

Lucius Beebe Memorial Library
Board of Library Trustees

Meeting Date: April 13, 2021

Meeting Location: Remote Meeting via Zoom (*Consistent with the Governor's orders suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law and banning gatherings of more than 10 people, this meeting will be conducted by remote participation*)

Trustees Present

Jeffrey Quinn, Kevin Scanlon, Aimee Lominac, Cindy Schatz, Laura Cutone Godwin, Susan Wetmore, Tim Healy

Staff: Catherine McDonald, Jaclyn Powers

Public: Helen Van BenSchoeten, Keith LaGraves, Scott Staiti

Documents

Agenda

Secretary's Report

Staff Reports

Operating Budget Status Report

Gifts and Grants Status Report

FY22 Beebe Library Request - Information Technology Five Year Plan

Charter Update from Town Counsel

Article from Town Meeting Updating Town By-Laws Related to Library Hiring

Public Correspondence

Scanlon called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM

Acceptance of Secretary's Report

Schatz moved to accept the secretary's report, Lominac seconded.

Discussed typo misspelling Lominac's name.

Motion approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Staff Reports

Godwin moved to accept the director's and staff reports, Schatz seconded.

Discussed "parklet", a tiny park, to be pulled together outside the library. Will include Adirondack chairs decorated by the Boys' and Girls' Clubs. Planned for after school vacation.

Discussed the leak that was detected last month. It has been identified and fixed.

Discussed Town Council member Mehreen Butt speaking for library advocacy. The MLA had reached out for her contact information to ask her to speak; she is the point of contact on the Town Council for the library.

Discussed meeting with the Town Administrator and Town Human Resources.

Discussed the new Library web site. Some fine tuning is still in progress, including menu interfaces and updating text that is difficult to read.

Discussed the purchase of five iPads.

Discussed increased phone costs, driven by requirement to support transfers to route numbers while librarians work remotely. It has been tagged as a COVID-19 related expense in the event that CARES Act funding is needed to cover the expense.

Discussed the Reference Question of the Month as a great reminder of the breadth of information and service provided by the library.

Discussed the Phased Service Plan update. The Director met the director of the Melrose public library and with Ruth Clay from the Board of Health. The Melrose library plans a partial reopening in May.

The Beebe staff has been planning for a potential reopening in May as well. A schedule and plan are in place to set up separate appointments for browsing, computer use, or family visits. Tom Walsh from Town Emergency Management has consulted on the reopening plans; he recommended starting small and working up to larger efforts.

Part of the plan includes plexiglass at the service desks as well as face shields. New RFID equipment implemented last year will facilitate self-checkout. Rooms will have posted capacity limits. All patrons will have to enter through Avon Street, although they may exit out the Main Street doors.

Everything that anyone touches will have to be quarantined for 24 hours per direction from the Board of Health. Staff have adjusted displays to minimize that amount of touching required to browse the collections.

Discussed contact tracing. Tracing was not a concern for Ruth Clay when the Director discussed it with her. A rough trace could be done based on appointments recorded for a given time.

The plan would be for 20 browsing appointments and an additional 4-7 computer appointments. Side door service would be maintained at least part of the time, evolving to two evening blocks between 5 and 9 P.M., as well as a Saturday block.

Lack of available plexiglass for the service desks is currently preventing initiation of the reopening plan.

Discussed discovery of termites in the library facility. Exterminators will be brought in to resolve the issue by May 11 and will not affect reopening.

Discussed other local libraries and their reopenings. Lynnfield is estimating they are at about 30% of pre-COVID traffic. Discussed family browsing appointments - they would be limited to a maximum of 4 appointments so as not to limit the number of people in each family appointment.

Side door appointments would continue to be made with the same calendar software.

Masks will continue to be required per state guidance. Gloves will be offered to patrons, as well as hand sanitizer.

Discussed a dedicated Senior Hour - not planned initially but will monitor patron traffic to see if it would be beneficial.

Booking of conference rooms will not be available initially.

Discussed outdoor events - such events are not part of the initial plan as the town continues to discourage anything that might draw a large crowd of people.

Discussed display of magazines and the obvious issues with the touch quarantine rules. Library plans to display magazines but not newspapers per recommendation of town emergency management.

Discussed checklist to verify patrons entering the building have not been exposed to COVID-19. Such a questionnaire will be part of the appointment booking process.

Discussed computer appointments. Those limits will be separate from browsing appointments.

Discussed rollout of reopening plan. Staff will need five days to convert from full side door service to partial side door with in-person browsing.

Discussed online programming - will continue with online programs, but pace may change as staff is needed to support in person browsing.

The motion to accept the staff reports was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Public Participation

Helen Van BenSchoeten, President of the Friends of Beebe, attended, and mentioned that the Friends would be sending a representative to future Trustees meetings. Kieth LaGraves and Scott Staiti attended the meeting. Both are running for Trustee in the upcoming Town election.

Correspondence:

An appreciative patron sent a drawing to the Circulation Desk, and was included in the packet.

Committee Reports:**Budget:**

None.

Building and Grounds:

None.

Friends:

Wetmore attended. The Friends Board gave a membership update, as well as an update on Book Sale planning - the Board of Health gave approval to proceed with the sale as long as certain COVID related rules and accommodations are in place. The Sale is planned for June, and the Friends will resume collecting donated books soon. The Board is also looking for new members.

The next Friends meeting is May 6. Barrett to cover.

Gift Funds:

Discussed adding the amount encumbered for each line on the report.

Legislative Advocacy:

Schatz attended Library Legislative Day event. According to an MBLC report, essentially all libraries that want to be certified are currently certified. The MBLC also has a statewide advocacy goal of 10 letters written from each town to advocate for libraries and library funding. A personal letter providing specifics of how funding has helped a local library can have a huge impact.

Personnel:

None.

New Business

Discussed the IT Budget. Total dollars for IT for the library are rolled into the Town's IT budget presented at Town Meeting. Replacement of the printer is being put off for the time being. Updates to digital signage will be paid for with CARES funding. Software upgrades will be handled with the Library's own budget.

Discussed server maintenance, and the possibility of moving to cloud servers.

Lominac moved to approve the IT budget as drafted for FY22, Barrett seconded, motion approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Discussed contract negotiations with one of the unions representing library staff. The Town Administrator declined to perform negotiations as usual with the union representing library staff based on Town Counsel's interpretation of a change to the Town Charter. The change was clerical, removing a reference to hiring of a category of employee no longer employed by the library, but in so doing a pre-existing contradiction in the Town Charter was underscored, wherein all hiring is done by the Director. The Town Administrator and Town Counsel took the position that this meant the Director must negotiate with the union, despite other language in the Charter that explicitly states that such negotiations will be performed by the Town Administrator. The result is that the bargaining unit representing library staff will be handled separately from all other unions in town.

Discussed having Town Counsel Tom Mullins discuss this with the Trustees.

Discussed hiring labor counsel, and who would pay for that counsel. Negotiations with the union have started, but have stalled based on these issues. The Director, along with Barrett, Healy, and Wetmore planned to meet with Town Counsel and Town Administrator to discuss further.

The Board thanks Scanlon for his 15 years of service, and thanks Schatz for her 25 years of service - both declined to seek re-election and will end their terms with the upcoming election.

Next meeting is scheduled for May 26th, 2021.

Adjourn

Healy moved to adjourn, Barrett seconded, motion passed, unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Meeting adjourned at 8:49 PM.