



**Springfield Town Library Board of Trustees**

**43 Main Street Springfield, Vermont**

**Tuesday, November 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes  
Amended and Approved 12/12/2023**

1. **Call to Order:** Vice Chair Sharon Ayer called the meeting to order at 5:32  
Attending in person: Char Osterlund, Christine Boardman, and library director, Sue Dowdell.  
Attending via zoom: Sharon Ayer, Suzette Chivers, and Chris Goding  
Not present: patrice jones
2. **Additions or Subtractions to the Agenda:** Corrected placement of Public Comments (now #3); remove 7a. Policy Committee: review and possible approval of selected Public Service Policies and replace with 7 a. Strategic Plan - Accessibility Plans
3. **Public Comment:** No public in attendance
4. **Review and Approval of Minutes:** The Minutes from October 18, 2023 were reviewed and there was one suggested change. Sue corrected an omission – there was a unanimous vote to adjourn. **Char moved to approve the minutes of the October 18, 2023 meeting as amended. Christine seconded. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.**
5. **FOSTL Report:** There was no FOSTL meeting in November. Suzette confirmed that she will attend the next FOSTL meeting on December 6, 2023, at 6:30 pm as the Trustee representative.
6. **Director's Report:** Please see the complete report attached at the end of this document. Sue provided some additional highlights and updates, as follows.
  - a) Sue needs to complete the FY23 Annual Report for the State of Vermont as well as the ARSL Grant report, which ends on December 31, 2023.
    - a. To expend the remaining funds, the Library is purchasing a camera and tripod, as recommended by SAPA TV, so that Library programs can be recorded even if a SAPA volunteer is unavailable. SAPA will purchase the requisite memory cards and swap out a blank card for a card containing an event recording so they can process it and get the program into their production rotation. An on-site camera will ensure that all programs can be recorded regardless of SAPA volunteer availability. These items will not go into the Library of Things, but could be used by another SAPA-trained volunteer or by other in-house groups with staff supervision.
    - b. The 5'x8' *All Are Welcome* banner is ready to be picked up and will be hung from the balcony.
    - c. The last Little Library is done and will be installed at the new Springfield Family Center location (to be announced) once they are settled.
    - d. The air hand dryers have arrived and are awaiting installation, pending electrician Frank Gould's availability.
  - b) The Selectboard (SB) approved the bid from Control Technologies last night, and will enter into a contract with them to install the new air handler and air conditioner. Payment will be made from Library Capital Funds. There is \$98,000 in the fund and the contract will use approximately \$80,000.
  - c) Sue is still awaiting information about the release of the Treasury Grant application, which will be used to repair the roof.

- d) Our two local representatives, Kristi Morris and Alice Emmons, will be participating in the next Community Conversation on December 5, 2023. Trans 101, a transgender education and conversation program, is happening on December 13, 2023. The December program calendar will be out soon – please share far and wide.

## 7. Old Business:

- a) **Clerk/Secretary:** Sue shared that she has spoken with a Library staff member and they are willing to take on the role of clerk for the Trustees. We have the funds in our budget to cover the salary for the remainder of this fiscal year and Sue has added an additional \$50 in next year's budget. **Suzette moved to hire a Board Clerk to attend Trustee meetings and prepare minutes. Chris seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.**
- b) **Strategic Plan:** Sue presented the plan at the last Rotary meeting and received a great response. The Sustainable Library Initiative also recommends hosting a dedicated page on our website for the most current Strategic Plan and our video presentation and updating it regularly with live status reports on action items. There are six library staff members who can access and update the website.

