TML Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 25, 2024

6:30 p.m.

APPROVED

Present: Tim Blackstone, Reed Dyer, Elizabeth Elliott, Tim Hebda, Sara Hoffman Patience Maloney, Rachel Davis (Director, Thomas Memorial Library, Committee Secretary)

Absent: Griff Gilbert

Welcome and Call the Meeting to Order: Tim called to order at 6:34 p.m.

1. Acceptance of minutes from the March 21 meeting: it was noted that Griff Gilbert was included as both present and absent in the minutes, when in fact he was absent. Reed made a motion to approve the minutes with that correction; seconded by Sara; unanimously approved
2. Public Comment:
    a. Jessica Simpson, 3 Manter Street passionately expressed her appreciation for Andy Ryer, former Community Engagement Manager, and questioned the decision making that led to his departure.
    b. Charlotte Bingham, 3 Crescent Road, expressed appreciation for the library and all of its programs, and said that there is a profound sense of loss with the departure of Andy Ryer
3. Strategic Planning
    a. Review Will Plumley's revised proposal: The Committee discussed the addition of a community conversation at the beginning of the strategic planning process
    b. Update from Rachel's meeting with Will: Rachel related details of her meeting with Will Plumley about the timing and structure of meetings. It was agreed that the community conversation should take place in mid-September, and then the first strategic planning working group would have its first meeting about one week later, with regular meetings to follow each month. Either the entire committee would be part of this working group, or the committee as a whole would only meet quarterly, with the members who are part of the working group reporting back to the whole committee at the quarterly meetings. The group would also include at least three staff members, and one or two members of the TML Foundation.
    c. There was discussion about the length of the strategic plan, and it was agreed that five years was a good amount of time, at least initially. The goals would need to be broad enough to matter over time, and ensure that the strategies to achieve them do not become outdated.
    d. The idea of registering participants for the community conversation was discussed, with the suggestion that participants are encouraged to bring someone they know who does not regularly use the library. Other ways of reaching people were suggested, such as a form on the library's website, a "conversation wall" that people can add to.

e. The idea of including younger participants was discussed, perhaps inviting the library's teen and tween advisory board members to participate, or to develop questions, or encourage their friends to participate in some way
f. The idea of framing the director's monthly report around the strategic plan and what has been achieved/furthered was discussed, as was the need for the library director to budget funds for a consultant to guide the process every five years.
g. Develop a Scope of Work to begin the process: the scope of work was outlined in Will's proposal
h. Duties of Committee members were summarized as:
    i. 1 to serve on the TMLF board
    ii. 4 to serve on the Strategic Planning Working Group
    iii. 7 (the full committee) to meet quarterly to conduct other business and get updates on the strategic plan
i. Discuss possible meeting schedule: Rachel will prepare a draft meeting schedule for the May meeting

4. Director's Update: Rachel shared her report and highlighted the eclipse programming that took place, and the eclipse glasses recycling program the library was participating in; recent staff changes, including the promotion of Sasha Kohan as the new Community Engagement Librarian; and the ongoing partnership with the Recycling Committee
5. Goals for 2024: The strategic plan is the main goal; the Social Media policy is being put on hold until the Town has hired its new Communications Director
6. Collaborating with the Board of TMLF: Tim reported on meeting with Tyler Patterson, and Rachel shared the TMLF's excitement at the prospect of the Strategic Planning Process and their desire to be involved. In the past two Committee members served on the TMLF Board. Rachel discussed this with the Deputy Town Manager, who confirmed that only one Committee member could serve on that board in order to be in compliance with FOAA laws (otherwise, the TMLF meetings would have to be publicly noticed, as if it was a Town committee meeting)
7. New Business
8. Public Comment (15 minutes)
    a. Jessica Simpson, 3 Manter Street again expressed her dismay at the departure of Andy Ryer and her dissatisfaction with library management; she also related how important the Fika Zoom program was to her and others
    b. Mary Michals, 7 Southwell Road, said she agreed with Jessica Simpson, and that she was at the meeting to support her
9. Next Meeting: Thursday, May 30 at 6:30 pm
10. Adjournment: Patience made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Sara; meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

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Minutes respectfully submitted by Rachel Davis, 5/23/24