

# City of Beverly, Massachusetts

## Public Meeting Minutes

**Board:** Library Trustees

**Subcommittee:**

**Date:** January 24, 2023, 5:00 P.M.

**Place:** Remote Meeting on Zoom

**Board members present:** Margaret Altman, Mary Behrle, Marshall Handly, Cathryn Keefe O'Hare, Ivy Mahan, Colleen Michaels, Kevin O'Reilly, Joanne Panunzio, Myron Schirer-Suter

**Board members absent:**

**Others present:** Allison Babin, Meghan Karasin, Mayor Michael Cahill, Mike Collins, Erina Keefe

**Recorder:** Meghan Karasin

Kevin O'Reilly presided. Meghan Karasin stated that the meeting was being recorded.

Joanne Panunzio noted a minor correction in the minutes for the November 29, 2022 meeting. Marshall Handly made the motion, seconded by Cathryn Keefe O'Hare, to accept the minutes of the meeting of November 29, 2022, as amended. Roll call vote approved, 8 to 0, with Altman, Behrle, Handly, Mahan, Keefe O'Hare, O'Reilly, Panunzio, and Schirer-Suter voting in favor. Motion passed.

### **Public Presentation**

None.

### **Presentation from Mayor Michael P. Cahill, Commissioner of Public Services Michael Collins, and Sustainability Director Erina Keefe regarding the library's heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) retrofit project.**

Mayor Cahill informed the trustees that the HVAC project would largely eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from the building. Mike Collins stated that the building's equipment is at the end of its life and needs to be replaced. This project is an opportunity to learn and be able to apply new knowledge to future projects on existing buildings. This is not an easy project. Geothermal provides significant savings and makes a significant impact in the amount of energy the building consumes.

Cathryn Keefe O'Hare asked if there was a comparative cost between the three project options. Mike Collins explained that they all have about a 50 year payback, but geothermal is the only one with significant savings on carbon emissions. Erina Keefe added that as well as a learning experience for designers and professionals, this is an opportunity for education on decarbonization for the public.

Cathryn Keefe O'Hare asked if solar was an option. Mike Collins explained that it was not, given the particulars of the library roof. However the city does get purchase credits from other city solar projects.

Margaret Altman asked about the life of the proposed system. Mike Collins explained that there's a 50-year warranty on the wells, but they should last longer. Equipment in the building will have a shorter life span but is easily replaced.

Ivy Mahan asked what the time frame is. Mike Collins explained that they just kicked off the design phase - moving from concept to design. Construction will likely not start until fall at the earliest. The Mayor explained that the parking lot will be out of commission for about 3 to 4 months during construction. A test well will interrupt parking for a couple of weeks prior to this. Meetings will take place soon to determine how to provide parking and maintain access to the building.

Marshall Handy asked if the city is already past the go/no go decision point. Mike Collins said that while the test well is important, they don't expect it to be very different from rock at the police station and will likely not change the decision. Rock absorbs heat well, is very stable, and is easy to drill into due to its uniformity.

Kevin O'Reilly asked what it would do to the cost of the project if the library shuts down for a few weeks. Mike Collins stated that they are studying it and will collectively decide if that's a good option. They will need data from consultants as to whether it is impossible to do certain things in the building while the library is occupied. Other possibilities are closing it off floor by floor, or changing the hours of the library temporarily.

Kevin O'Reilly asked if the construction company was hired yet. Mike Collins said that early on in the design they'll hire a construction manager, similar to how the middle school and police station were built. The construction manager is hired based on qualifications and past projects. Proceeding this way means that some parts of the project can get started without waiting for the complete design to be finished. They will be able to speed up the project this way.

Kevin O'Reilly asked what they would like from the trustees as the process goes on. Mike Collins replied that they appreciate the understanding and support of the trustees. There will be time for creative thought on how to deliver library programs and services during the disruption. Erina Keefe stated that she'll probably be circulating talking points and appreciates the trustees talking up the project. The Mayor thanked the trustees for their patience and partnership and encouraged them to keep communicating with Allison about the project.

Cathryn Keefe O'Hare asked if other buildings in Beverly can be required to use geothermal. Erina Keefe explained that as a Green Community, Beverly will automatically be a part of the stretch building code. The city has the option to adopt specialized opt-in building codes, which would disincentivize fossil fuels.

Mayor Cahill, Erina Keefe & Mike Collins left the meeting at 5:55 PM.

Joanne Panunzio asked if Allison wanted an ad hoc committee to help with the HVAC project. Allison Babin responded that, at this point, due to weekly meetings on the project, she's been kept very well-informed and feels confident about being able to navigate the project.

### **Committee Reports**

Personnel: No report.

Administration: No report.

Finance: No report.

Long Range Planning: No report.

