



Minutes

May 24, 2023

Call to Order: 6:07 p.m.

Location: Silvia Trust Room, Middleborough Public Library

Attendance:

Board Present: Barbara Chadwick, Colleen Evers, Diane Fay, Paula Fay, Tony Freitas, Samantha O'Connor, Dave Pincus, Jessica Pincus

Guest: Karen Freitas

Not In Attendance: Randy Gagne (Due to Staffing Shortage)

Minutes from April 26 Meeting: Motion by Tony with second from Paula. Minutes were accepted unanimously.

Communications: Email received from Linda Corey, North Easton Savings Bank expressing her appreciations for our support of the collaborative work between the Veterans Service Office and the Library as it related to the various aspects of the afternoon event on Saturday. North Easton was the major supporter of the Hometown Heroes implementation and has also provided funding for Friends' fundraising events. Establishing and maintaining relationships with major supporters is imperative to the Friends ability to provide annual funding for programs and the ongoing maintenance, insuring and operation of the parking lot.

Board Appointment: Motion was made by Diane with a second by Jessica to appoint Karen to the Board. The motion passed unanimously. Going forward, Karen will be working with Tony to implement QuickBooks. This will allow the Friends to improve tracking of expenses and revenue.

Treasurer's Update: The Friends remain solvent. Discussion took place pertaining to the need to determine the impact that the library staff's mandate that the Friends are unable to procure funding via grants for any library program that the staff deems impact Adult, Young Adult, and Children programming. Expectations are that future revenue for the Friends will be impacted and the Friends will need to evaluate the resulting impact that the mandate will have on the funds that they are budgeting for programming by library staff.

Discussion took place regarding the fact that library staff will be applying for grants to supplement the potential fluctuation in funding from the Friends of the Library. Currently, grant funds received from Massachusetts Cultural Council at the local level via the Middleborough Cultural Council are deposited in the Friend's account. The marketing of any such program must identify support by the Friends even if additional funding is not provided by the Friends when the program takes place.

Discussion took place regarding the fact library staff will need to handle the funds associated with grants received from other groups besides the Middleborough Cultural Council.

Discussion took place regarding the fact that prior to submitting and/or supporting grant applications that indicate partial funding will potentially be coming from the Friends, library staff will need to inform the Friends.

Non-Profit Status Update: Status remains unknown due to the need for electronic filing of recent returns. Colleen will follow up on this item on Thursday, May 25th as it impacts the ability to apply for some grants.

Grants/Funding:

Current Grants:

Mass Cultural Council Grant: Festivals & Projects for FY'2023: The Friends were awarded \$2,500 to cover costs associated with Concerts held October 2022 through March 2023. All associated paperwork for the receipt of the award has been completed. Tony will monitor the bank account for pending direct deposit of funds. The last remaining event associated with the grant award is the Toe Jam Puppet Band Concert being held on June 27. There is a need to recognize both the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the Friends when marketing this event.

New England State Touring (NEST) Grant: The Friends were notified that we were awarded a New England State Touring Grant which is funded in part by the New England Foundation of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. Indications are that approximately 100 grants were funded across the New England states. The funding we received covers 80% of the \$2,000 fee from the travelling troupe. Children Librarian, Amanda Meyers selected this group from Connecticut as she felt that it aligned with this year's summer reading theme. In addition, the performance introduces basic American Sign Language (ASL). Since federal funding for many grants is starting to require outreach to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) community, a population that is underserved in many cultural programs, this award positions the Middleborough Public Library in the forefront of meeting a requirement that will in the future become as standard as providing handicap ramps, large print materials and other services to residents of Middleborough and surrounding communities. Currently, the date for the event has been set and planning is underway. The Friends have done outreach to the READ Collaborative since they coordinate DHH services in Middleborough and 17 surrounding communities. READ will assist in marketing the program to the families of their DHH clients. In

addition, supporting funds to offset the expense associated with the hiring of an ASL interpreter is being explored with the Middleborough Commission on Disabilities. The Friends will also be covering the cost for materials needed to create masks, supplementary books, and food for participants of the pre-show workshop.

Missed Opportunities Due to Mandate from Staff:

NEST – August Submittal: Based upon the mandate from the Adult Librarian, the Young Adult Librarian and the Childrens Librarian, this opportunity will not be used to obtain programs that would potentially enhance opportunities provided to the community. Expectations were that the potential revenue if this grant was processed and awarded it would assist with the Friends' annual commitment to the library. Since this will not happen, the Friends will potentially need to adjust the annual funding amount.

Rockland Trust: General Community Grant: Implementation of an Infant Welcoming Program and Literacy Development Program was identified as a long-term goal for the library. Such a program not only addresses the environmental justice demographic surrounding the downtown area, but it also offers the opportunity to attract and retain additional patrons. As an established nonprofit, the Friends would have been able to apply for this opportunity. Original plans were to explore working with library staff to creating marketing materials that would include pamphlets distributed to organizations that would have contact with young families, creation of a welcoming bag with parenting materials and infant literacy items, and the enrollment in the Imagination Library program (Dolly Parton) which would provide books to a child monthly from infancy until school entry.

