

City of Beverly, Massachusetts

Public Meeting Minutes

Board: Library Trustees

Subcommittee:

Date: September 27, 2022, 4:00 P.M.

Place: Remote Meeting on Zoom

Board members present: Margaret Altman, Mary Behrle, Cathryn Keefe O'Hare, Ivy Mahan, Colleen Michaels, Kevin O'Reilly, Joanne Panunzio

Board members absent: Marshall Handly, Myron Schirer-Suter

Others present: Allison Babin, Meghan Karasin, Bruce Doig

Recorder: Meghan Karasin

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

Colleen Michaels made the motion, seconded by Joanne Panunzio, to accept the minutes of the meeting of June 14, 2022. Roll call vote approved, 5 to 0 with Altman, Mahan, Michaels, O'Reilly, and Panunzio voting in favor. Behrle abstained. Motion passed.

Public Presentation

None.

Committee Reports

Personnel: Joanne Panunzio reported that she sent the Director's Review to Mayor Cahill on June 27, 2022.

Administration: No report.

Finance: No report.

Long Range Planning: No report.

Report of the Library Director

1. Fiscal Year 2022 Budget: Allison Babin shared the Fiscal Year 2022 budget report to screen. All necessary transfers were made prior to June 30, including the additional \$12,000 needed to accommodate raises from union negotiations. Enough funds remained in the budget to perform an upgrade to the AV in Sohier Room, with \$35,000 was encumbered in the repair line for the upgrade.

2. Fiscal Year 2023 Budget: Allison Babin shared the Fiscal Year 2023 budget report to screen. Everything is on track so far this year. The part time staff line looks a little underspent, but there's room in there for mid-year minimum wage raises. The computer software and hardware

line is a little over 50% spent, by design. This includes planned spending on technology upgrades, including upgrading the ScanPro machine. This is a microfilm-reading machine that was at the end of its life. The Mayor recently mentioned that non-union department head raises should be completed in a few weeks. This may be reflected in the next report.

3. Annual Report Information Survey (ARIS) Highlights: Allison Babin presented a comparison of 5 years of ARIS data to the screen. Most interesting is circulation - over 400,000 items circulated last year. Looking more closely, childrens and teen circulation has increased while adult has decreased. Joanne Panunzio asked if these numbers include ebooks. Allison Babin replied that the numbers include ebooks circulating through OverDrive, but not through hoopla. Because the library staff doesn't select individual titles in the hoopla collection, usage of this resource is included in the Usage of Electronic Collections data. This line also includes online databases.

4. Summer Reading: Allison Babin shared the Children's Summer Reading Report to the screen. Children's had more participants than they did in 2019, pre-COVID. 833 children registered and 593 completed the program. Over 600 people attended the kickoff event at the common.

Kevin O'Reilly left the meeting at 4:25 PM.

Allison Babin shared the Teen Summer Reading Report to the screen. There were 129 attendees who participated in 11 programs. 153 teens registered for the summer reading program, with 63 completing it.

Kevin O'Reilly returned to the meeting at 4:30 PM.

5. Building Issues: Some, but not all, items have arrived for the Sohier Room AV upgrade. Installation will be scheduled when all materials arrive. Regarding the HVAC project, the city has hired Tom Ellis as the Owner's Project Manager (OPM). He'll oversee the design and construction procurement and stitch together funding for the project. On September 15, potential engineers could do a walk-through of the building and gather information. The deadline for design applications is September 28, with interviews on October 5. Allison Babin will serve on the committee to review the applications. Right now it is too early to have a sense of when the project will start. The project is considered 5% designed, and the hired firm will have to then create the full design. Congressman Moulton visited the library on Thursday August 4 as part of his Community Project funding tour. He met with the Mayor and Allison Babin. Kevin O'Reilly asked if the funding requested was \$1M dollars. Allison Babin replied that it is.

The library's public internet connection is provided by the North of Boston Library Exchange (NOBLE). On July 1, NOBLE switched to Apogee as its telecom support firm. As part of this switch, Apogee performed an upgrade of equipment. This will allow for better security and higher bandwidth.

Allison Babin had been working with the Mayor's Office to determine the closing schedule for the holidays, with Christmas Eve on Saturday and Christmas on Sunday. City Hall will be closed Friday December 23 - Monday December 26. The library will be open on December 23 and

closed on December 26, with a floating holiday for full time staff. Closing the library for 4 days seems like too much. It has been difficult when determining this takes so long, as staff can't plan their time off and administration can't plan schedules.

6. Community Engagement: The Teen Room Grand Opening was held on Friday August 19. Thank you to Kevin O'Reilly and Colleen Michaels for joining. There were about 25 people in attendance. Afterwards, there was an article in the Salem News and Katie Nelson was interviewed on WBZ radio. Katie did a great job putting the whole event together.

The Children's Department had a table at Hooray for Health's Free Family Fitness Night at Lynch Park last week. This was a collaboration with the Beverly Public Schools, Greater Beverly YMCA, and the Beverly Parks and Recreation Department. The librarians brought book lists on a variety of topics and were able to create library cards right on the spot.

Beverly Public Schools has hired a new district wide elementary media specialist. Laura Brosnan is a former public librarian and has met with our Children's librarians to discuss possible collaborations. The Beverly Public Schools new City Connects Coordinator, Kali Martin, reached out to our Teen Librarian, Katie Nelson. The goal of the City Connects program is to look at every student in the schools and figure out what they need to be their best self. After the evaluation process, students might be connected to social activities, food/other resources, academic supports, social/emotional support, etc. There is a coordinator at every elementary school, one at the high school, and two at the middle school. Katie was able to share our activities and provide additional resources and connections to other organizations.