### **Report of the Library Director**

1. Fiscal Year 2023 Budget: The budget is on track. Transfers were received for the raises of the Director and Assistant Director. Overtime spending is up. The senior custodian was out for 2 weeks and the junior custodian worked on Monday, the holiday, so that the building could be open for HVAC scan work. The part time line is a little under spent. COVID and other viruses have had an impact on the part time staff as well. The fence is scheduled to be repaired tomorrow and should cost approximately \$500.

2. Building Issues: Envelope testing of the main library building will necessitate closing the main library for two days in February. The dates are not yet determined. Joanne Panunzio asked if state aid will be used for the HVAC project. Allison Babin stated that there's been no discussion of this. Part of the work that may be done with the HVAC will be repairs to the Winter Street roof. The Winter Street entrance needed to be closed again today due to falling snow/ice.

The library van continues to have problems. The serpentine belt came off again on Monday, losing power steering. The motor pool was able to cobble it back together but it is not truly repairable. Allison Babin has begun to explore electric options, in the range of \$55,000 (about \$15,000 more than gas powered). State aid should cover the cost of it in FY2024.

The bookmobile generator has not been working for 3 months. The generator powers the interior lights, heat and laptop. A specialist determined that the problem is the brushes inside the generator. The model needed has been discontinued but they have been ordered on the secondary market. Katie Marsh has been incredibly flexible and creative to keep the bookmobile on the road for these past few months. A new generator could cost around \$15,000 so we are hopeful the repair will be successful. Ivy Mahan and Mary Berlthe complimented Katie Marsh's work, flexibility, and positive attitude while dealing with generator issues. Kevin O'Reilly asked what the expected life span of the bookmobile was. Allison Babin stated she did not know.

3. Community Engagement: The Massachusetts Center for the Book has launched a new reading challenge with monthly assignments. Both local bookstores, as well as the library, are promoting this challenge. The 27th Annual Teen Poetry Contest is open for submissions. Finalists will be invited to read their submissions at a ceremony on April 26. The library received a new batch of COVID tests from the city for distribution. They are available at all service desks. The library partnered with the Sustainability Department to serve as a styrofoam collection site January 11-13. Allison Babin and Meghan Karasin will attend Library Legislative Day on March 15. Library Legislative Day is a free event, co-sponsored by the Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) and the Massachusetts School Library Association (MSLA). Talking points and advocacy initiatives are provided for those librarians participating. The library will once again be participating in the annual Boston Bruins Pajama Drive and will be collecting pajamas for children and teens in the children's

room from February 1 through March 15. This drive is in partnership with the Department of Children and Families, Wonderfund, and Cradles to Crayons. On Monday May 1, the library is hosting a Sign and Sell event for local authors. The Children's room staff has done outreach at Harborlight Nursery School and provided special story times for the Pioneer Charter School. The library card application has been translated into Portuguese and Arabic. It was already available in English & Spanish. NOBLE will be implementing Quipu, an online library card service, which will be available in eight languages. But having these applications already translated will be helpful in outreach to the schools.

The library has had some great programming lately. Lisa Ryan has run Books & Brews, a book club that meets in local restaurant/bar for a few years. It has become so popular that she regularly has to turn people away. Allison, Meghan, and Lisa are brainstorming how to expand it while maintaining its success. Lisa has also been offering a popular series of programs on topics such as tarot and astrology. Katie Nelson, teen librarian, just met with 317 students at Beverly High School to talk about digital access. She's been hosting crafternoon at the library where teens can relax and make a fun craft. The Farms Nutcracker tea had about 300 guests. In December alone, approximately 742 people attended library programs.

4. Friends of the Beverly Public Library: The Friends spring book sale is scheduled for March 25 to April 1. A preview night for Friends members will be held on Friday March 24..

5. Trustee Terms: Joanne Panunzio's and Colleen Michaels's reappointments as trustees were approved on January 17th. Their terms go to January 31, 2026.

6. Staff Development and Committee Work: Our Preservation Committee, an internal group, met recently to discuss ongoing projects and upcoming initiatives. Jerusha Maurer leads staff professional development on Readers Advisory Services. In February, staff will be discussing microhistories. Kerri MacLaury, substitute reference librarian, will be leading a staff development on Google Workspaces. The Children's department will rearrange the picture books collection to provide better access for patrons. This will require closing the children's room on the morning of March 8th. A pop-up collection will be available in the Sohler Room.

5. Programs: There are quite a few author events coming up at the library, including James Hagerty, Rebecca Hall, and James Ziskin. Teens have card making at the Beverly Senior Center and Creative Writing Club. Childrens has Take Your Child to the Library Day and a STEAM Story Time featuring magnets.

### **Communications**

None.

### **Unfinished Business**

None.

### **List of Documents/Exhibits**

- Draft minutes from the November 29, 2022 meeting
- Fiscal Year 2023 budget to date (1/24/23)

- Press Release dated January 17, 2023 on the Library HVAC retrofit

The next regular meeting of the board is February 28, 2023 at 5pm via Zoom.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 PM.