Upcoming Grant Opportunities for the Friends:

Mass Cultural Council – Festivals and Projects Grants – June Submittal: Two opportunities will be explored for FY' 2024: Funding for the upcoming concert series and funding for digitization of copies of the Middleborough Gazette. The grants submittal date for these applications is June 8. The concert series will be submitted by the Friends and is the continuation of the grant that was funded last year. Since last year's submittal included two family/friendly concerts presented by the Toe Jam Puppet Band and there is a mandate from the library staff that the Friends do not include what they consider their programs in any grant that we write, the associated \$600 revenue from the concert series grant will potentially result in a comparable decrease in future funding that the Friends can provide on an annual basis for programming. Library staff needs to identify if there is a desire to continue to include these two family friendly events as deliverables in the June 8th grant application.

The digitizing grant application is being submitted by Randy. Hopes are that this will be the first of several grant submittals for the overall task which is estimated to cost \$10,000. Beyond

assisting with this grant submittal, the Friends are exploring additional funding opportunities that are available for the project. This includes outreach to representatives from SRPEDD.

NEST – August Submittal: At this point, the Friends will review the various opportunities available through the NEST program to determine if some of the Creative Ground artists can be utilized as a fundraising event. For example, there are magicians that offer events that focus on fundraising events. NEST supports and encourages charging for events so the Friends would be able to utilize the income from the fundraiser to eliminate expenses that we are covering for the NEST event on August 8th because the children theater event is being run as a library program.

Local Cultural Council Grant: Applications for local cultural funding will be released in the September/October period. The Friends will submit a funding request for a series of culinary experiences that focus on culinary experiences. Included will be the Fall In Love with Middleborough Food Experience, Victorian Holiday Festivity, and Winter Wine Festival. Other culinary experiences will also be explored and implemented.

Marketing Material/Expenditures:

Branding: Selected logos have been provided to Anthony. Identification of color palette is in process.

Online Ticketing: Currently exploring options for table seating events. Ticketing strategy for Mini-Golf will meet the needs for Fall Food Experience event.

Donor Management Software: Outreach to a variety of suppliers is taking place. These products need to be explored to determine the most effective option for the Friends.

Events/Activities Update & Discussion:

Seasonal Floral Design Workshops: It was identified that library staff have a goal to conduct a Books in Bloom event. To support this event, the Friends were going to conduct a series of floral design workshops as a fundraising event to develop an interest in the community participating in the Books in Bloom event. Barbara had been in contact with Lakeville Garden Club and was working on conducting the seasonal floral design workshop. Due to the mandate from library staff, the Friends have decided not to move forward with this or similar workshops that would have supported the Books in Bloom event. Going forward, library staff will need to utilize their budgeted funds to plan and conduct any required events needed to implement the Books in Bloom event.

May Tea: The Mother's Day event netted a profit of \$464.75. This revenue was lower than previous afternoon teas. Lower than normal attendance impacted the overall income. All board

members and Randy made in-kind donations for this event. In-kind donations included event marketing, event booking, food donations, mileage/vehicle usage, food/product purchasing, food preparation, food storage, floral arrangements, event set up, event staffing, and event clean-up. No board member was compensated for any of these in-kind donations.

Hometown Hero Banner Program (5/20/23): The Hometown Heroes/Deborah Sampson's function was provided "special" funding because it met one of the goals established by the Board of Trustees to have the library expand its' collaborative relationship with other municipal departments. The Friends determined it was effective use of our fundraising efforts because it showed the two major sponsors of the actual banner project (North Easton Savings and Beantown Construction) that the library plays a role in the community that extends beyond 102 North Main Street. This collaboration enhances the Friends' ability to continue to approach the bank for funds to support the programs and events that the library staff offer to the community. It will also offer us an opportunity to attempt to establish a relationship with Beantown. The donation jar received numerous contributions and potentially there were a few attendees at the event who will continue to donate to the Friends of the Library so that we are able to maintain our annual commitment to the library for programs and events. Time will tell if the commitment and energy that Randy put into working with Steve will bring about the desired outcome. No matter what, it positions the library as a significant contributor to the community, aligns it with corporate sponsors and puts the library in a "good light" with the Board of Trustees and town management. Without their collective support, the Friends' ability to support all the good things that happen at the library is limited. Samantha, Diane, Paula, and Randy made in-kind donations for this event. In-kind donations included event marketing, event booking, food donations, mileage/vehicle usage, food preparation/donation, food storage, event set up, event staffing, and event clean-up. These board members were not compensated for any of these in-kind donations. Friends covered the costs of all marketing materials and services for this event. The required funds were not expended from the program budget established for the fiscal year. The expenses for this event were \$788.51.

