Highgate Public Library & Community Center
March 11th, 2025
Board of Trustees Meeting

Present: Rebecca Manning, Chelsea Pigeon, Amber Machia, Virginia Holiman, Amy Rainville, Christine Walton

Meeting called to order at 6:50pm

Public Comment: Amy reported that she had family visiting that stopped in the library and were very pleased. Christine reported that she has had positive feedback from the community. Rebecca reported that she has heard inquiries about how the select board will proceed following the approval of Article 5.

Minutes: Chelsea made the motion to approve the minutes from the February meeting. Amy seconded the motion. Amber and Rebecca noted that Wendy caught that Amy's presence was omitted from the February meeting minutes and she (Wendy) made that edit before posting the meeting minutes. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: The board reviewed the budget status and warrants for February.

Rebecca inquired about the large amazon charge on 2/21. Christine will look into it.

Amber noted that the library is noticeably over budget for the line item "printing and binding" on the Budget Status Report. Christine explained that ink has been very expensive there is a learning curve to figuring out how the budget will be set up in the future.

Virgina inquired about how the NCSS grant works. Christine explained that it works on a reimbursement system based on submitted invoices, now on a bi-annual basis.

Amy made the motion to approve the warrants and budget status from February. Virginia seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Director's Report:

Library Programming Updates
- Special Events:
  - i) Winter Carnival: COMPLETED
    - (1) Saturday, February 8th from 10 AM – 12 PM at HLCC. We will be partnering with the Siber Sled Dog team and offering sled dog selfies, bonfires, s'mores, a story time, snow art, games, and a hot dog station. 68 people attended.
  - ii) Sushi Making Day: PENDING

(1) Saturday, March 29th at 11 AM – Town Building. We have 8 people registered. *Chelsea will be assisting as Patti is out that day.*

Weekly Programs:

iii) 2025 HLCC Programming Schedule

(1) Muffin Mondays: UNDERWAY

(a) Every Monday from 10 AM – 11 AM

(b) We have 10 people registered

(2) Books & Babies: UNDERWAY

(a) Every Wednesday from 10:30 AM – 11 AM

(b) We currently have 4 children registered

(3) Storytime: TO RESUME ON THURSDAY, MARCH 13th

(a) Every Thursday from 10:30 AM-11:30 AM

(4) Stay & Play Saturdays: UNDERWAY

(a) Every Saturday from 10 AM – 2 PM

iv) Winter Break Events

(1) Lego Day

(a) We offered a mini figure search, a building challenge, a Lego hand puppet, and giveaways.

(b) We had 9 people join us

(2) Movie Day

(a) We watched Frozen 2 and offered complementary popcorn and juice boxes, and giveaways.

(b) We had 6 people join us

(3) Karaoke Day

(a) We offered an interactive song station and giveaways.

(b) We had 3 people join us

(4) STEAM DAY

(a) We offered a playdoh, kinetic sand, magic snow, and giveaways.

(b) We had 9 people join us

Afterschool & Community Outreach:

i) Crossroads – TO RESUME THURSDAY, MARCH 20th

(1) Awarded a $500 Clif Spark Grant to support the program. We still have $259.42 to spend until June 2025.

(2) We have signed on for the spring session from March 10th – June 5th, with a break from April 21-27th. Patti will be walking the space with Ellen on March 12th. Patti will facilitate Crossroads independently.

(3) The spring curriculum and craft prep are currently being planned.

Rebecca inquired if some of the funding could be used for non-consumable goods – something that could be reused for future programming.

Personnel & Staffing:

1) Patti's monthly program training session is completed

2) Update to Staff Bulletin Board
    a) Posted weekly schedule - COMPLETED
    b) Posted monthly program schedule - COMPLETED
    c) Posted monthly checklist - COMPLETED
3) New Library Clerk Position - COMPLETED
    a) The position is closed and the posting came down on Sunday, March 9th. I have 3 more interviews this week and will make my final decision on Friday. All candidates will be notified. This position will be a part-time position, 10-15 hours a week, at $17/hr starting wage.

Christine has interviewed 5 people and has 3 more interviews scheduled. She will check in with Shelly regarding interview notes and keeping applications on file.

Monthly Metrics:

1) Adult Patron Visits: 228
2) Children Patron Visits: 93
3) Computer Usage: 12
4) Reference Questions: 2
5) Items Circulated: 343
6) New Cards Given: 5

Age Well Update:

1) We handed out 59 meals this month. The program has been extended indefinitely. Laura Need is to inform me when the grant funds have officially run out. All participants have been informed.

Grants Update:

1) Our 2024 grants:
    a) We received a $10,000 grant from LTC (Libraries Transforming Communities) that is an accessibility grant. We have currently spent $2,726.11
    b) We received a $8,000 grant from ARSL (American Rural/Small Libraries) that is an agricultural grant meant to go to our community food project. We have currently spent $1,148,89.
    c) We received a $500 grant from Clif Spark that will assist with the winter crossroads program. We currently spent $240.58.
    d) We have received a $2,000 grant from Ben & Jerry that will go to fund Muffin Monday Social Hour. We have currently spent $532.15.
    e) The library received a $1,000 grant from NCSS for our playgroup programs that needed to be spend by the June 2025.

