

# City of Beverly, Massachusetts

## Public Meeting Minutes

**Board:** Library Trustees

**Subcommittee:**

**Date:** June 14, 2022, 4:00 P.M.

**Place:** 32 Essex Street

**Board members present:** Margaret Altman, Cathryn Keefe O'Hare, Ivy Mahan, Kevin O'Reilly, Joanne Panunzio, Myron Schirer-Suter

**Board members absent:** Mary Behrle, Marshall Handly, Colleen Michaels

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

**Recorder:** Meghan Karasin

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

Cathryn Keefe-O'Hare made the motion, seconded by Joanne Panunzio, to accept the minutes of the meeting of May 24, 2022. Motion passed.

### **Public Presentation**

None.

### **Committee Reports**

Personnel: Joanne Panunzio presented the Library Director's review. Overall the rating was 3.66 out of 4. Joanne Panunzio thanked Meghan Karasin for her guidance on open meeting laws and creating the online survey. Due to open meeting laws, the review was not able to be circulated ahead of the meeting. Trustees were given 10 minutes to read the review. Ivy Mahan thanked Joanne Panunzio for her leadership and work on the review. Cathryn Keefe O'Hare asked about the procedure for closing the building in an emergency. Allison Babin stated that the staff has been frustrated with the decision making process during snow storms. The authority to close lies with the Mayor only. Ivy Mahan praised Allison's incredible leadership through COVID. Allison Babin stated that there are some lessons here. She could do a better job in reporting to the Trustees on collection development so they have a better understanding of the work being done there.

Administration: No report.

Finance: No report.

Long Range Planning: No report.

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

1. Fiscal Year 2022 Budget: Allison Babin stated that everything remains on track with just about 3 weeks to go. The custodian line has received a transfer to fully fund salaries through the end of the fiscal year. The full timeline has not yet received the needed \$12,005 transfer. It's been presented to City Council for approval. The funds from the binding records line have been transferred to cover software costs in computer software, partially due to an increase in cost for Constant Contact (due to increased number of subscribers). \$31,000 remains in the repair line. Provided no additional repair needs exist, these funds may be used for repairs/upgrades to the Sohler Room for Audio Visual system (estimated cost \$25,000 - \$35,0000). Joanne Panunzio asked if trust funds could be used. Allison Babin said that they can. Joanne Panunzio asked what happens if there are remaining funds in the electric line. Allison Babin replied that it goes to free cash, though some may be used up by transfers to cover other needs, like heating fuel.

2. Fiscal Year 2023 Budget: There have been no changes since the last meeting. The budget was presented to the City Council on Wednesday June 1. Allison thanked Joanne Panunzio for attending.

3. Building Issues: The Mayor has asked the City Council to approve the transfer of \$2M from free cash to begin the work associated with the HVAC project. The mayor will return to the Council in the Fall for additional funds. The total estimate of the project is \$4M. There will be a public hearing on the request. The hearing is set for Monday June 27 at 7:55PM. Allison Babin will attend. Minor sprinkler repairs are needed at the Farms. The money has already been encumbered. A mask advisory was issued on Tuesday May 24 due to the then increasing COVID numbers.

4. Community Engagement: The Friends of the Beverly Public Library ran a table at Historic Beverly's Opening Festival. They've had a pop up book sale and are gearing up for the bigger book sale on June 24-27. Member preview night is on Thursday June 23 from 7-9pm. Karen Laughon has prepared baskets for a raffle. On Friday August 19, the library will officially celebrate the opening of the Teen Room. Invitations will be going out to Trustees, city officials, Teen Advisory Board (TAB) members and alumni, and donors. Children's librarians have just visited all grades at all five elementary schools to talk about summer reading. The teen librarian has been in the middle school promoting summer reading as well. The Children's librarians will be participating in Bootstrap's Book Fair to give away summer reading books. On Saturday August 6, the Children's department will be represented at the Recreation Department's Tiny Tots Day at Lynch Park.

5. Update on New Website: The vendor, Stirling Brandworks, has presented the initial site, including the back end, to Allison Babin, Meghan Karasin, and Ona Ridenour. Ona's expertise and technological knowledge has not only guaranteed that we'll get a great product, but she also has the capability to do things that save us a lot of money going forward. An announcement of the new website will be in the July newsletter.

6. Programs: The Summer Reading Kickoff is on Thursday June 16 on the Common. This will involve a DJ, lawn games, and giveaways and it will mark the launch of the library story walk. The story walk was funded by the Myrtle Hickey Trust Fund. Allison Babin specifically wanted to recognize the amazing work done by Joe Bonaiuto, Mike Spiridigliozzi, Margie McClory,

Katie Nelson, Liz Caffi, Kate Carpine, and Katie Carlson in planning the event. Upcoming programs at the main library include Wildlife Encounters, Flying High Dogs, Cupcake Wars, Pasta & Pages book chat, and Summer Sounds. Programs at the Farms branch include Bubblemania and Stuffed Animal Sleepover.

### **Communications**

None.

### **Unfinished Business**

None.

### **New Business**

Annual Review of the Acceptable Use Policy

No changes were recommended. Joanne Panunzio made the motion, seconded by Margaret Altman, to approve the Acceptable Use Policy. Motion passed.

