

Pierson Library Board of Trustees Minutes
March 30, 2020 3:30 PM
Pierson Library (Dial-in strongly encouraged)

Attendees (all via conference call)

Kevin Unrath (director)

Trustees: Ruth Hagerman, Lisa Merrill, Laureen Mathon, John Boscia, Charlotte Albers, Barb Comeau

Future Trustees: Alex Nalbach, Becky Jewett, Cate Cross, Eliza Brooks (student member)

1. Call to Order 3:36 pm
2. Approval of Agenda – Barb moves to accept agenda with addition of 5a. Approval of minutes from March 16, 2020 and 6a. discussion of Town’s policy with COVID-19, Ruth seconded, Laureen, Charlotte, John, Lisa, Ruth, Barb approved.
3. Public Comment - None
4. Approval of minutes from Feb 17, 2020 – Barb moves to approve minutes of Feb 17, 2020, Ruth seconds. Lisa, Laureen, Barb, Ruth, Charlotte, John approved.
5. Approval of minutes from Feb 20, 2020 – Barb moves to approve minutes of Feb 20, 2020 meeting, Ruth seconds. Lisa, Laureen, Barb, Ruth, Charlotte, John approved.
- 5a. Approval of minutes from Mar 16, 2020 - Barb moves to approve minutes of March 16, 2020 meeting, Ruth seconds. Lisa, Laureen, Barb, Ruth, Charlotte, John approved.
6. Library policy related to COVID-19 update. Library closed at end of day last Monday per Governor Scott’s order. Providing digital services, transitioned over to offering online discussion groups, online story time and additional online resources available either freely available or that we’ve curated or available through using one’s library card. We are making effort to advertise those efforts as widely as possible. Staff has been working on things like this type of conference call. Will pay for one Zoom account. The Town is also going to have their own Zoom account, but since we will be having one event a day we wanted to have our own account So far we have had 4 online programs including an interactive story time (over a dozen attendees) and over 7 attended online book group discussion group today. Building itself is completely closed. One staff person coming in for one hour a day to check book drop – check in and shelve books – water plants – do a walk around the building. Cataloguer will pick up books once a week to bring them home. All staff members have transitioned to working at home now. Lisa asked about book returns, are they handling them right away? Yes, they are shelving them right away, but they are wearing gloves and they are using wipes and the books will not be going out into circulation anytime soon. All staff are using their own computers. Only have one staff person in the building at a time. The State library thought it was a bad idea to have people touching all of the books so we have stopped putting out the free book cart. Charlotte asked if we are still relaxing fines. Kevin says that we are not collecting fines now. Everything is due May 1st. If it was already overdue when we shut down, we were unable to advance due dates for those items. We are not recommending that people return books now and we are not going to bill anyone for items that are out.
- 6a. Town policy related to COVID-19 update – Kevin updated us on the Town policy related to COVID-19. They are establishing an economic task force called Pro Tem Financial Advisory Committee and they are charged with providing for the continued viability and preparation of a Town econometric

model based on the town's financial activities. This committee was formed after Friday's Selectboard meeting – first meeting is today. They are probably going to be recommending a reduction in force for non-essential Town employees (layoffs) and it will be wise for us to make a proposal that allows us to continue our online services, but also allow us to be able to re-open and have full staffing for our return. In 2006-2009 recession, libraries saw a 25% increase in usage because people come to the libraries for access to technology and free books and programs. We need to propose a reduction in force that will allow us to continue services appropriately once we are able to re-open. Alex asked question about money that is saved with such a plan – it does go back to the Town general fund for them to allocate as they see fit. This is just a proposal and is not our decision to make. We need to explain how we are currently providing library services and how important libraries are in economic downturns, but make sure they understand we will need full staffing again once we re-open our doors. This committee should verify that our assumptions about the unemployment payments to affected staff are correct in helping our staff with reduced hours. We want to show we are fiscally responsible but also get message out that libraries are important in economic downturns. Kevin would like to have a board member help him put together proposal for Town. Becky volunteered to help Kevin with this proposal.

7. Consider request to contribute \$2,500 of Trustee funds towards additional online materials. We subscribe to Overdrive and we have talked about upgrading to Overdrive Advantage in the past, but now it seems like good timing to do this. Kevin reached out to the Friends and they agreed to donate \$2,500 for additional Overdrive titles, Kevin set aside \$2,500 from his Development fund for this purpose as well and he would like to know if Trustees would be willing to donate \$2,500 for these additional titles as well. E-books cost more through library than if we were to buy it as an individual (opposite of a hard copy book). They feel like it takes away from market share so when you buy an E-book, you have access to it perpetually, a certain period of time, or for a certain number of uses. It depends on the publisher, whether it is per use, per time, or perpetual. They typically cost in ballpark of \$50 per title (bestsellers especially). Most libraries who purchase Advantage, use it to buy high interest titles from popular fiction writers or a series that they know their readers like to read – for example Louise Penny for us. Or they look at holds queue and buy titles that patrons have requested. Lisa suggested we use the money from Sunday hours that isn't going to get used toward this Overdrive Advantage. Kevin just added Tumblebooks for kids K-12 so this would be focused more on adults. Barb also mentioned that students are being inundated with online resources from their schools right now. Barb made motion to approve \$2,500 for purchase of Overdrive materials. John seconded. Lisa, Laureen, Charlotte, Ruth, John, Barb all in favor.

Lisa asked if Barb and Ruth want to step down or wait until officially replaced as trustees as their terms are not ending? New trustees have not been approved by Selectboard yet, but Lisa hopes that they will be soon. There will only be 4 trustees in attendance if they do step down and others aren't approved, enough for a quorum? Would need all to be in attendance. Laureen's term is over as of 3/31/20. Lisa thanked them for their efforts and contributions to the library.

Kevin commented on how the online storytime went with children singing Wheels on the Bus together – it was very emotional.

8. Next scheduled meeting, **April 16, 2020 7 PM**

Meeting adjourned at 4: 29 p.m. – Barb moved to adjourn the meeting, Ruth seconded. Lisa, Laureen, Barb, Ruth, Charlotte, John approved.

Meeting by Conference Call:

Dial-in number (US): (425) 436-6306

Access code: 545049#

International dial-in numbers: <https://fccdl.in/i/lisamerrillvt>

Online meeting ID: lisamerrillvt

Join the online meeting: <https://join.freeconferencecall.com/lisamerrillvt>