Highgate Public Library & Community Center
January 7th, 2025
Board of Trustees Meeting

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

Meeting called to order at 6:55pm

Public Comment: none

Minutes: Virginia made the motion to approve the minutes from the December meeting. Chelsea seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: The board reviewed the budget status and warrants for November and December. Warrants from most of November are missing from the report.

The board discussed where donated funds and craft fair fundraised funds should be kept or invested. Rebecca will follow up with Shelly to explore the options.

Chelsea made the motion to approve the warrants and budget status from November and December. Virginia seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Director's Report:

Library Programming Updates:

- i) December Take Home Craft: COMPLETED
  - (1) We had 18 crafts go out this month. We handed out roughly 30 library bookmark kids throughout the month of December. December will be the last month of Take-Home Crafts. We will not be carrying this program on into 2024.
- ii) Holiday in the Village: COMPLETED
  - (1) The library hosted its first ever Holiday Celebration in the Village event on Sunday, December 8th from 1 PM – 4 PM at HLCC. We had over 120 people attend, and 76 participants took a horse drawn sleigh ride. We handed out 25 new books and over 15 free bookmark craft kits.
- iii) 2025 HLCC Programming Schedule
  - (1) Muffin Mondays: UNDERWAY
    - (a) Every Monday from 10 AM – 11 AM
    - (b) We have 10 people registered
    - *3 patrons attended*
  - (2) Books & Babies: PENDING
    - (a) Every Wednesday from 10:30 AM – 11 AM
    - (b) Starting Wednesday, January 8th, 2025
  - (3) Storytime: PENDING
    - (a) Every Thursday from 10:30 AM-11:30 AM

(4) Monthly Program Schedule

(a) Present January & February (PRINT)

(5) Stay & Play Saturdays will continue every Saturday

iv) Winter Carnival

(1) Is this still something we would like to host?

(2) Do we still want to work with Siberian Sled Dog program at $350/hr.? Let's take a vote.

The library received a donation from VELCO for $500. Christine suggested using the donation for programming. She has also programming information for a sushi making event. The board supports Christine's decision to move forward on programming as she sees fit.

The group discussed possible programming for February break and promotion/outreach.

Afterschool & Community Outreach:

i) Crossroads – UNDERWAY

(1) Our first month at Crossroads was a huge success. We served 8 registered kids.

(2) Awarded a $500 Clif Spark Grant to support the program. I have spent $334.94 on craft supplies and Christmas book giveaways.

(3) The current session runs until February 18th, 2025. We have signed on for the spring session from March 10th – June 5th, with a break from April 21-27th.

(4) The spring curriculum is planned, and the completion of craft prep is underway.

Personnel & Staffing:

1) Our new Circulation Clerk, Patti Michel ~~started on Monday, January 6th, 2025~~.will *start Saturday, January 11th*

2) Patti's monthly training program has been drafted

3) Update to Staff Bulletin Board

a) Posted weekly schedule (PRINT)

b) Posted monthly program schedule (PRINT)

c) Posted monthly checklist (PRINT)

4) Time punch cards

a) We plan to continue to use time punch cards to track staff hours

5) Library Assistant position wage review (see attachment)

Monthly Metrics:

1) Adult Patron Visits: 265

2) Children Patron Visits: 101

3) Computer Usage: 18

4) Reference Questions: 8

5) Items Circulated: 278

6) New Patron Accounts: 3

Age Well Update:

1) We handed out 70 meals this month. The program is coming to an end due to limited funding. Thursday, January 30th, 2025, will be the last meal we receive.

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 $1807.30.

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 $816.85 to replenish and for a larger shelf. We have had several community members donate to the food shelf, assisting with our vision to have the program be sustained long-term by the community.

c) We received a $500 grant from Clif Spark that will assist with the winter crossroads program. We have spent $334.94 on craft supplies, Christmas & Valentine's Day book giveaways.

d) We have received a $2,000 grant from Ben & Jerry that will go to fund Muffin Monday Social Hour. We have currently spent $447.71 on a new coffee cart, Keurig and coffee pot combo, coffee & tea, pantry stand, and k-cup organizer.

e) The library received a $2,000 grant from NCSS for our playgroup programs that needed to be spend by the second week of December. I managed to get an invoice in on time and spend $1,988.37 on all new baby and Story Time program items.

f) I applied for several grants that I am waiting to hear back from.

Library Marketing & Communications:

1) Library Z-fold brochures about our Attraction Passes & Online Resources are now available (see attachment)

Rebecca recommended connecting with Wendy to have these printed resources as well as library card application for new Highgate residents.

2) Monthly Newsletter and e-newsletters are available (see attachment)

3) The library's 2024 Town Report has been written and submitted to Shelley (see attachment)

4) Monthly Programming Calendar

5) Library Policies

a) Revision is underway

Library Facilities:

Inside:

- Christmas decorations are down.
- Cleaning of the vault will begin the second week of January with new shelving to be installed.

- Basement electrical. Phase 1 completed. I reached out to our approved contractor but have not heard back. This is my 5th attempt to contact him. Cleaning of the basement will begin after the upstairs vault is reorganized and completed.
Christine has connected with another general contractor to get a quote for the work. There are funds from the insurance claim in a library account.

Outside:

- Christmas decorations are down. Christmas lights will remain up all year.
- Public Works installed slip strips on the stairs and the ramp over the Christmas break.
- I am researching contractors that specialize in door installations and await an appointment for a quote.

The door handle on the front door is failing and will be replaced soon. New keys will need to be issued.

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

Old Business
-Village Core: will meet 1/8/25.

-Craft Fair: Event evaluation paused

-Funds that are unspent at the end of the fiscal year remain with the department. There is $108,430.52 in the library "excess funds" account. These funds are left over from unspent funds budgeted for support staff, salary expenses from when we didn't have a director, grant funds, flood claim funds. The board discussed fiscal responsibility and transparency with the community.

New Business:
-Library Policy Review: Christine is working on reviewing and reorganizing policies and bylaws and identifying any holes.

-Staff Training Manual: Christine is in the process of drafting.

-Plant Tower: Rebecca noted that community members have inquired about the return of the greens! Virginia and Amber agreed that it would wonderful to put back in action. Christine is hesitant to bring the plant tower back due to humidity and ventilation concerns and the amount of time and labor needed to maintain it and is hoping to find an alternative solution. Chelsea suggested a smaller unit until we have more space for the large unit. The board discussed options.

-Capital Project Grant Funding Opportunities for Public Libraries | Department of Libraries: Virginia brought this opportunity to the board's attention. The board discussed the potential. Christine will look into this and follow up with the board asap.

-Town Report: The board discussed a few minor edits to get the report down to two pages. Chelsea made the motion to approve the town report. Virginia seconded the motion. The motion carried.

-Town Meeting Day informational meetings: February 27th. The board discussed having a library presence at the meeting possibly including a resource table and signage.

-Select Board Town Budget meeting: The library budget was approved. The requested $100,000 CIP funds was cut to $50,000.

The motion to enter executive session to discuss personnel was made by Chelsea, Virginia seconded the motion. The motion passed. The board entered executive session at 8:12pm.

The board exited executive session at 8:50pm.

Chelsea made the motion increase the hourly rate for the Library Assistant to $17 effective Monday, January 14th. Amber seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:52pm

The next trustee meeting will be Tuesday, February 4th, 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

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