

Farmington Libraries since 1901

Library Board Minutes

March 19, 2025

Attendees: Dana Pescatello, , Alan Sherman, Lyman Louis, Rich Olivastro, Jocelyn Kennedy, Kate Martorelli, Gary Ontko, Norma Hartley, Brian Lindroth, Elisabeth Umpleby, Henry Gu, Linda Chapron, Celia Bouza, Amy Palumbo

Board Members Not Present: Ida Franklin, Trish Garcia, Vanitha Patil

Guests: Shana Shea, Sage Gentry (Library staff member attended to give a presentation to the board)

Quorum: A quorum was determined. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Public Comment: There were no members of the public present, and consequently, no public comments were made.

Approval of the December Meeting Minutes: Gary moved, and Lyman seconded, the minutes were unanimously approved.

Presentation on Library Programming and Marketing:

Shana and Sage gave the board a very informative presentation on how the library staff develop programs and how the library communicates and promotes the library's programs and services.

Board Chair Report:

Dana updated the board on the recent happenings and she also highlighted the upcoming events and plans:

1. Maker Fair is on March 23 from 1:00pm to 4:00pm. Board members are encouraged to participate in the event and to sign up to greet the patrons at the fair.
2. The library budget proposal was presented to the town on March 13 with a 2.8% increase over the last year's budget. It was well received and was provisionally passed.
3. The library will share the infrastructure report with FVGLA by the end of April.
4. The board will receive the executive director's evaluations form in April and will conduct the evaluation in May.
5. The Bylaw committee will present the bylaw revision in May or June.
6. The Friend's book sale is in June. Book donations will be appreciated.
7. The board is seeking new board member nominations to replace the members who are going to rotate out of the board this summer.

Executive Director Report:

Jocelyn provided an update to the board on the library's ongoing efforts to recruit a new Director of Children's Services. She explained that the search had been reopened after the previous candidate accepted an offer from another library. Currently, two candidates have been invited for in-person interviews.

She also shared highlights from recent popular library programs, including the Harriet Tubman living history lecture, a presentation on New England UFOs, and the well-received "Puppies and Pie" event. However, Jocelyn noted that the library's February activity statistics showed a decline in all categories compared to the same period last year. The reasons behind this trend and its implications are still being evaluated.

In her report, Jocelyn emphasized one of the library's initiatives: creating more opportunities for neurodiverse community members and ensuring the library is a welcoming and inclusive space for all.

Additionally, Jocelyn confirmed that the current year's budget execution is on track. She mentioned that unplanned building repair expenses required reallocating funds from other categories to cover the costs. A concern regarding budget reporting to FVGLA was raised, and it was agreed that this issue would be addressed at the upcoming FVGLA meeting on March 31.

Friends of the Library:

As the secretary of FVGLA, Linda informed the board that FVGLA meeting will be held on March 31 at 6:30pm. All the board members who are also FVGLA trustees are expected to attend the meeting.

Linda reported that the Friends' membership drive was met with very positive community feedback, successfully raising over \$9,000 to date. The Book Nook has also seen an increase in sales compared to last year, with last month's sales reaching \$800. She reminded the board that the Friends will host a book sale from June 5th to June 7th and emphasized the need for volunteers to support the event. Additionally, the Friends have recently approved \$11,350 in funding for the library's summer programs.

Committee Reports:

Facilities & Infrastructure Committee:

Gary reported that no emergency issues have surfaced recently.

SP+A conducted the assessment to the facility and will have the report ready in April.

The Barney Library's boiler excessive water consumption problem was corrected by our HVAC contractor.

The fire alarm panel replacement funding was approved, and the panel is being replaced.

Bylaws:

The Bylaws committee is drafting an amendment to address the conflict with the FVGLA bylaws. Once reviewed by the FVGLA attorney, the revised bylaws will be forwarded to the board for review and approval.

Policy Committee:

The committee met once to discuss the goals and subsequent policies to be reviewed. The committee is currently working on reviewing the library's personnel policy.

Nomination Committee:

The board plans to recruit two new members to replace three current members whose terms will conclude in June. Board members have been encouraged to suggest potential candidates, ideally by the end of March. Preference will be given to individuals with skills that could contribute valuable expertise to the board.

Technology Committee:

The projector at the children's programming room was replaced with a new sound bar. We are also in the process of evaluating wide-angle webcam options to enable remote online meetings in the boardrooms..

Result of the Fire Alarm Panel Replacement Funding Vote: A vote to approve the expenditure of \$46,240 to replace the fire and emergency alarm control panel at the Main Library was conducted via email between the February board meeting and March board meeting. 14 board members voted yes, and one board member didn't submit the response. The motion was approved.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm. Lyman moved to adjourn, seconded by Rich.

Next Board Meeting: April 16 at 7:00pm.