services.

Meeting with John Deyst, Finance Committee Liaison

Mr. Deyst reported that the town's budget deficit estimate is now 1.1 million dollars, down from a 2.3 million dollar

projection. At a meeting of the full Finance Committee on Saturday, budget numbers will be firmed up. There may still be a cut to the library budget, but Mr. Deyst expects that it will be minimal. In preparation for that meeting, he asked Ms. Loud to supply him with minimum figures to qualify for library state aid. He will report back on the results of the meeting.

New Book Area

Ms. Loud asked the Board about the possibility of relocating the new book collection to the Reading Room. This would require the purchase of new shelving. She was directed to survey the library for other possible locations for the collection and to check shelving prices. Ms. Ruderman suggested incorporating this idea into the long-range plan.

Trust Fund Budget Report

Ms. Muldoon gave a report on the status of the trust fund spending. Nearly 50% of the unrestricted funds have been spent thus far. Some videos and summer reading materials still need to be purchased. More than 50% of restricted funds have been used. There are funds left in the staff development account which could be used for a staff workshop. A report on the expenditure of funds received through fundraising will be given at the May or June meeting.

Russell Fund Report

This report was tabled until the May meeting.

Wireless Project

Ms. Diminture explained a proposal from the library staff to install a wireless network for patron access to the Minuteman catalog, databases and the Internet from wireless enabled laptop computers brought to the library. A discussion took place about whether funding for this project could be a goal of a targeted business solicitation by the Trustees. This will be discussed in greater detail at a future meeting.

Other

Ms. Fennelly asked about fundraising to pay for replacement or repair of damaged books. Ms. Loud explained that this will be covered by funds approved by Town Meeting. Potential donors can be redirected to established donor channels. Ms. Loud sent a letter to the editor of the Arlington Advocate thanking all parties for their assistance with flood related activities, particularly the re-shelving of the fiction collection. The Board will also prepare an appropriate appreciation for the staff and volunteers.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 PM on a motion by Ms. Radochia; seconded by Ms. Fennelly. The next meeting will take place on May 11th at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Diminture