Annual Review of the Internet Use Policy

No changes were recommended. Cathryn Keefe O'Hare made the motion, seconded by Joanne Panunzio, to approve the Internet Use Policy. Motion passed.

Annual Review of the Security Policy

No changes were recommended. Joanne Panunzio made the motion, seconded by Myron Schirer-Suter, to approve the Security Policy. Motion passed.

Meeting Room Policy

This policy doesn't get reviewed annually and was last revised in 2019. Allison Babin presented a couple of small revisions. The first change addresses the possibility of getting a liquor license. In 2019, the city ordinance changed to allow the Director to approve liquor licenses (instead of City Council). The applicant would still need a one day license. This change in the library policy makes the process more clear to the public. The other change takes away the age requirement for study rooms. Myron Schirer-Suter made the motion, seconded by Joanne Panunzio, to approve the revised Meeting Room Policy. Motion passed.

Policy for the Selection of Materials and Maintenance of the Collection

Allison Babin explained the proposed changes:

- Renaming it the Collection Development Policy to be in line with best practices.
- Updating the Young Adult Collections section to reflect that the collection is now called "Teens"
- Under the Objections to Library Materials section, restrict the ability to file a formal request for reconsideration of library materials to a resident of the municipality. The policy, as currently written, would allow anyone to request removal of a title.

Ivy Mahan asked if there could be a complaint that the book is in the wrong section. Allison Babin said that could be the complaint. Ivy Mahan asked if the raising of the complaint should be restricted to Beverly residents. Myron Schirer-Suter said he preferred this distinction, especially

within a network, which allows complaints to be raised, but the formal review process can only be triggered by a Beverly resident. Kevin O'Reilly stated that he liked the 2-step process and asked if the language is similar to other libraries. Allison Babin stated that there is a lot of conversation about this now, but Beverly is ahead of most. This language is similar to Nahant Public Library. Kevin O'Reilly says the language as suggested gives some flexibility for the person to complain without triggering a larger process. Kevin O'Reilly asked to what extent this could go up to the legal department in the city. Allison Babin could check with the City Solicitor to see if there's a legal requirement for us to follow this procedure, though it is standard practice in libraries.

Allison Babin explained that we want to address complaints or concerns through conversation first. If the patron is not satisfied with the results of the conversation, the patron can then request the Request for Reconsideration Form. The form is not available online.

Margaret Altman asked if there is an age that a kid must be to check out at the adult desk? Allison Babin explained there's no age restriction. It's the parent's responsibility to monitor it as they see fit. Myron Schirer-Suter said that it's possible that someone could make an objection to something in electronic form. Allison Babin stated that the majority of electronic resources are purchased in bulk. Librarians are not selecting the individual materials within them. The exception is OverDrive. NOBLE makes most of the purchasing selections in OverDrive, but individual libraries do make additional purchases.

Joanne Panunzio suggested changing the language to singular.

Margaret Altman asked how many times has a book been challenged? Allison Babin said there hasn't been a formal challenge during her time in administration, but it has happened prior to that. Librarians have had conversations with patrons about selection of books.

Margaret Altman made the motion, seconded by Joanne Panunzio, to approve the revised Collection Development Policy as amended. Motion passed.

#### Public Presentation Policy (Proposed)

Allison Babin explained that this is a proposed new policy for the Board of Trustees. Trustee meeting agendas currently list public presentations as an item, but currently there are no rules about what the public can say, for how long, and what the process is for requesting time. This proposed policy is modeled after a new policy from the Council on Aging, as well as those of Wellesley, Arlington, and Boston Public Libraries. The City Solicitor has said there is no requirement to allow members of the public to speak at public meetings. However, boards can allow it; and if they do, there should be general rules relating to time, place, and manner.

This policy will allow the public to speak, but in a way that also allows the board to conduct its business. It also accounts for guests, such as Bruce Doig, Bryant Ayles, or other library staff.

Kevin O'Reilly asked if the policy needs to be voted on at this meeting. Allison Babin stated that it doesn't. Kevin O'Reilly also asked if it should be restricted to Beverly residents and suggested adding that the Director can also invite guests.

Cathryn Keefe-O'Hare says there may be legitimate reasons for non-residents to want to speak to the Board.

Ivy Mahan asked if it's possible for it to be at the Director's discretion to allow them to speak, based on topic. Cathryn Keefe O'Hare suggested requests for speaking must include the topic and be made in writing. Allison Babin reminded the board that they are just listening, not responding to public comment. Ivy Mahan suggested requests could be submitted by a form. Kevin O'Reilly suggested that requests must be made more than 48 hours in advance, in order to allow for time to post agenda.

Joanne Panunzio suggested a wording revision under #4: "a quorum of the board may, by affirmative vote..."

Allison Babin explained that the public could submit written comments as well, that would be read to or circulated to the Board.

The policy was tabled for revision and will be revisited at the September meeting.

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

- Fiscal Year Budget as of June 13, 2022
- Fiscal Year 2023 Budget
- Current Selection Development Policy
- Proposed Collection Development Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Internet Use Policy
- Security Policy
- Current Meeting Room Policy
- Proposed Meeting Room Policy
- Proposed Public Participation Policy

The next regular meeting of the board will be held via Zoom on Tuesday September 27, 2022 at 4PM.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:47 PM.