

Trustees Minutes

July 14, 2020

A **virtual** meeting of the Trustees of the Public Library was held on Tuesday, July 14, 2020 at 6:15 p.m. Those virtually present were:

Axelrod (left at 6:38)	Goldman	Livingston	Martin-Page
Burstein	Healy (arrived 6:36)	Lohe	Vanderkay (arrived 6:36)
Chanyasukit	Jones	Margolis	

Also virtually present: S. Slymon, Director; A. Reed, Assistant Director, and E. Mitchell Assistant Director of Technology.

**** All motions were taken by roll call vote.**

I. Nomination of Officers

G. Jones, as Senior Trustee, opened the meeting and called for nominations from the floor for Chair. A motion was then made, and seconded, to nominate R. Healy for Chair. This motion passed unanimously via roll call vote. G. Jones then called for nominations from the floor for Vice-Chair. A motion was made, and seconded, to nominate C. Axelrod for Vice-Chair. This motion passed unanimously via roll call vote. C. Axelrod then presided over the meeting and called for nominations from the floor for Secretary. A motion was made, and seconded, to nominate K. Martin-Page for Secretary. (R. Healy arrived). This motion passed unanimously via roll call vote. R. Healy then presided and called for nominations from the floor for Treasurer. A motion was made, and seconded, to nominate C. Lohe as Treasurer. This motion passed unanimously via roll call vote. C. Axelrod left the meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the months of June and July will be voted on at the August meeting.

III. Library Director's Report

Circulation: The circulation report was distributed along with some graphs from Minuteman.

Financial: The rolling annual financial report can be found at:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Pw6i_vFQmky8ZDoMMMRdV_z2xCEsElw9QhfQVI08RMY/edit#gid=1795794717

This Month is Libraries

The Director shared the following links:

Censorship in China:

<https://www.newsweek.com/schools-reopen-china-removes-illegal-library-books-nationwide-amid-xis-push-patriotism-1516982>

Fine Free as a Social Justice Issue:

<https://www.npr.org/2020/07/10/889427801/dawn-wacek-how-can-libraries-be-a-path-toward-inclusivity-and-forgiveness>

Police in Libraries:

<https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2020/07/08/rethinking-police-presence/>

Staff Gifts: The Director thanked the Board of Library Trustees on behalf of the staff for the book gift cards. She personally was able to get a book that she had been trying to get for a while. You can see the review at: <https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/george-m-johnson/all-boys-arent-blue/> Some other titles that staff purchased were:

A Phoenix Must Burn

<https://www.publishersweekly.com/978-1-984835-65-9>

Native Son

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1992/07/20/the-hammer-and-the-nail>

Caribbean Vegan: Meat-Free, Egg-Free, Dairy-Free, Authentic Island Cuisine for Every Occasion by Taymer Mason

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/8070468-caribbean-vegan>

The Friends of the Library provided all full-time staff with a library-themed facemask.

Anti-racism Initiatives: Once things settle down a little in the libraries, the Director will begin sourcing training and education opportunities for the staff and Trustees around anti-racism. The Director enrolled in the Denver Public Library Workplace Equity Symposium, as did some staff, but could not attend due to the lack of staffing; however, she will have access to all of the information after the fact and is looking forward to sharing it with others.

Budget Advocacy: The Director is very concerned about the library maintaining its ability to stay certified this year. All departments were asked to prepare for a 10% cut. The Director did so and was pleased to receive an 8.3% cut, less than expected. However, the Director was assured that the cuts would be proportional across Departments, and they most decidedly were not. The Police Department was cut 1%, and many other departments received increases. Recreation, the Council on Aging, and the Library sustained the biggest cuts. This is exactly a situation for which the Mass Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) will decertify a municipality. If that were to happen, the library would have to apply for a waiver. The Director has expressed her concerns to the Town Administrator, the Deputy Town Administrator, and the Assistant Town Administrator. The library would also lose \$100,000 in State Aid. There will need to be some significant advocacy to have a dramatic portion of the library budget restored in November in order to stay certified. As the Director stated previously, MBLC has relaxed some requirements due to the pandemic, and they may relax more later, but there is no way to predict that. The Director is recommending that the Board of Library Trustees form an ad hoc advocacy subcommittee to begin work in September.