Teddy Bear Picnic: Amanda has done an excellent job in keeping costs for presenters/activities to a minimum. Associated costs for giveaways bags that include a reading book, coloring books, juice, and cookies have impacted projected expenses. As one of two "special" programs that the Friends are funding outside the annual FY' 2023 budget that we provided to the library, we feel that the Teddy Bear Picnic event is a positive use of the Friend' fundraising efforts. The smiles on faces and comments from attendees last year were enough for us to realize the impact that Amanda has on the children and their parents We also realize that the library will only thrive on its ability to attract and retain patrons. Friends are covering the costs of all materials and services for this annual event. The required funds are not being expended from the program budget established for the fiscal year. The current expense for this event is \$741.32.

Commemorative Brick Program: Existing orders will be forwarded to the vendor for processing. Outreach to the mason will take place with the expectation of a late summer completion. In the future, there will be one installation each year unless demand warrants otherwise.

Murder Mystery/Dinner Theater: Configuration was reviewed with Judith Kaloara from History At Play. Tables have been ordered from Grant. Dinner and Flatware quote has been requested from Taylor. Tables will seat 8 so 20 tables will be ordered. Jessica and Dave will do outreach to potential sponsors. Development of a program book is being considered.

Sunday Concerts 2023/2024 Season: Dates have been set for October 2023 through March 2024 concerts. There are no significant conflicts with the Patriot's schedule. Selection/scheduling of performers is in process.

"Fall in Love with Middleborough, A Local Food Experience" Marketing materials for vendors have been developed. Harper Lane Brewery will run the cash bar at the event. Committed vendors include Café Milano, Flying Banana, Main Ingredient, Freitas Liquor and the Friends of the Middleborough Public Library. Tony will do outreach to Bill Fisher for Harry's and Dave's Dinner. He will also do follow-up with Central Café. Dave and Jessica Pincus will do follow-up with Local Eatery and Nellie Rose. They will also approach Charred Oak, Mike Carver, Tateo Organic, Apazidis, Check in Thai, and Pachinis. Paula will approach Fireside, Fisher's Pub, Boston Tavern, and The Cabin.

"Wine Tasting with Pairing Experience" Similar in nature to Culinary Expo discussed for January 2024. Tony will begin doing outreach to his vendors. Paula will follow-up with the Town to confirm that a tasting event does not require a one-day license.

Parking Lot Discussion: Outreach has been made to both Pavestone and Turner Brothers regarding acquiring cement curb protectors at a reduced rate. The protectors are being installed to protect the investment that has been made in fencing for the lot. Tony has identified people who are willing to "Adopt A Curb Protector" to reduce the overall expense of this work.

Discussion regarding obtaining mulch for the parking lot took place. Outreach to a contact who has a business relationship with Ryco will take place to reduce the overall expense of this work.

Discussion pertaining to the use of the parking lot by non-library patrons remains a concern. Paula will meet with Chief Perkins to explore strategies to limit use of the parking lot.

Going forward there is a need to establish a maintenance and upgrade plan for the parking lot. Expectations are that resurfacing and repainting the lines in the lot will potentially impact the available funds that can be allocated on an annual basis to the library.

Downtown Improvement Committee/Downtown Property Owners Update: BID concept would include assessment of non-profit which could impact Friends' budget by either direct assessment of property owned by the Friends or by established requirements outlined in a memorandum of understanding.

Library Update: None due to Randy's inability to attend the meeting.

Unanticipated: Discussion took place pertaining to the fact that it appears library staff are not recognizing funding from the Friends of the Middleborough Public Library on all marketing materials. The Friend will be monitoring adherence on both social media and printed materials to this requirement by requesting that the Friends be provided with a complete list of pending programming monthly. Failure to properly acknowledge the Friends contribution to all supported programs and activities significantly impacts the Friends' ability to effectively solicit funding.

Discussion took place regarding the fact that at least one staff member has indicated that Board Members of the Friends are benefitting from their involvement with the non-profit. All members of the Friends are offended by the insinuation that is being made and offer any staff member who desires to get a better understanding of the workings of the Friends to attend a monthly meeting of the Board. Members of the Board hope that by doing this, there will be a realization that to provide the budgeted \$16,000 and the additional \$1,529.83 that funded the Teddy Bear Picnic and the Hometown Heroes event in FY' 2023 required a significant commitment that was provided for the good of the library and the community.

Discussion took place regarding the fact that both the Friends and the Library will be designated as a "Card to Culture" organization by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. This designation provides priority ranking points for future grant applications from either the library or Friends. Should this designation moved to the local level, library staff will benefit from the work that was initiated by the Friends to obtain this designation.

Next Meeting: There will not be a meeting in June. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, July 26, 2023,

Meeting was Adjourned: 7:23 p.m.

Submitted by: Diane Fay