

MINUTES OF KENT MEMORIAL LIBRARY COMMISSION
JANUARY 9, 2024
TOWN HALL, SUFFIELD CT

Meeting opened by Michael Alexopoulos, acting chair at 7:05pm

- I. Roll Call:** Commission Members: Corbin Adzigirey, Michael Alexopoulos, Klaire Bielonko, Denise Boutin, James Irwin, Claire Kawalec, Nina Kendrick, Michelle Kynard(zoom), Cameron Lisk, Christine Sinopoli, Despina Tartisinis, Lester Webb

Associate Director: Kate Jarest

Board of Selectman: Jerry Mahoney

II. Public Participation:

John Gracey- curious about selection criteria for commission members, has asked previously at Board of Selectmen meeting and not had a response; reference to staff input for search committee, he feels 1-2 people is appropriate; believes funds for interviewee to come here should not be problem; questioned why there would be an issue with a Friends of the Library member being on the search committee.

Bob White – In the past when the Commission didn't have a secretary, all commission members would rotate taking minutes.

III. Approval of Past Minutes:

- Cameron Lisk motioned to accept minutes.
- Klaire Bielonko seconded the motion.

Discussion: Christine noted corrections needed "Section III, 2nd paragraph, 2/3 way down 'She also expressed concern that some suggest the a Library Director...' We don't need both "the" and "a"; "the" will be removed."

- Cameron Lisk amended his motion to accept the minutes as amended.
- Klaire Bielonko seconded the amended motion.

VOTED and PASSED unanimously.

Prior to moving on to the next item in the agenda, Cameron Lisk asked if it would be possible to amend the agenda to move **IX. New Business** up before **IV. Communications Received**.

- Cameron Lisk motioned to move New Business to before Item IV on the Agenda.
- Christine Sinopoli Seconded the motion.

Discussion: Despina noted that the by-laws positioned New Business at the end of the meeting. Cameron said that he was only interested in moving the elections to earlier in the meeting, since it was

the start of the new year. Nina supported his motion with research showing that elections had been placed earlier in the meeting in previous years.

- Cameron Lisk amended his motion to move the Election of Officers portion of New Business up on the agenda to the next order of business
- Christine Sinopoli Seconded the amended motion.

VOTED and PASSED unanimously.

IX. a. Election of Officers:

Chair:

- Nina Kendrick nominated Denise Boutin.
- Cameron Lisk seconded the motion.
- Jim Irwin nominated Michael Kynard.
- Despina seconded the motion.
- Michael declined.

VOTED and PASSED unanimously for Denise Boutin

Denise Boutin took over chair responsibilities of the meeting.

Vice-chair

- Christine Sinopoli nominated Klaire Bielonko.
- Michelle Kynard seconded the motion.

VOTED and PASSED unanimously.

Secretary

- Corbin Adzigirey nominated Despina Tartsinis.
- Claire Kawalec seconded the motion.
- Despina Tartsinis declined.
- Nina Kendrick nominated Michelle Kynard.
- Cameron Lisk seconded the motion.
- Michelle declined.

It was decided that each member would assume the role as Secretary and take minutes. Alternating in alphabetical order with Corbin Adzigirey being the secretary for this meeting.

Treasurer

- Mike Alexopoulos nominated Claire Kawalec
- Corbin Adzigirey seconded the motion.

VOTED and PASSED unanimously.

IV. Communications Received: None

V. Report of the (Associate Director):

Kate shared November and December statistics, currently still recruiting for Program Services and Outreach Coordinator. They are not actively recruiting for Page, although there should be a post soon. Mike asked what the Program Services and Outreach Coordinator did. Kate said she/he sought out new programs, talked with schools, maintained the web site and the electronic newsletter. Then she highlighted three events with good feedback and turnout – Diwali, partnership with Suffield Community Aide and Suffield Alight

VI. Standing Committee Reports: None

VII. Special Committee Reports:

a. Update on Patron Behavior Special Subcommittee

Michael: 11-29-2023 Special committee met, not just a library issue.

-selectman has set up a (TOWN COMMISSION) including Fred Switzer, Police Dept., Kelly with Youth Services

-more cameras, strategically placed for better visibility is currently being considered. The Town has been in the library to for specifications and quotes.

