

Lucius Beebe Memorial Library
Board of Library Trustees

Meeting Date: May 24, 2023

Meeting Location: Lecture Hall and Zoom

Trustees Present

In-person: Jeff Quinn, Laura Cutone Godwin, Paul Gordon, Scott Staiti, Chris Barrett, Jackie Natale, Susan Wetmore, Adam Rodgers

Via Zoom: n/a

Staff: Catherine McDonald, Jackie Powers, Casey Chwiecko, Annie Hochheiser, Holly Turner, Molly MagDougald, Heidi Zeibig

Public Participation: Julie Orsino (25 Summer St, Wakefield)

Documents

Agenda

Secretary's Report

Staff Reports

FY23 Operating Budget Status Report

Trustees Gift Funds Report

Board of Trustees (contact information and committees)

Library Holiday Schedule 2024

Trustees and Friends Meeting Schedules 2023-2024

Article about Work and Play Stations at libraries

Article from The Daily Item about Beebe Library (4/25/23)

Patron email on iPhone class

Patron email on Digitized Daily Item

Patron thank you card to Youth Room staff

Quinn called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Given the volume of public participation, Quinn requested we start with public participation.

Public Participation

- Julie Orsino from 25 Summer St spoke on behalf of raising flags at the library as a sign of welcome for the community, in particular the Pride flag. Requested revisiting our policy in light of the change in ordinance in the city of Boston.
 - Barrett suggested reviewing the Town Council minutes and guidelines. Quinn suggested discussing this further at the June board meeting.
 - McDonald clarified that libraries don't follow the same policies as municipalities. She invited Orsino to meet with her to discuss further. She also noted that the library is not governmental and doesn't speak on behalf of the town. Therefore, if we allow one group to fly their flag, we have to extend that same right to all groups.
 - Quinn recapped the discussion from the September 2022 board meeting. The library flew the Pride and Juneteenth flags in June 2022 because it was the only available flagpole in the town. There were challenges with using the flagpole, but there was no objection to those particular causes.
 - Wetmore emphasized that the library is inclusive and the staff makes a great effort to exhibit that inclusive environment inside the library.
 - Quinn noted that the policy is not on the agenda so we can't vote on a policy change at this meeting.
 - Rodgers noted that the library is here to share knowledge. We don't have the same protections as the town to make statements that are or can be perceived to be political.
 - Orsino suggested that an exterior flag could help promote what is happening inside the building. She will reach out to McDonald to discuss further.
 - Quinn suggested getting refreshed guidance from Mullen about the town's policy.

Youth Library/Summer Program

- Casey: Change from "Summer Reading Program" to "Summer at the Library" which is more inclusive (not limited to reading, and also covers adult programs).
- Annie: Shared program brochure. Age-appropriate collectibles will be given to participants (stickers/notebook, lanyard/pouch, scratch ticket for prizes).
- Molly: About 40 programs scheduled for the summer including: story times, scavenger hunts, pajama party, teddy bear picnic, sensory play, Critter Club, STEM Builders Club; Dungeons & Dragons; Teen Creativity Cafe, Musical Theater Audition Workshop, Graphic Novel Club, Creative Writing Club, etc.

- Heidi: Where's Buzzy 2023. He travels to space but he gets lost. Scavenger hunt participants will help bring Buzzy home. This year's posters will include a QR code that will bring up Buzzy. Last year there were about 900 raffle tickets filled out.
- Holly: Visiting elementary and middle schools to talk to students about "Summer at the Library" and this year's theme "Finding Your Voice." Opportunity to explain how the summer programs work and the booklists. Each librarian takes on a grade level and assesses what has been popular, what's new, etc. and creates a resource to help patrons find books by grade level. School visits are a good way to have outreach to the students.
- McDonald noted that the library plans to pause its social media over the summer. Buzzy usually lives on Facebook but the staff is adapting. The goal is to move that content to the website. This is part of a wellness initiative.
- McDonald also noted that the staff is using more and more of their own skill sets – rather than hiring outside performers, etc.
- Will utilize e-newsletter, Daily Item, town community boards, etc. to promote these events.
- Discussion about a library app. The staff has done a lot of research on this but to do it really, really well is very expensive (ie, integrating all the library's various functions). NOBLE has an app but just for the catalog. In the March 2022 survey: vast majority of respondents indicated that they want to get info from the library website or e-newsletter.

Acceptance of Secretary's Report

Gordon moved to accept the secretary's report; Staiti seconded. Motion was approved unanimously by roll call.

