

Approved minutes 3/13/24

Langley Adams Library Board of Trustees meeting
March 6, 2024

Attending: Robert Downey, Jan Dempsey, Lee Thomas, Laurel Puchalski, Kathy Prunier, Mary Lou Costello, Nancy Hurley Darcy Lepore

Absent: Lindsey Aylward, Jay Collins.

ZOOM session was recorded.

Call to order: L. Thomas motions to open the meeting. L. Puchalski seconds, and motion passes on a unanimous roll call vote.

Report from Director: Darcy Lepore read prepared statement (attached).

Trustees' response to public review and discussion: BOT members discussed the written draft of their response statement to the public comments received by the BOT regarding the Youth Services staff resignation and whether it is ready to be released.

R. Downey makes motion to review the response statement draft. L. Thomas seconds and the motion passes on a unanimous roll call vote. L. Thomas reads the response draft, and the BOT discusses changes. After incorporating the changes made to some of the language in the text, N. Hurley read the revised statement.

M.L. Costello will edit the final draft for punctuation and grammar.

K. Prunier made a motion to postpone adopting the response statement until the next meeting. After discussion, K. Prunier withdraws the motion to postpone. L. Thomas motions to accept the content of response statement. J. Dempsey seconded and the motion passes on a unanimous roll call vote.

L. Puchalski motions to adjourn. L. Thomas seconds. and the motion passes on a unanimous roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Hurley

Director's Report

March 6th, 2024

In accordance with the personnel policy of the Town of Groveland and out of respect for Staff members both present and past, specifics regarding this issue must remain private. However, I am able to share the following.

I agree that the former Youth Services Librarian embodies talent for children's programming and working with youth. We at the library will absolutely miss her dynamic programming and her abundance of ideas for children's services. I very much appreciate what she did for children's services while she was here. I would never discount your or your children's positive experiences with her. I know the connections she made with you and your kids were important.

Several staff members have accepted jobs at other libraries over many years for significantly higher pay and for the opportunity to increase to full time status in benefited positions which offer chances for advancement. Only recently has Langley-Adams Library become far more competitive due to the most recent override vote.

For example, just two fiscal years ago in FY2022, the Youth Services Librarian here was making \$19.87 per hour. One Youth Services Librarian left to serve teens and make a minimum of \$28.63 per hour at Reading Public Library, and one left to be the head of children's services at the Peabody Institute Library for a minimum of \$26.26 per hour. Their new positions offer excellent chances for advancement. This information comes directly from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners website. There is no mystery as to why these excellent employees moved on with best wishes from the Board of Trustees and the Library staff.

I am sorry for any negative interactions patrons have had with any library staff. I know at the last meeting, on 2/14, someone said that just because patrons don't report issues to me doesn't mean they don't happen. However, I can tell you that every time a patron or a staff member has reported issues regarding interaction with Staff, I have dealt with the situation. If ever an interaction with any Staff member is perceived to be negative, it should be reported to me; only then will it be handled and corrected. I am available by phone, email, or in person. I will need specifics – dates, a time frame, and details, but I can't do anything if an issue isn't reported to me. I can also tell you that Staff training is an ongoing function as changes in public libraries are ever improving and expanding.

As Director, I have always been supportive of any programming and new innovative ideas. If any personnel issues were ever reported to me they were certainly dealt with in the prescribed manner. Any tensions between myself and the Youth Services Librarian were one-sided. They were not communicated to me, and I supported her as much as was possible until her final day

of employment.

The reason a mediation did not take place is because of very specific, private personnel issues. These specific issues would have prevented the mediation from being beneficial. The petition letter presented on February 14th stated that both the Board of Trustees and the Town Administrator agreed to do the mediation, however this is not true. The full Board of Trustees acts as one entity, and the majority of the Board was not informed of a request for a mediation. The Town Administrator was also open to both options, but ultimately told me that she agreed with me that the mediation would not be beneficial when we met on January 30th and 31st. Again, I cannot tell you what the specific personnel issues were, but I can tell you what they were not. They were not me being unsupportive, or any tension or disagreement between us.

It is untrue that there is no system of professional oversight over me. Any issues regarding my Directorship were addressed at an executive session of the Board of Trustees on Thursday, February 8th. However, just because one disagrees with a decision I made, due to reasons that you are not aware of, does not mean the Board of Trustees is not doing their duty. The Board of Trustees evaluates me every year at two monthly meetings, and they are always open to the public, as was stated at the meeting on February 14th. The Board of Trustees has always been totally supportive of children's services. In fact, the Board of Trustees has always been very supportive of programming and services for all ages at the Langley-Adams Library.

I appreciate everyone's passion for children's services and the library as a whole. We *still* need your support! The Friends of the Groveland Library are always looking for new members. They have been instrumental in children's services. They work hard to raise money to fund programs for all ages and fund museum passes. We still need to stay taxpayer funded to stay certified! Being certified means that not only can we fund programs for all ages, but our patrons can request items through interlibrary loan and check out items at other libraries. Of course, we would love for you to check out your items here at Langley-Adams!

Thank you.