## 8. New Business

- a) **Accessibility Planning:** Sue reviewed the results of the Staff/Trustee Accessibility Priority survey results, which will inform the [LTC Accessible Small and Rural Communities Grant Application](#). This application is being submitted in partnership with Lincoln Street, Inc. and is unique in that awards can be made in the amount of \$10,000 or \$20,000. Libraries are invited to submit budgets for funding at both levels. Priority items from the survey that will be included in the application are:
- a. Fixing or replacing the front door. The front door sticks and is not easy to open sometimes, even with the power assist. Sue is waiting for a quote from a company that produces products that maintain the historic integrity of buildings.
  - b. Bathroom Doors. The bathroom doors are too heavy and out of compliance with ADA requirements (greater than 5 lbs/foot). If our maintenance person is not able to make the necessary adjustments to the closer mechanism, Sue will include power assisted doors in this application.
  - c. Noise Cancelling Headphones and Small Manipulatives for Neuro-divergent Patrons. These will be purchased with grant funds and added to The Library of Things. Lincoln Street, Inc. is providing guidance around the best options for these items.
  - d. Other items, outside accessibility priorities identified in the survey, will be purchased using grant funds and are listed in the application draft linked above.
  - e. Other survey priorities not associated with this grant include:
    - i. Dedicated parking spaces for Library patrons. Parking during busy downtown times can be extremely difficult. Sue has mentioned to Jeff that the Trustees may be asking the SB for help resolving this issue. While not necessarily enforceable, it would be helpful to have one handicapped space and one signed (15-minute Parking Only) space in front of the library. Trustees discussed potential costs to make these changes. The handicapped detail would be painted on the road by the Town Highway Department and both spaces would require signage. The Trustees encouraged Sue talk with Chief Burnham about potential pitfalls of this suggestion and to ask Jeff to bring our formal request to the SB. **We ask that the Town dedicate one handicapped space and one 15-minute only space in front of the library.**
    - ii. Website accessibility. Staff is researching and meeting on November 30, 2023 to discuss potential changes. They will also discuss the best way to add "Request for Accommodation" to all Library marketing material.

- iii. Stack Labels. Molly should have the balance of the non-fiction stack signage done by the end of 2023. Sue and a volunteer will also be completing the non-fiction collection weeding.
- iv. Flinn Room chairs. The Family Center may have some chairs that they will donate to replace the deteriorating chairs in the Flinn Room.
- v. Add visual indicators for the emergency alarms. This will require additional research and planning outside the scope of this application.
- vi. Target Alarm Removal. The alarms on the inside of the front door are no longer active and need to be removed. There is concern that they may be perceived as “security alarms” rather than just alarms notifying staff that someone is coming in. Flooring under the alarms may also require repair, so Sue will talk with Frank Gould about scheduling and will coordinate the project to maintain safety.
- vii. Offering resources for individuals reintegrating into the community after incarceration. This will require additional dedicated staff hours and will remain under discussion through 2024, as will discussions about monitoring shower usage on Saturdays.

b) **Finance Committee:**

- a. **FY25 Budget process update.** Sue presented the budget to the SB last night and the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) is visiting the library tomorrow. Sue presented the Trustees with a new budget draft with recommended cuts totaling \$3,550, which she will share with the BAC. These cuts will bring the Library budget increase to 4.3%, closer to the recommended 4% increase cap set by the SB. Trustees discussed the potential negative perception created by cutting funding for books, and ultimately agreed that Sue is the best person to determine funding levels necessary for Library operations. **Chris moved to endorse Sue’s recommended cuts (reluctantly including cuts to the book budget) for presentation to the BAC. Christine seconded. There was no additional discussion. Motion passed unanimously.**
- b. **Non-resident fee update.** The SB approved the fee increase at the meeting last night. Sue will put out a press release inviting non-residents to apply for a card before the rate increase on July 1, 2024.

c) **Public Relations/Advocacy Committee: appointment/establishment:** Sue would like Trustee assistance to develop and manage a Marketing Plan for the Library. Trustees deferred conversation about this topic until the next meeting when the chairperson could be present. In the meantime, Sue asked that all Trustees continue to like and share Library Facebook posts and the monthly calendar.