Staff Reports

Godwin moved to accept the staff reports; Gordon seconded. Motion was approved unanimously by roll call.

Discussion:

- High volume of destructive incidents last month.
- McDonald will serve as Vice President of NOBLE Executive Board for this upcoming year, and will serve as President the following year.
- McDonald to ask Holly for feedback on the neurodivergent conference.
- Wetmore acknowledged the large number of library staff that helped support Blossoms – especially Meghan Kinton for learning and managing the app. On behalf of the planning committee, Wetmore wanted to thank the entire staff for their contributions.

- Successful event for the 100th celebration, and the building looked terrific.

Public Participation

- See above.

Correspondence

- McDonald researched the Work/Play stations but the Youth Room has declined them. There isn't a good space for them.
- Positive feedback on iPhone class
- Positive feedback on Digitized Item
- Thank you note to Youth Room staff

Committee Reports

Budget

- On track to spend the full budget by the end of the year.
- Our portion went through Town Meeting without issue.

Building and Grounds

- Library participated in No Mow May. Glad to have participated but this isn't a good location for that program.
- One of the six boilers is down (the sixth being redundant), but that is a lower priority than the roof and the front steps. It looks like they'll need to take down all the front steps and rebuild them. That will go in next year as a capital project.

Friends

The May meeting was held on 5/11/23. Gordon attended.

- It was a slow month in terms of incoming revenue.
- They shared data comparing their group to other Friends' groups at the meeting. They will discuss similarities/differences at a future meeting. This was used to discuss how much money they should be keeping versus giving to the library.
- Looking for future storage/site location for the book sale. Looked into local and portable options. There were some offline discussions. There is no timeline for them to depart the Hurd.
- They have some board positions open: President, VP, Treasurer, Social Media.
- Meeting got heated. There seems to be strife within the board which might explain the push back regarding the digitization project. Two people left the meeting and did not return.

- Discussion of declining membership over the year; how to reinvigorate their membership. Want to look at new ways for sustaining membership/renewals.
- Will discuss bylaws to be approved at their annual meeting.

The June meeting is scheduled for 6/8/23. Lominac will attend.

Gift Funds

- No changes.

Legislative Advocacy

- Everything is on track for state funding.

Personnel

- Personnel committee has met twice.
- Wetmore made a motion to approve the minutes for meetings held on May 11, 2023 and May 18, 2023; Staiti seconded. Motion passed unanimously by sub-committee.
- Staiti made motion to release the meeting minutes held May 11, 2023 and May 18, 2023; Barrett seconded. Motion passed unanimously by sub-committee.
- Wetmore presented the committee's work:
 - This was the first time the sub-committee has evaluated McDonald's salary and increased responsibilities since she moved to the Director role in 2017. After reviewing the materials, the committee is recommending an increase in McDonald salary from \$117,769.60 for 2023-2024 to \$148,116.80 for 2024-2025. Subsequent years will be increased by the annual town employee percentage (3-5%).
 - Increase is based on hourly rate range which is the top tier of what Assistant Director range would be and raised that by 15%. Looked at comparable positions within the town (those with negotiated contracts) with a range of \$90K - \$240K salaries and various responsibilities. (There are very few who are responsible for running an entire building.) Compared the range of library directors at surrounding communities.
- Discussion about the process. Desire to retain excellent staff at the helm of the library.
- Quinn suggested looking at the director's salary on a more regular basis (i.e., in alignment with the contract renewal).
- Godwin made a motion to amend the director's compensation based on the recommendation of the Personnel committee. Gordon seconded. Motion approved unanimously by roll call.

New Business

- Recognition of Wetmore, Rodgers, and Godwin on their re-elections.
- Annual Board Reorganization
 - Barrett made a motion to accept the slate of chair, vice chair, and secretary as presented: Quinn as chair, Lominac as vice chair, and Godwin as secretary. Gordon seconded. Motion approved unanimously by roll call.
 - Committee discussion was postponed until the June meeting due to time constraints.
- Meeting schedules discussion postponed until June meeting due to time constraints.
- Holiday schedule discussion postponed to June meeting due to time constraints.
- Blossoms
 - 371 guests, largest group ever
 - Final numbers are not in yet, but the profit will be about \$50K total (\$25K each for the library and the chamber of commerce)
 - Survey results: Wetmore will share recap at future meeting.
 - Barrett acknowledged Wetmore's great efforts in chairing the event.

Items not reasonably anticipated by the chair

Next Trustees meeting is June 21st.

Gordon made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Barrett seconded. Motion approved unanimously by roll call.

Meeting adjourned at 8:59 PM.