-police department will hold a training session with library staff about best practice for what, how, timing, etc

-support from the 1st selectman for a dedicated space, however we are limited and will need to get creative. Staffing is also an issue; Michael has some ideas he's working on; it will be a community effort.

Jerry: School is barred from identifying students, this is why we are involving police

Michael: Juvenile Review Board a key component & getting home involved in a constructive way, not punitive.

Claire asked who was on the task force, Michael answered:

Cameron said he was happy to help with camera placement and installation.

b. Other Committee Updates: None

VIII. Unfinished Business:

Jim read a letter he wrote to Search Committee Chair, Claire with concerns about new resumes being purposely withheld from the Search Committee. He also expressed concern about what he characterized as intentional delays in the process.

- Christine Sinopoli motioned to discharge the Search Committee; they completed their mission and brought forward a candidate to Selectman.
- Les Webb seconded the motion.

Discussion followed.

Jim hopes all candidates' resumes were reviewed. Corbin asked what happens if we discharge; is a new search committee formed? Jerry said the whole commission sees the candidates. Despina noted that our bylaws state that the personnel subcommittee forms Search Committee, and while it isn't specific, there is currently a policy stating that the Search Committee shouldn't be discharged because their job isn't complete, as a director has not yet been hired. Klaire asked if the Selectman chooses who to hire, why does it matter. Jerry noted that the bylaws don't control the charter, it is instead the charter that controls the bylaws. Denise asked Jim what the charge of the search committee was; was it to choose a candidate for Library Director and have you done that? Jim answered, yes. Denise said then you've accomplished your charge.

- Christine motioned to move to close discussion.
- Lester Webb seconded the motion.

Vote: FOR (7) Christine Sinopoli, Nina Kendrick, Lester Webb, Cameron Lisk, Michelle Kynard, Klaire Bielonko, Denise Boutin AGAINST (4) Despina Tartsinis, Jim Irwin, Michael Alexopoulos, Claire Kawalec OBSTAIN: (1) Corbin Adzigirey, Motion carried 7 to 4 with 1 Abstention

- Christine Moved to discharge the Search Committee
- Les Webb seconded the motion.

Vote: FOR (7)- Nina Kendrick, Cameron Lisk, Christine Sinopoli, Klaire Bielonko, Michelle Kynard, Denise Boutin, Les Webb AGAINST (4) Despina Tartsinis, Jim Irwin, Michael Alexopoulos, Claire Kawalec OBSTAIN (1) Corbin Adzigirey, Motion carried 7 to 4 with 1 Abstention

After the vote, Jim Irwin asked what happens next, since the search committee no longer exists. Mike Alexopoulos said it was his understanding that we had metaphorically "parked the car" and would now proceed driving to an executive session with HR, so that HR could present the candidate to the commission. Denise will coordinate that meeting with HR.

IX. New Business:

b. Committee Appointments (Chair is listed first and bold)

Building and Grounds – **Jim**, Corbin, Michael, Les

Community Relations – **Michelle**, Despina, Claire

Finance – **Claire**, Cameron, Christine, Michelle, Michael

Historical – **Klaire**, Michael, Les

Personnel – **Christine**, Jim, Nina

Policy – **Despina**, Jim, Christine, Nina, Corbin

Technology – **Cameron**, Klaire

Hospitality (not an official subcommittee)- Michael and Corbin. There was a suggestion that people might want to take turns doing this.

c. 2024 Meeting Dates to Town Clerk

Michael, already submitted; made a MOTION to notify the town of 1/14/2025 being added to the list of regular meeting dates by 1/31/2024; Denise 2nd, PASSED unanimously.

Corbin noted misspelling of her name on Agenda.

X. Public Comment:

Fred Switzer: - task force member, acknowledges a lot of work being part of KMLC, has noticed a subtext about struggle and assumptions about what town residents want at the library. Encourages short- and long-term goal development and getting opinions from residents.

Bob White:

1. Attached to town charter, commission hires director.
2. Last 8 directors, the commission hired vs recommended.
3. When there is a motion to move the question, it requires a 2/3 vote; when discharging a committee, this also requires a 2/3 (or maybe even a ¾ vote). A majority vote is insufficient.
4. There is an active subcommittee not mentioned in discussion that writes long term planning.

XI. Miscellaneous Business: None

- Denise Boutin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:52pm.
- Klaire Bielonko seconded the motion.

VOTED and PASSED unanimously.