d) **Nominating Committee: appointment/establishment re: Trustee opening:** With Myrt’s departure, our Board is one member short again. Suzette is up for re-election and Christine, Chris, and Char need to run for office at Town Meeting in March 2024, since they were appointed to fill open positions. While considering whether or not to run, Suzette and Chris indicated that changing the day of the week we meet would persuade them to consider running. In the spirit of valuing and retaining our Trustees, Trustees agreed that Char will distribute a survey before our December meeting to find the best alternative meeting day. Christine feels passionate about securing a balanced board and volunteered to take the lead on the Nominating Committee. Suzette encouraged us to also seek a young person to run. **Chris moved to convene a Nominating Committee and to appoint Christine, Char, and Sue to the Committee. Suzette seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.**

e) **Use of Library Trust funds re: Library Greenspace Project / Better Places crowdsourcing grant.** The Library is partnering with Springfield on the Move (SoM) to improve the small area along the river behind the Library. This space would only be open during daytime hours and cameras will be installed to discourage bad behavior. Because it’s a crowd sourced grant, Sue and Jessica Martin of SoM, will be seeking a variety of funding sources, including grants and small and large community donations. This project is part of the larger Downtown Master Plan to improve access to the river. Sue will talk with other libraries to learn how they handle exterior cameras relating to patron privacy.

f) **Technology Plan.** Our current [Technology Plan](#) expires in June 2024. Sue and staff are in the beginning stages of reviewing the current Plan and is inviting Trustee participation in the process, keeping accessibility at the forefront of the revision process.

**9. Future agenda items:** Potential change to our regular meeting day (new business); Convene Public Relations Committee and appoint members (old business); Policy Committee work (old business); and Technology Plan discussion (old business).

**10. Set date of next meeting:** December 12, 2023 at 5:30 PM

**11. Adjournment: Char moved to adjourn. Christine seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 6:55.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sharon Ayer, Vice Chair  
November 20, 2023

**Springfield Town Library**  
**Library Director's Report for October 2023**  
**Submitted for discussion at November 14, 2023 meeting**  
**Sue Dowdell**

Sustainable Libraries Initiative, Building, and/or Grants  
(Environmentally Sound, Socially Equitable & Economically Feasible):

- 2800+ pounds of plastic recycled in Springfield via NexTrex, close to 5<sup>th</sup> bench
- ARSL grant:
  - o Family pumpkin painting
  - o All Are Welcome / Kindness Matters banner being created by Clever Cow to be mounted on balcony railing
  - o Air Dryers for the patron restrooms purchased, waiting for install
  - o Timer switch ordered for light at staff entrance
  - o Third little library expected to be ready by Thanksgiving
- Pruning to be scheduled for crab apple tree
- Air Handler/AC quotes discussed with town manager. Expect the vendor to be approved by Selectboard on 11/13.
- ALA Libraries Transform Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities grant application in process. In collaboration with Lincoln Street staff.

Patron Services:

October Circulation and Use Statistics:

- Visitors = 2060, compared to 1548 in October 2022 (33% increase).
- Patrons = 1359 total, including 58 non-residents
- Reference questions answered = 69 questions
- Tech help: 12 people for individual help sessions
- Website visits: 1870
- Computer users: 196 people used library computers, for over 154 hours in October
- Volunteer hours: 43 hours
- Circulation of physical/traditional library items = 2593, compared to 2048 in October 2022 (26% increase)
- Circulation of nontraditional library items = 51
- Circulation of digital items
  - o EBooks & EAudiobooks & Movies: 492
  - o Database Usage: 147+ views (Newsbank totals will not be available until 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month)
    - Interlibrary loan:
      - o Items lent to those in other libraries: 381
      - o Items borrowed/received for our patrons: 348
- October Programming: 30+ events serving/interacting with 1200+ people

Adult:

- More than You Can See – virtual author visit
- UFOs are Really Here
- Hospice 101

- Springfield Hospital Job fair
- Seal or Expunge Your Vermont Criminal Record
- Putting her life on the Line
- Fall Pumpkin Craft
- Bewitched – Fashions from Salem Witch Trials
- 3 Book Club meetings & 2 Page Turners sessions
- Scribble Society writing group
- Individual Tech Help

Youth:

- Preschool story time
- Toddler time
- Thursday after-school programs (Spoon Catapults, Spooky Story Campfire)
- RMS Open House
- SHS Community Service Fair
- Trunk or Treat (500+ children with their adults)
- Mini Pumpkin Painting

All Ages

- Banned Books Movies
- Speak Out
- Community Puzzle
- Kindness Rocks