

Great Barrington Libraries Board of Trustees Special Meeting Minutes

Great Barrington Town Hall In Person

July 26, 2023 5:30 pm

Board Members Present: Patrick Hollenbeck (Chair), Sandy Pantorno, Carol McGlinchey,
Lauren Clark, Ruby Chang (Secretary)

Board Members Absent: Rob Shaeffer

Others Present: Donna Brown (Library Interim Director)

Others Missing: Mark Pruhenski (Town Manager)

I. Call to order at 5:35 pm.

Discussion regarding Trustee involvement on Library Director Search Committee Nomination and vote

- PH noted the recommendations from Mark who is not present today that we should keep the team small. He also gave review of past members of the interview team including Mark Pruhenski, Ed Abrahams (chair of Friends), trustee member and Chris Rembold. The interviewee should get a sense of the community. He had conveyed to Mark that although all of the trustees would like involvement and we need more people on the team. He noted there will be an initial review committee which will be Mark, Donna and HR person. Then the larger group most likely members are Mark Pruhenski (town manager), Ed, Donna Brown (interim library director), human resource for the town and one trustee. The ultimate decision will be made by Mark, the town manager.
- SP requested history of previous directors in the last 12 years which were Anne (3 years), Kate, Amanda (6 years) and Samara. She questioned whether this was unusual and how we could turn this around. It would be good if Mark can accept help from the Trustees.
- PH noted the director position have to be able to deal with the public/community at large and should be treated differently and with more care.
- SP noted Rob Schaefer has written in email today:

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Committee to hire the Library Director:

I am very interested in serving on this committee to hire our next Library Director. First and foremost, I have the staff's interest at heart. Together we need to figure out how to create a working space where all of the staff want to work, instead of looking for work some where else.

I firmly believe that I can bridge the gap b/n the Trustees, Staff, and our Town Manager, building a team that collaborates well together. I have experience in hiring. I've worked with librarians on a National level through the American Library Association, and I will listen to everyone that contributes.

- PH noted there are significant applicant pool and the interviews should be started soon. The salary will be \$72,000/year. He would like to put everyone's name up for consideration except for himself.
- Discussion further with Donna for the trustee members about how we could support the staff including understanding the job description such as book keeping/financial reporting, either

outsourced or as part of the staff would be helpful to alleviate the pressure on the director. Donna agreed to the comments and noted the job entails doing scheduling (assistant director), payroll which is submitted biweekly, cataloging etc. This is for both libraries.

- CM noted the division of duty within the staff members is Mark's jurisdiction.
- SP recommend advertising for staff may include description of book keeping to lighten the director's duties.
- There are overall recommendations for creative person who could focus on programming.
- PH concluded with recommendations to Mark, to look at the book keeping aspect of the job to other staff members and also another trustee involvement. Maximum of two trustees would be sufficient otherwise making scheduling difficult. Donna noted they are fine with technology support for now. They have Christine Warner and John Shannon.

Motion made by CM to have two Trustee members on the interview committee for Director of the library. SP second the motion.

All voted "aye" to the motion.

- Discussion further about who will be best for the job. Rob Shaeffer and Lauren Clark. PH also had concerns about hiring the position of Children's librarian. He recommended having RC be part of the process. She has discussed qualifications of a librarian for children that she has observed with working with present librarian, Laurie. The position is in the process of being posted per DB. CM request clarifying the process of hierarchy of hiring each of the positions. Mark has the final say in the hiring. Sophia is the HR person. SP noted we need to make sure there are library staff members in the process. CM recommend RC come up with list of questions that would be important as part of the interview process.

Motion made by CM to appoint Rob Shaeffer and Lauren Clark to be appointed on the interview committee for the Director of the library position. Motion seconded and all voted "aye" in agreement.

Motion made by PH to appoint Ruby Chang to advise/assist on the committee for appointment for the position of Children's Librarian. Motion seconded and All voted "aye".

Old Business/New Business regarding Library: none
Citizens Speak/Media Time: none
Board Speak: none

Adjournment at 6:25 pm due to need to vacate the meeting from the Town Hall for Conservation Committee meeting at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary of the Board

Ruby Chang MD