

Library Board of Trustees

Edgartown Public Library

26 West Tisbury Road, Edgartown, MA

**MINUTES**

**Meeting of Thursday, September 14, 2023**

In the library program room

**Olga Church** called the meeting to order at3:35 p.m.

**Trustees in attendance:** Olga Church,David Faber, Nis Kildegaard, Julie Lively, Denise Searle

**Absences:** Maggie Morrison

**Guests:** Lisa Sherman, Library Director, Joan Dunayer of the Friends of the Library

**Review of Minutes:**

**MOTION:** To accept the minutes of the July 2023 meeting.

**MOTION:** Denise Searle, **SECOND:** David Faber, **ACTION:** Unanimous

**Friends Report, and Library Programs:**  Joan Dunayer reported that the Friends organization has received nearly $3,000 in donations honoring Diane Bongiorno, and $800 in memory of Richard Wilton. A draft of the organization’s annual appeal letter is now circulating and will be going out in mid-October. A report compiled for the period from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 counted 155 individual donors and a total of $27,000 in donations including in-kind and grant funding.

Lisa said the program room concert in August by David Crohan, on the piano he donated to the library, was a memorably wonderful event and drew an appreciative, standing-room-only crowd.

**Director’s Report:** Lisa Sherman

* Lisa said the library’s traffic count was 8,542 in July and 8,797 in August, with 221 new users during that period.
* Lisa shared a summary on library finances for FY 2023. The year ended with almost $71,000 left in the Salaries & Wages account, because there were gaps in staffing for several stretches of time. This year will likely be the same, she said, explaining that the library is currently down two part-time people. Building maintenance was costly in fiscal 2023, including repairs to the roof, the HVAC systems and the elevator. The library spent $185,925 in FY 2023 on the Books & Materials category, an amount required to meet standards set by the state.
* Lisa led a lengthy discussion with the board about the challenges of staffing a municipal service like the library at this moment on Martha’s Vineyard. “We have to start thinking more radically about how we’re going to approach library service in the future, about how we’re going to staff this building – and how we retain this current staff, who are so awesome.” She said other Island libraries are experiencing similar challenges: West Tisbury had just lost their children’s librarian the day before – to an office job that pays more and is likely much less stressful than running a children’s room at a public library. (Edgartown will be losing Alison Leslie, Technical Services librarian, at the end of this calendar year; Alison, Lisa said, has been on a 24-hour schedule, has been a mainstay of the staff for two decades, and will be exceedingly difficult to replace. Lisa also noted that last year it took the library ten months to find and hire its new director of programs – a person who stayed in that job for less than a year.)  
   Lisa said that for the library’s two part-time job openings, she has been interviewing candidates whom she would not have seriously considered for these posts a decade ago. “Yesterday,” she said, “something happened that has never happened to me before: an applicant was a total no-show for their interview – not a call, nothing.” These jobs are 18 hours per week, at $26.02 per hour with no benefits, and the library is getting almost nothing in the way of applicants.  
   The library has four people regularly slotted now for work on Saturdays, and two of them are scheduled to be out on two Saturdays this month. “That leaves us with just two people on the schedule, which we can’t do.” Full-time staff are swapping days with each other to address this, Lisa said – adding that she worked six days a week several times all summer herself.
* Lisa said the upstairs HVAC is still out of commission, needing a new compressor after a power surge that hit the library in August. She said that temperatures upstairs have continued to hit the high 80s, and signage has been posted warning patrons about conditions there. She said she is working on two fronts: in the short term, to get the system running again, and in the longer term, studying the advisability of a service contract directly with Daikin, manufacturer of the system. Lisa said Juliet Mulinare, the town’s facilities manager, plans to find an engineer qualified to look at our system and advise on the best approach going forward.
* Lisa said that biddable documents have been prepared for the library’s landscaping project. Our landscaping consultant reports that some of her recent projects did not receive bids from contractors; Lisa will put the documents out and we will wait and see.

**Fundraising/Gifts Received:**

**MOTION:** To accept August and September gifts totaling $3,000 in support of library programming from the Friends of the Library.

**MOTION:** Nis Kildegaard, **SECOND:** Julie Lively, **ACTION:** Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

**Next meeting date**: Thursday, Oct. 12, 2023 – in person at the library, beginning at 3:30 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Nis Kildegaard, secretary*