MINUTES
Friends of the GPL
September 2, 2026
Present: Mary Saunders, Amy Smith, Katie Jones, Regina Tracy, Joy Viele, Stephen Veiga, Kristin Lund, Sarah Cognata, Peggy Rice, Liane Small, Michelle Dumas, Erin Baker, Alicia Raspa, Hannah Dieterle, Laurne "Laurie" Kinney, Linda Corcoran, Linda Metcalf.

Mary Saunders called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

Reports:
Minutes: Katie moved the July minutes be accepted. Stephen Seconded. Passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Katie reported that $280 was raised, including $130 from the donation box and $100 from Zeffy. Expenses totaled $2,258.24, including petty cash reimbursements, expenses for the summer reading program and museum passes.

There was a discussion about gift cards for the summer reading program. Several attendees were surprised that businesses did not donate those to the library. We might consider asking them to donate in the future. Katie was asked if she could use the YTD format Renata Zeneviciute used. She will do so. Regina moved the report be accepted and Mary seconded. Passed unanimously.

Library Director's Report. There was no formal report. Sarah said the pack out of the adult fiction section is complete and we are waiting on a demolition schedule. Fall programming has begun.

Old Business
Listening Session**:** Stephen reported strong attendance and interest at the August 17 listening session regarding the children's room renovation. Kristin thought people were very engaged and Mary believed the group felt they were heard.

Book Sale: Prices will be raised. Hardcovers will be $3, paperbacks are $2, and all children's books are $1 apiece. Teacher discounts are in effect and are usually 50%, but will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Kristin will put out information regarding the teacher discount. Mary will send out a sign-up sheet for book sale workers. Kristin will contact schools for students needing volunteer hours. It would be helpful to have them on Monday after the sale.

Katie asked if we would distribute children's books at Camp Dennison Family Day. Mary will see there is a sign advertising the book sale at Camp Dennison Family Day.

Kristin said those working on the book sale should download the Zeffy app on their phones. It will only work on iPads, if one logs into the Zeffy site.

Annual Meeting: Amy distributed the press release she wrote promoting Phil Eil's talk on AI and misinformation. It will be sent to the communications list, including the Town Common, Newburyport Daily News, and Lawrence Eagle Tribune. Sarah will send a flyer to other libraries. We are eager to build an audience for this event.

The annual meeting will start at 6:30 and last 15-20 minutes, with the talk to follow. Kristin suggested putting an end time on communications. That will be 8 pm, the library's usual closing time.

There was discussion in regard to whether library trustees should be members, but it is not currently in the bylaws. Amy felt it would be a good thing to have Trustees also be Friends.

The meeting is open to all, but only Friends can vote. Sarah will provide colored paper that we can cut into cards for voting. Mary will send a sign-up refreshment list. Zoom will probably not be available, so Kristin will either Facetime with Regina or send the election results to her for distribution.

Last year we offered the option for voting online in addition to in-person voting at the annual meeting. It was suggested we advertise that anyone needing that or special accommodations, contact us.

New Business

Liane introduced the incoming officers and directors:
Mary Saunders- President
Michelle Dumas – Vice President
Erin Baker – Secretary
Alicia Raspa – Treasurer
Directors:
Linda Corcoran
Hannah Dieterle
Laurene "Laurie" Kinney
Linda Metcalf
Stephen Veiga

They shared information about themselves: Michelle has an MBA with a non-profit concentration and is membership manager at the Cabot Theater in Beverly. She does the bookkeeping for the Georgetown PTA. Linda Metcalf has been an active volunteer at the library and Council on Aging and is a town election worker. She has been very involved with the book sale. Her background is in corporate contact management. Alicia Raspa is active in town government, serving on the Finance Committee and CPC. She is a CPA. Although she has not been involved with the library, she is very interested in its operation. Linda Corcoran has been very involved with the book sale, and with last year's Books in Bloom fundraiser. Erin Burke is a semi-retired attorney and serves on two other non-profit boards. She is experienced in budget forecasting and board governance, and teaches part time at MA School of Law. She brought her first library card with her. Hannah has lived in Georgetown since 2011, and raised her family here. She operates Dough, a small batch home bakery. She loves the library and the book sale. Laurie works for the post office and in the past worked in the airline industry. She is a personal finance guru.

Mary explained the election will take place on October 7. Elected candidates are welcome to attend all meetings through December, but will not assume their new duties/positions until January 2027. Those making their donation now will be Friends in good standing through December 2027.

The group asked questions, including how much time is involved. That changes according to one's position and/or committee assignments, and involvement in special events, but current directors and officers agreed that one is not committed to more than an hour or so a week. The Board meets on the first Wednesday of the month. Committees may meet more often. The Board communicates in person at meetings or by email.

Amy suggested sending the new Board members the bylaws. The bylaws can be accessed on the website. Mary pointed out that the Friends' key responsibility is raising money. Revenue raised by the Friends covers programming expenses (events, museum passes, etc.). It is not used for salaries or capital expenses. Special events for 2027 will probably include Books in Bloom, as well as the book sales in the fall and spring. The Friends also send an annual appeal. This coming year, we should consider how we can reach more people, rather than send in utility bills as more people are moving to online payment

The Friends leave programming design and execution to library staff. Mary said that programs like the book sales are seen as a public good and we may want to develop other such initiatives.

We are currently holding listening sessions to seek input regarding the renovation of the children's room to increase programming capability.

Erin asked if we used AI to take notes. Currently, Regina does not use AI for notes, but all were open to using it.

New members were encouraged to follow the Friends on Facebook and get their friends involved in library committees and activities. Liane mentioned she has identified a potential chair for Books in Bloom. The Board thanked Liane for the tremendous job she and the nominating committee did on the Board slate.

Bylaw change: Kristin reported the increased number of directors will require a bylaw change. She will draft that motion, and send it to the board for a recommendation that it be voted on at the annual meeting.

Regina voted the meeting be adjourned. Amy seconded. The meeting was concluded at 7:41 pm.