

City of Beverly, Massachusetts

Public Meeting Minutes

Board: Library Trustees

Subcommittee:

Date: February 23, 2021, 4:00 P.M.

Place: Remote Meeting on Google Meet

Board members present: Mary Behrle, Marshall Handley, Cathryn Keefe O'Hare, Ivy Mahan, Kevin O'Reilly, Joanne Panunzio, Myron Schirer-Suter

Board members absent: Margaret Altman, Colleen Michaels

Others present: Allison Babin, Meghan Karasin

Recorder: Meghan Karasin

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

Joanne Panunzio asked that clarity be added to the January 2021 minutes to indicate that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) is the board that is waiving the materials expenditure requirement. Joanne Panunzio and Myron Schirer-Suter pointed out typos. Cathryn Keefe O'Hare made the motion, seconded by Mary Behrle to accept, as amended, the minutes of the meeting of January 26, 2021. Roll call vote approved, 6 to 0, with Behrle, Keefe O'Hare, Mahan, O'Reilly, Panunzio, and Schirer-Suter voting in favor. Motion passed.

Public Presentation

None.

Committee Reports

Personnel: No report.

Administration: No report.

Finance: No report.

Long Range Planning: No report.

Report of the Library Director

1. Fiscal Year 2021 Budget: The budget is on track and administration continues to monitor it closely. With some custodial costs covered by Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) funds, some of that budget line can now be used for other much-needed items like tools, shovels, and trash cans. The part-time salaries line is 59.6% spent (3% lower than Fiscal Year 2020), but with the addition of Sunday hours this spending will increase. The staff development line is being used for a web development workshop for the Assistant Communications Librarian and an Anti-Racist Library course for the Director, Assistant

Director, and 3 additional librarians. Myron Schirer-Suter asked about the \$19,000 encumbered under the computer maintenance line. Allison Babin explained that this is our North of Boston Library Exchange (NOBLE) fee.

2. Phased reopening: Front Door Service has expanded to include Sunday hours. Tax forms have been added to the vestibule and linked to on the website for easy access. Beverly had the highest circulation in NOBLE for January 2021. After consulting with the Mayor, appointments for in-building access resumed on Tuesday, February 16th. Appointments are now on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

The Children's Department has launched a new service, offering bundles of books to families after they fill out a brief interest survey. This has revealed a need to bulk up the collection on certain topics (trucks, dinosaurs, princesses, etc.). Teen bundles have been created on request as well. Mary Behrle asked how the items are checked out. Allison Babin stated that they are checked out at the time of pick up.

3. Building Issues: Allison Babin showed before and after photos of the Story Time Room. It is now complete with new carpet, door, paint, clock, decals, a plaque honoring the donor, and custom-built shelves by Senior Custodian Joe Bonaiuto. A consultant has visited to help develop a plan for paint, flooring, and decor in the Arts & Crafts Room. The mastic which was used in the flooring of the Story Time Room has been tested and shows no signs of asbestos. The tiles will now be able to be removed and replaced. On the second floor, we are creating a section of new DVDs, rather than interfiling them with older DVDs. The two paperback collections of Quick Picks and Good Reads will be combined. Unused security gates on the second floor will be removed as they don't align with our values. They have already been removed in the Children's Department.

Snow and ice continues to build up, melt, and fall from the roof in various locations. We have had to close the Winter Street entrance at times and deliver items through a window in the Sohier Room. That side of the building has problems as well and we have had to suspend Front Door Service entirely for a day because there was no safe way to deliver items. Allison Babin has been in discussions with Mike Collins about the issue and he may look at including roof work with the HVAC work.

Marshall Handly joined the meeting at 4:29 PM.

The library's van - a 1996 Ford - with 49,000 miles has passed inspection this year, but it is aging.

National Grid has scheduled work near the Farms Branch through April 23rd. Staff can park in a nearby church lot, but this may impact public parking.

Kevin O'Reilly commented that it was great that the book bundles revealed a need for more of some types of books. Allison Babin said that the work of the bundles and continued collection development should be credited to Margie McClory, Head of Children's, and her staff.

4. Community Engagement: The SORA app is now live. This allows Beverly Middle and High School students to access NOBLE's Overdrive collection with their school email credentials. No

library card is needed. Alix Woznick, Beverly Middle School librarian, spearheaded this initiative. NOBLE will provide statistics so we can see how many items are checked out through this app.

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) approved grant funding to networks for eBook and digital audiobooks. NOBLE received \$33,159 and has used these funds to purchase titles to support children and families, those looking for jobs or changing careers, and items in Spanish and Portuguese. Since the pandemic there has been a 40% increase in eBook and digital audiobook checkouts across the Commonwealth.

We are hoping to add online access to the Wall Street Journal for \$1800 per year. Access would work similar to that of the NY Times, where patrons redeem a code that is good for 3 days. This code is renewable. The contract is currently with the Solicitor's and Mayor's offices for review.

Katie Nelson, Head of Teen Services, has joined the Be Healthy Beverly and Beverly Youth Collaborative boards. Both are facilitated by the YMCA.

Allison Babin attended Rotary's student networking night and met in a Zoom breakout room with students who were interested in management.

Teen and Children's librarians are working hard at planning summer reading programs, including many outdoor events such as a visit from Wildlife Encounters. The Children's librarians are meeting with Beverly Public Schools reading specialists to develop summer reading lists for the elementary schools.

We have purchased 5 seats in Library Journal's Fostering an Anti-Racist Library Culture course. It's a 3-week course that is tailored specifically to libraries. What we learn will be shared with staff at large.

5. Personnel: There were three very strong internal applicants for the Library Assistant Circulation position and we expect that position to be filled soon.

6. Programs: Upcoming library programs include Cookbook Club, Healing Sounds Meditation, Art Therapy, Teen Flower Making Workshop, Teen Poetry Contest, Music and Movement, and Steam Story Time.

Communications

None.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

None.

Myron Schirer-Suter pointed out that the Library Trustees information on the City of Beverly's website needs updating. Allison Babin will follow up with the city.

The next regular meeting of the board will be held virtually on Tuesday March 23, 2021 at 4 PM.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:44 PM.