The library is hosting a Costume Drive for the Recreation Department. Donated costumes will be sold at the Carriage House on October 10. Additionally the library will be hosting a Trick or Trash collection bin for candy wrappers from October 22 to November 22. This will be advertised at Downtown Trick or Treat.

7. Collections and Services: The library's new website launched on Wednesday July 20. Allison Babin displayed the main page of the website to the screen and pointed out some features. Ivy Mahan commented that she loves the new site and finds it very user friendly.

The library has many online databases. Some are provided through the state, some through NOBLE, and some are purchased individually. If purchased with the books & subscriptions funds, the databases are for Beverly residents only. The state is offering a few new resources including Transparent Language, Peterson's Test Prep, and PebbleGo (a resource for kids).

Allison Babin presented the materials budget to the screen. The books & subscriptions line in the library's FY23 budget is \$285,500. That is further broken down by age and format into the materials budget and is shared with the staff. Determining funding is a collaboration with librarians based on needs they are seeing or formats that are/aren't circulating. Librarians who are assigned collections have a monthly spending target, and fund reports are run weekly. Librarians select materials by reading professional reviews.

Kevin O'Reilly asked how the holdings of other libraries influence purchasing decisions. Allison Babin replied that staff look at what patrons put holds on that might be in other libraries, and there are discussions and recommendations made about databases.

Margaret Altman asked that the materials budget be sent to the trustees.

Allison Babin shared the Book or Materials Challenge Procedure to the screen. This is an internal document to guide staff. Allison Babin shared the Request for Reconsideration Form to the screen. Kevin O'Reilly had asked at the last meeting, to what extent could a challenge go up to the legal department of the city. Others had asked who the ultimate authority is on the library collection. The rest of this conversation will be about the Board, Director, and Mayor, as positions - not the individual people that currently hold those positions. Allison Babin met with the city solicitor's office. Their advice is that the authority for what goes in the collection lies with the Library Director and the Board. One can look to the city ordinances regarding the Board. Ordinance 15-39 states:

Composition. The custody, management and control of the public library and reading rooms, and all property of the City relating thereto, subject to the provisions of the Charter relating to trust funds, shall be vested in a board of trustees consisting of nine persons, residents of the City, who shall serve without compensation.

Additionally, the Director's employment contract states: "It is the responsibility of the Library Director to enforce and pursue the policy for selection of materials adopted by the Board." The Board sets the policy, and the Director enforces it. The policy determines what goes in the collection and how it is selected. The solicitor says that there is nothing in the statute that says the Mayor has the authority to decide what goes or does not go in collection. But the Mayor appoints the Trustees. The structure isn't immune from someone's agenda, but there's a balance of power.

Cathryn Keefe O'Hare joined the meeting at 4:54PM

8. Personnel: Jianna Christopher, part time reference librarian, resigned to take a full time position in Chelmsford. Chris Sherratt has filled this opening, after concluding a long career with MIT libraries. Liz Flaherty, part time library assistant, has taken a position in Newbury. Eddie Negron, full time library assistant, has taken a position with Tisch Library at Tufts University. Their position will be filled soon.

Ivy Mahan left the meeting at 5:15PM

9. Programs: Many programs this week focus on Climate Preparedness week, including Monday Mornings and Story Times. Former Mayor Bill Scanlon is coming to discuss his new book. Teens are having a Creative Writing Club and Childrens is hosting LEGO Club and Story Times.

Communications

None.

Unfinished Business

1. Public Participation Policy: At the June meeting, a draft of the Public Participation Policy was put forward. This policy aims to lay out the rules for how the public can participate in a meeting. Allison Babin shared the draft with the City Solicitor's Office, which edited it heavily. It is expected that a draft will be ready for the Board at the October meeting.

New Business

1. Collection Development Policy: Allison Babin shared the marked-up Collection Development Policy to the screen. These edits were suggested by City Solicitor Stephanie Williams. She suggested including language about not creating a legal right for the item to be removed.

Joanne suggested edits to the first paragraph. She'll send them to Meghan Karasin for compiling before the next meeting.

Kevin O'Reilly asked to what extent the board would be involved if there was a challenge. Allison Babin. Librarians and administration will start with a conversation with the patron and will likely not notify the Board if it's resolved there. If the form is filled out, the Board of Trustees will be notified.

The proposed revised policy will be discussed at the October meeting.

2. Trust Fund Proposed Spending for Fiscal Year 2023: Each year, Allison Babin reaches out to the city finance department for how the trust funds performed. This information informs the following year's spending. Allison Babin shared the proposed spending report to screen. Bryant Ayles guides the library to use a 3-year rolling average of income. Some trust funds have restrictions as to how they are spent. The proposed spending is conservative for FY23. What is not spent remains in the fund and is accessible for later use. This provides a safety net for the library. Joanne Panunzio asked Allison Babin to share a copy of the report with the trustees.

Regarding spending on hotspots, Joanne Panunzio asked if hotspots have a shelf life. Allison Babin replied that T-Mobile provides the devices for free, but the library pays a monthly fee for the data for each hotspot. Some funds for this also come from the city budget.

Joanne Panunzio suggested that the library's new website indicate that it was funded through trust funds. Allison Babin said she would look into how to note this on the site.

List of Documents/Exhibits

- Draft minutes from the June 14, 2022 meeting
- Fiscal Year 2022 budget
- Fiscal Year 2023 budget to date (9/21/22)
- ARIS Report
- Children's Summer Reading Report
- Teen Summer Reading Report
- FY23 Materials Budget
- Book or Material Challenge Procedure

- Request for Reconsideration Form
- Current Collection Development Policy
- Proposed Collection Development Policy
- Proposed Trust Fund Spending for FY23

The next regular meeting of the board will be held in person at the library on October 25, 2022 at 6PM.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:35 PM.