

A **virtual** meeting of the Trustees of the Public Library was held on Tuesday, December 8, 2020 at 6:15 p.m. Those virtually present were:

Axelrod	Burstein	Chanyasulkit	Healy	Jones (6:20)
Livingston	Lohe	Margolis	Martin-Page	Vanderkay

Also virtually present: S. Slymon, Director; A. Reed, Assistant Director; E. Mitchell, Assistant Director of Technology; and members of the public, Tracy Chen and Matthew Shakespeare.

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

**I. Approval of Minutes**

**M** A motion was made to approve the November minutes. This motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

**II. Library Director's Report**

**Circulation** Report Attached.

**Financial**

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Pw6i\\_vFQmky8ZDoMMMRdV\\_z2xCEsElw9QhfQVI08RMY/edit#gid=1795794717](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Pw6i_vFQmky8ZDoMMMRdV_z2xCEsElw9QhfQVI08RMY/edit#gid=1795794717)

**This month in libraries**

Protecting Library Workers' Mental Health During the Pandemic:

<http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2020/11/naming-the-elephant/>

**Covid/Re-Opening**

The new staffing model transitioned on November 30, 2020, and it's so far so good. Like everything else this year, it is not optimal, or convenient, but everyone has maintained their full hours. The Director is relieved to think that we have increased the safety of the staff as well, amid the dramatic spikes in cases. Dr. Jett is predicting a huge spike two weeks after Thanksgiving. It was widely reported that as many as 50 million people traveled for the holiday. There was at least one library employee who traveled for the holiday, and we are anticipating that at least five more will be traveling at Christmas time. Dr. Jett has also said there will be a huge spike after Christmas. We are working with Procurement and Buildings to get semi-permanent structures around the entrances of the libraries that will allow for ventilation, but also protect staff and patrons from the elements. Hopefully, they will be able to have some sort of heat. We have seen a dramatic uptick in complaints from the public about having to wait outside in the cold, and it isn't even winter yet. Governor Baker has released his roll-back plan, and we will see what this means for the libraries. The Director doesn't believe that we will have to roll back any services at this time. Many of the libraries in Minuteman that were allowing patrons to browse are now having to pull back that service. Although the

Director praised them for their valiant try, she is glad that we did not provide that service, only to see it be taken away.

**Budget:** The Director reported that after Town meeting, the library received a \$40,000 restoration to the budget. The Director thanked the Trustee Advocacy Committee for its work, as she believes it was instrumental in getting the \$40,000 restored. This budget restoration will be reported to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (“M.B.L.C.”) in January. In addition, the Director and the Town Administrator may have to go downtown and appear before the M.B.L.C. The M.B.L.C. hasn’t decided yet how it is going to handle this unprecedented year. They may change the threshold; in which case, the Director and Town Administrator would not have to appear before it. The Town has asked the Director to level fund the library budget based on FY’21 numbers, which would mean a \$400,000 cut that could force permanent layoffs for approximately 40% of the part-time employees. Some members of the Town Advisory Committee have asked M. Goff why the library budget should not be cut, inaccurately reasoning that since the libraries are closed, the libraries are not doing anything. The Director asked the Board of Library Trustees to reach out to any Advisory Committee members they know, as well as to other members of any committee to which they belong, to advocate for the library. J. Margolis will draft a letter to the Advisory Committee similar to the one that was sent to the Select Board previously, along with an invitation to the Advisory Committee to meet with the Board. C. Lohe suggested incorporating in the letter the statistics that the Director used in a letter she recently sent out to the public, describing in more detail all the many ways the library staff is hard at work providing services to the public even while the library buildings are closed to visitors. The Director did not submit a level funded budget based on FY’21 numbers but instead, submitted a level funded budget based on FY’20 numbers. This will be put on the agenda for further discussion at next month’s meeting.

**Anti-Racist Curriculum Development Team:**

We have been working hard to organize a curriculum framework and a request for proposals to hire a facilitator, and we hope to have these ready to roll out in February or March at the latest.

**Book Sale:**

The Book Sale has remained very busy and successful, but we are going to talk at the Friends meeting on December 3 about how it will proceed due to the onset of winter. The Chair thanked Sara and staff for all of their hard work maintaining the book sale out on the terrace.

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

**III. Trustee Search Committee Report**

C. Chanyasulkit thanked the Director, K. Livingston, and the Assistant Director of Technology E. Mitchell for administering the actual outreach to Trustee candidates. The Trustee Search Committee Report is posted in the meeting materials K. Martin-Page sent out, as well as in Google Drive, and it specifically lists all the different venues for outreach. K. Martin-Page offered to draft and send a grid that Trustees could use to take individual notes during the candidate interviews. The deadline for applications is December 10, 2020. There are currently 8 applicants and possibly two more. The interviews will take place on December 14, December 15, and December 16, from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Each interview should last 30 minutes. All applicants have received the three questions they will be asked, so that they can be prepared. C. Chanyasulkit will send these questions to the Board again in an email. All interviews will be held via ZOOM, and they will be open to the public. The School Committee just underwent a virtual candidate interview process, and School Committee members were told by Town

Counsel that they were not allowed to go into executive session to discuss the candidates, as such discussion does not fall under the parameters for an executive session.

### **Treasurer's Report**

C. Lohe reported that the portfolio with State Street increased by \$360,000.

**Staff Appreciation:** The Treasurer proposed that since there will not be a January staff appreciation party due to COVID, that we use the money previously budgeted for that party to purchase a gift for the staff in January, and another gift at a later date, should any money be leftover. The Board agreed. The Treasurer will work with C. Chanyasulkit, once a gift has been decided. C. Chanyasulkit will work with the Executive Committee and the Staff Appreciation Committee and report back to the Board.

### **IV. Old/New Business**

**Anne Reed:** Assistant Director A. Reed is still out after the loss of her husband, Richie Reed. The Board of Library Trustees expressed support for A. Reed and asked to be informed if there is anything that she needs.

**Bear Naming Committee:** J. Margolis was appointed to be the sole member of the Bear Naming Committee. He will report back to the Board.

### **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 7:18 p.m.

A true record.

ATTEST



Koinonia I. Martin-Page

Secretary

2020