**Franklin Public Library**

**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**January 22, 2024**

**Present**: Charleen Belcher, Kathleen Gerwatowski, Amanda Rabbitt, Barbara Steele, Alison Wallace of the Board, and Library Director Felicia Oti.

**Call to Order**: Charleen called the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**Public Comment**: None

**Minutes:** The minutes of the October meeting were approved.

**Report of the Board Members:**

**Barbara:** Barbara attended Vicki’s presentation on the origins of the Franklin Public Library and found it very interesting. Vicki prepared a booklet called Franklin and America’s First Free Lending Library. Barbara also shared that Alice Hoffman’s novel entitled The Invisible Hour contains a reference to the Franklin Public Library and mentions a book donated by Ben Franklin.

**Kathleen:** Kathleen shared three newspaper articles from the Boston Globe and the Wall Street Journal on various library topics: [1] Library of Things suggestions including a karaoke machine; [2] the popularity of the Narcan demonstration at a branch of the Cambridge Public Library; [3] speed dating for seniors held at libraries. Felicia will explore adding a karaoke machine to the Library of Things.

**Amanda:** Amanda noted that the library needs more parking. She observed that the programs can never be successful if there is no way to park.

**Charleen:** Charleen noticed that Massbook.org has begun the 2024 reading challenge. Franklin Public Library is not listed, although the local bookstore Escape to Fiction was listed. Charleen also noted the ‘N’ is not in alignment on the walkway library signage. Lastly, she observed the automatic door is not working.

Charleen will attend the Friends of Franklin Library meeting in February. She reminded the board of the upcoming fudge sale.

**Library Director’s Report**: The Franklin Public Library Annual Reading Challenge for 2024 has begun. Rather than participate in the state program, Bree wanted to make it more personal to Franklin. Felicia reported that 144 people joined at the start, and the response has been “phenomenal.” Charleen suggested that Franklin should still do the Massbook.org because it recommends very different book suggestions for each month.

The Franklin Public Library and the Friends of Franklin Library are offering book groups on the Town Wide Read called Rough Sleepers. Felicia is hoping someone from the Boston Health Care Center for the Homeless will come to speak at the library. The fee for the author to speak is $5000 which is not feasible.

The new library assistant is offering painting classes for adults, teens, and children. It’s part of her job description. To be able to provide these classes in-house has been wonderful.

This summer Bree will offer ballet classes for children 5 to 6 years of age.

Caleigh is working with the first-grade teachers at Kennedy School to create reading kits which will be tied to the new curriculum rolling out. Caleigh has applied to receive a grant to fund this initiative.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance will be offered *every* Saturday from now through April.

**Next meeting:** The next meeting will be held on February 26, 2024.

**Agenda for next month:** At the next meeting we will receive a library and staffing update.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Gerwatowski