

# City of Beverly, Massachusetts

## Public Meeting Minutes

**Board:** Library Trustees

**Subcommittee:**

**Date:** April 27, 2021, 4:00 P.M.

**Place:** Remote Meeting on Google Meet

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

**Board members absent:**

**Others present:** Allison Babin, Meghan Karasin

**Recorder:** Meghan Karasin

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

Marshall Handly, made the motion, seconded by Colleen Michaels to accept the minutes of the meeting of March 23, 2021. Roll call vote approved, 8 to 0, with Altman, Behrle, Handly, Mahan, Michaels, O'Reilly, Panunzio, and Schirer-Suter voting in favor. Motion passed.

### **Public Presentation**

None.

### **Committee Reports**

Personnel: Joanne Panunzio stated that the Director's Review will be completed over the next month. She'll send documents to the trustees to be completed before the next meeting and will send a survey to the library staff on managerial skills.

Administration: No report.

Finance: No report.

Long Range Planning: No report.

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

1. Fiscal Year 2021 Budget: Allison Babin shared the current Fiscal Year 2021 budget report. Everything is on track.

2. Fiscal Year 2022 Budget: Allison Babin shared the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2022 (FY'22). The proposed budget was presented to the Mayor on April 7 and received positive feedback. The proposed budget meets the state's minimum requirements for certification for FY'22. This budget is modeled on FY'2019 with adjustments accordingly. This coming year will

reflect more of a return to normal operations, with typical use of the building. The state requires that 13% of total appropriation is spent on library materials. The increase in the part-time personnel line reflects increases in minimum wage, increases in adjacent wages, and an increase in hours for the outreach assistant to provide additional support to that department. The mayor asked for a breakout of each of these categories. We are requesting level funding in the full-time line. The union is currently in negotiations and there is no increase to budget for yet. We have requested an increase in the technology budget line to support greater needs. Myron Schirer-Suter asked if the Director was happy with the budget. Allison Babin stated that she was pleased to not have to ask for a waiver and that the Mayor and City Finance Director were very supportive of the budget. Marshall Handly asked for clarity on the custodian line. Allison Babin stated this line represents the salary of two employees. Margaret Altman asked for clarity over the COVID-19 Expenses line. Allison Babin said lines that are no longer in use still show on reports and that this line wasn't used. Many COVID-19 expenses were paid from other lines and the library received a lot of support from the city for COVID-19 expenses. Joanne Panunzio asked when the Director will present this budget to the City Council. Allison Babin replied that the date has not yet been set.

Marshall Handly made a motion, seconded by Joanne Panunzio, to support the proposed Fiscal Year 2022 Budget. Roll call vote approved 9 to 0. Motion passed.

3. Update on State Aid: The library has received the disbursement of the second payment of \$34,236.11. The debt for the Farms branch renovation will be fully paid off in Fiscal Year 2023 with no payments for Fiscal Year 2024. Allison Babin and Meghan Karasin are brainstorming uses for state aid beginning in Fiscal Year 2024. Mary Behrle asked if the debt repayment was for 20 years. Allison Babin stated that it was 20 years of repayment, accounting for the one year the library did not receive state aid.

4. Phased reopening: The expanded hours that began on March 22, 2021 are going well. The library averages 77 people per day for front door service at the main library and has appointments available 7 days a week. The general public became eligible for the COVID-19 vaccines on April 19 and the administration has been checking in with staff on their progress in getting vaccinated. The library is expecting to transition to a new model on May 10, which will allow building use without appointments. There will be no seating, except at computers, and patrons will be asked to keep their visits to less than an hour. Front door service will end, as the circulation staff will return to the second floor. However, accommodations will be made for patrons who are not yet comfortable coming into the building to pick up holds. Staff will remain at the front door for the first two weeks of the new model to explain this to patrons. Initially, the library will maintain time at both the beginning and end of the day for cleaning and staff tasks. So, for example, while staff are in the building 9AM-9PM on Mondays, the library will be open to the public from 10AM-8PM. The library will be closed to the public on Sunday May 9, in order for staff to move all of the holds back to the second floor. Ivy Mahan asked how the library will regulate time in the building. Allison Babin replied that she has been in touch with other libraries using this model and a simple request seems to work most of the time. Not having seating also will help to move patrons along. Mary Behrle asked if the library will be counting capacity. Allison Babin stated that the 2nd and 3rd floors of the building are large enough that the library does not ever expect to reach capacity there. However, the capacity of the Children's

Room is smaller and Margie McClory, Head of Children's Services is working with Allison on monitoring the capacity of this room. Myron Schirer-Suter asked if contact information was still required to be collected. Allison Babin replied that the City Solicitor advised that it is not required.

5. Building Issues: Allison Babin provided an update on the Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC). Mike Collins is working with the engineering firm B2Q to do a study. There are 3 options: a basic replacement of what the library has now, but with more modern and efficient equipment; replacing the rooftop compressors and air handlers with air source heat pumps to handle much of the heating load and to provide dehumidification (something Mike Collins sees as a must-have, which the building doesn't have now); or, similar to the second but using ground source heat pumps. It may not be possible to get enough wells to handle the load but they are also considering installing them on the Common if possible. In a few months we will have some data to review and to make a decision from. The first option is not being considered. Road closures near the library resulted in several days where the library was hard to reach for staff and patrons.

The Friendly Garden Club has long maintained the Landman Garden at the library. They have struggled with membership numbers and have donated a sprinkler system to the library. Members of the club are very passionate about continuing to work with the library.

6. Community Engagement: The library has a new online subscription to the Wall Street Journal. The library has offered the New York Times in this way for a while now. The Friends of the Beverly Public Library held a pop-up sale on Wednesday, April 21, 2021. Primarily they sold children's books and DVDs. They made \$128 but this was good preparation for the larger outdoor summer sale in June. The main library served as the collection site for Beverly Main Street's Art in the Park "School of Minnows" art project for kids. The decorated minnows will be on display at Hale Farm on May 8, 9, and 15. Allison Babin shared some photos of the minnows as well as recent virtual library programs.

7. Updates on Farms Branch: The Salem News reported that the Farms branch received a few donated items from the Updike family, including John Updike's 2006 Nashville Public Library Literacy Award, a framed quote, three personal letters, a postcard, and a business card that Updike had made when he graduated from high school. The Trustees technically accept the donation, and Michael Updike signed the gift form.

Colleen Michaels made the motion, seconded by Mary Behrle, to accept the donated items from the Updike family. Roll call vote approved 9 to 0. Motion passed.

The Farms Friends are researching an online donation platform. The main library Friends have been using one for years, but combining these two is not an option as there's no way to keep the data separate. Allison Babin met with them to discuss their needs. Having an option for online donations is a good next step as this is the way most people want to give now. The Farms may be accepting two garden beds through Beverly Main Streets for their Blooming in Beverly grant project.

8. Programs: Upcoming adult programs include Cookbook Club, a meditation program, and a Saturday program at Long Hill involving a nature walk, yoga, and meditation. Children's programs include story times, Graphic Novel Book Club, and Katie Bug Crafts. Teen programs include two book clubs and a cooking program series. In addition, Katie Nelson, Teen Librarian, is finishing up the work on the Teen Poetry Contest, which will premiere later this month.

Kevin O'Reilly stated that he's very happy about the options for the HVAC system and the potential to cut a lot of emissions. The city is lucky to have Mike Collins working to cut emissions for the city.

**Communications**

None.

**Unfinished Business**

None.

**New Business**

None.

The next regular meeting of the board will be held virtually on Tuesday May 25, 2021 at 4 PM.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 PM.