The library received another donation from the Tyler Place, bringing 2025 donations to the library to around $1700.

Library Marketing & Communications:

1) March Newsletter and e-newsletters have been published
2) Monthly Programming Calendar is currently in the works for March-June

3) Library Policies
a) Revision is underway

Library Facilities:
Inside:
- The vault has been completed: cleaned out and organized.
- Basement clean-up is scheduled and will begin on Wednesday, March 12th.
- Basement electrical. Phase 1 completed. Phase 3 is pending. Ruffneck Buildz construction will take place from Monday, March 24 – Saturday, April 5th

Other:
- Long Term Director Goals are currently being drafted but are not yet completed

Rebecca inquired about Caley's Closet prom dress "program." Christine has worked on promotion and when basement reorganization happens, prom dresses will be moved upstairs. Prom is May 25th. Christine will coordinate with other FLARE libraries.

Amy made the motion to approve the director's report. Chelsea seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Old Business

-Summer Programming: Patti & Christine are in the planning process, including Crossroads and gardening programming. Virginia inquired about bringing in speakers on composting and a few other topics. The board discussed a vision for the outdoor garden and yard space.

-Library Policy Review: Christine continues to work on reviewing and reorganizing policies and bylaws and identifying any holes.

-Staff Training Manual: Christine continues to work on drafting.

-Plant Tower: The board would like to see the plant tower functioning again. Christine asked if the plant tower could be relocated to a larger space in the town. There are not other spaces in the town that would be fully accessible to the community. Christine states there is a concern about the humidity and space constraints. The board discussed fully utilizing grant funded purchases. The board would like to see the electrical work completed when the electrician is here for basement work and the plant tower to be incorporated into the library space next year January-March

-School Volunteers: Christine has connected with the contact at the school and is making a plan.

-Library of things lending policy: Christine has gathered intel from other libraries. Other libraries have individual lending policies and forms for each group of items. Christine will send out the information to the board for discussion at April meeting.

New Business:

-Story Walk: the eighth station needs repair and possible relocation to avoid future repair.

-Toilet: has been running and the chain keeps slipping off. Christine will reach out to the Public Works Department.

-Hope Sign: needs to be uninstalled. Amy and Virginia will attempt it on Saturday. It will be temporarily stored at Chelsea's house.

The motion to enter executive session to discuss personnel, legal, and contracts, where premature general public knowledge would place the town and/or individuals involved at a substantial disadvantage was made by Amy. Chelsea seconded the motion. The motion passed. The board entered executive session at 8:00pm.

The board exited executive session at 8:24pm.

Amber made the motion to approve and pay out the 65% downpayment to Ruffneck Buildz based on the submitted invoice (%7,807.64) to move forward with the repair work that needs to be completed, already covered by insurance claim funds pending a signed contract for service. Amy seconded the motion. The motion passed. Christine will work with Shelly to get the payment completed.

Virginia made the motion to approve the board re-structuring:
Chair: Rebecca
Vice-Chair: Chelsea
Secretary: Amber
Treasurer: Virginia
Library Steering Committee Liaison & Time Keeper: Amy
Amy seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:38pm.

The next trustee meeting will be Tuesday, April 1st, at 6:30pm

Short & Long Term Goals

1. More programming, especially outdoors based or utilizing the school and town office space

2. More community involvement in programs & running programs

3. Continue to clean and organize the library space

4. Create new transitional book section for children (between early readers and juvenile fiction)

5. Find grant money to expand large print and CD/audio books

6. New library building to expand offerings to the community, events and improve community relationships

7. Work with a marketing agency to put together a marketing plan for the library & community center.

8. Renewed focus on trustee training

9. Outreach to each board & foster relationships between boards

10. Utilize trustees more effectively

11. Consider re-evaluating the hours that the library is open and make sure we are meeting the needs of the community

Board of Trustees

Calendar of Annual Tasks

JANUARY

-Begin to discuss presentations/presence we want to have at Town Meeting

-Library written report for Town Meeting

-Begin recruiting new board member prospects if positions are opening

FEBRUARY

-Finalize plans for Library representation at Town Meeting

MARCH

APRIL

-Annual review and update of all Library policies and board by-laws

-Orientation for new board members

-Set date for plant swap

-Pick date for spring yard clean up

MAY

JUNE

JULY

-Review Craft Show documents

AUGUST

-Send out Craft Show documents

-Explore and organize/schedule annual trustee training opportunities for the fall

SEPTEMBER

-Director annual evaluation

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

-Treasurer & Director work on next year's proposed budget

-craft show

-plan for plant tower

DECEMBER

-Board to finalize proposed budget

OTHER :

-visit another library & trustee group to get new ideas and perspectives

-evaluate long range planning

-evaluate how the trustees are linking the community with the library