Woburn Public Library: The Director, Trustees, and Mayor have worked together to lay off all of the library workers at the Woburn Public Library. The library was fully funded, and in fact, received a 2% increase for FY'21. Thus far, they have declined or cancelled all opportunities to speak with their public, their staff, or the Executive Board of the Minuteman Library Network. The MLN Executive Board and Executive Director sent WPL a letter warning them that they were in danger of being expelled from MLN if they did not clarify what was happening at the library. Recently, a pair of Trustees took to Facebook and accused the MLN Executive Board of lying. This situation is unprecedented in every way. The Director has included MLN's statement on the issue in this month's documents. If the library were to be decertified, the

Board would need to write a letter stating that we will no longer loan items to Woburn patrons, as we did for Wareham years ago. There will be a statement coming from MLA shortly, and the Director will keep the Board notified.

Museum Passes: The library is not currently offering museum passes. Staff simply cannot keep up with the work they have now, and adding another component is a recipe for failure.

COVID-19: Staff are still quarantining materials for 3 days. For more information, visit the following links:

<https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/3.-emergency-management/3.5-disinfecting-books>

Staff is very concerned about this report:

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/07/09/889526937/who-re-port-aerosols-not-likely-to-be-significant-source-of-covid-19-transmission>

Re-Opening: At this point, we are in Stage 3 of our re-opening plan, which involves all of the services we have been offering during the pandemic, and adds contactless pickup. The Director explained that it is very difficult to estimate when it is safe to move to the next phase, which would involve welcoming a very limited number of patrons into the building to browse. Town Hall was supposed to open on a limited basis last week, but Dr. Jett cancelled it based on the incredibly scary surges happening around the country, and some slight upticks in Massachusetts.

To help inform our discussion, the Director wanted to mention a few things:

- Dr. Jett does not feel it is safe to open the library at this time.
- Patrons are thrilled with curbside, and although curious about when we might let them back in the buildings, they are not upset when we tell them we do not know.
- Staff is incredibly nervous about interacting with patrons face-to-face, with cases on the rise again in Norfolk County.
- None of the major libraries have any plans to let patrons in before August. The Director has spoken with the President of the Boston Public Library and all of the Directors that touch Boston, and no one is opening in July. Cambridge, Newton, Waltham, Arlington and Lexington all plan to wait and see for August. Some libraries will be doing contact tracing, but the Director does not see our library doing this.

Personnel: The Director is pleased to announce that Snowy Quinn will join the library on Monday, July 13 as our new Business Manager. Snowy has been a bar manager at Matt Murphy's for over a decade and has extensive experience with inventory, procurement, payroll, scheduling, and social media. Tony Corsentino has been promoted from part-time

reference librarian to full-time cataloger in the Tech Services Department, and he will start on July 14.

Patriot Act: The library has not been served with any court orders since the last meeting.

IV. Committee Reports

M Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer reported that there is only a partial FY'20 budget for the end of the year, as some of the items she needs are in the library, and she cannot get access to them for now. The budget came in at approximately \$22,000 under budget, as there were some programs that did not happen, and some professional development conferences that were cancelled, due to the pandemic. The Treasurer stated that \$151,000 was spent on books and materials. Every line item was on or under budget.

Executive Committee: K. Martin-Page sent a list of the current library committees. If there is a committee that you would be interested in serving on, please let the Executive Committee know.

Staff Appreciation Committee: C. Chanyasulkit requested that if any Trustee have any suggestions for gifts, or would like to make a 1 minute or shorter video of them thanking the staff, to send them to her.

Old/New Business

Zoom Meetings: E. Mitchell encouraged the Board of Library Trustees to make an appointment with her to be trained on logging into future meetings.

V. Adjourn

M There being no further business to come before the meeting, upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimous:

Voted: To adjourn at 7:58 p.m.
A true record.
ATTEST



Koinonia I. Martin-Page
Secretary
2020