

Trustees Minutes

February 9, 2021

A virtual meeting of the Trustees of the Public Library was held on Tuesday, February 9, 2021 at 6:15 p.m. Those virtually present were:

Axelrod	Burstein	Chanyasulkit	Healy	Hung	Livingston	Lohe
Margolis	Martin-Page	Shakespeare	Vanderkay			

Also virtually present: S. Slymon, Director; and E. Mitchell, Assistant Director of Technology, and Brita Zitin, Assistant Branch Supervisor, Coolidge Corner

** All motions were taken by roll call vote.

I. Approval of Minutes

M A motion was made to approve the January 12, 2021 minutes. This motion was seconded and passed unanimously. K. Hung and M. Shakespeare were welcomed to the Board.

II. Library Director's Report

Circulation

Report Attached.

Financial

[FY21 BUDGET](#)

The Director has begun meeting with the Town to discuss the FY22 budget and has been actively advocating to have the FY21 budget cut restored completely. There has been some pushback because "the library is not open". The Director has reminded them that we anticipate the library buildings being open to the public for most, if not all, of FY22 and that the FY21 cut would require permanent layoffs, and likely a reduction in hours. There is no scheduled meeting yet with the Advisory Committee, but the Director encouraged the Board of Library Trustees to be prepared to have a unified message to the Advisory Committee. The Director will keep the Board informed. J. Margolis has sent a draft letter to the Director regarding advocating for the library budget to be sent to the Advisory Committee. At times, it has been suggested that we use Trust Funds to fill in gaps in the library budget, and the Board was reminded that these donations given to us from donors are for specific purposes like books and programming and furthermore, that the Board already supplements the library budget with nearly a quarter of a million dollars from the trust funds, annually.

This Month in Libraries

The Director shared several interesting articles. They can be viewed at:

<https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/libraries-and-invasive-technology>

<https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/article/85450-the-unbearable-whiteness-of-publishing-revisited.html>
<https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/shaping-the-after/>

<https://www.everylibrary.org/priorities>
<https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/publisher-news/article.html?id=51111>
[librarians in vaccination plans](#)

The Director has also been asked to join the newly formed Task Force on Homelessness.

The Woburn Library continues to be in a challenging period. The Mayor removed the President of the Board and is also planning to also abolish lifetime appointments.

Staff Reimbursements

The Director will meet with the Treasurer to discuss staff reimbursements moving forward.

Re-Opening

The library continues to operate in two separate staffing teams on rotation, so we do not overlap with each other. This has posed challenges for the smaller departments, whose work is highly dependent on each other. Admin, Tech Services, Putterham, and Custodial have been especially impacted. At this time, it is not recommended that we change this, for health reasons. We continue to use intercoms to communicate with the public, and the staff are missing the face-to-face interactions with our patrons. Other than that, the model seems to be going well. Having the staff vaccinated remains the key to re-opening the buildings to the public. The Director is doing her best to try to restore Sunday hours.

Brookline Village Library Renovation

The Director informed the Board that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners ("MBLC") Library Construction grant structure has changed since the last time the Public Library of Brookline sought a grant, in 1999. If, for example, the renovation was to cost \$24 million, the MBLC would match up to 50%. The Treasurer was asked to see if \$2 million could be moved now into a renovation line.

Assistant Director of Technology Report

E. Mitchell attended her first Disparity Working Group of the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations, for which Town Meeting had asked for a report in access to technology, educational achievement, and access to COVID testing and vaccination. She found it very informative. She was also able to share what the library has to offer, such as Chromebooks, hotspots, launch pads, Ozmo kits, etc. She also shared that the library will make public printing available next week. She also shared that the schools could provide some reimbursement to families who need internet if they fill out a hardship waiver, and the Housing Department is

working on an RFP to get low cost, high speed internet into their buildings possibly through Starry, a high-speed internet provider.

III. Old/New Business

M **Director's Evaluation:** A motion was made to approve the Director's evaluation. This motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The Director has met with the Chair and Vice Chair regarding her evaluation prior to the February meeting.

Proposed Bylaw Changes: The executive committee proposed two amendments to the Trustees bylaws, as outlined in its executive committee report. K. Martin-Page also sent out the proposals separately to the Board. The proposed amendments include 1.) a provision to designate a liaison to the Commission on Diversity Inclusion and Community Relations and to other Brookline boards or commissions, and 2.) the inclusion of the Executive Committee, comprised of the officers, as a standing committee. There will be a vote on these proposed bylaw changes at next month's meeting. The Director suggested that the Board reach out to other Libraries to see how their Executive Committees work.

Investment Committee:

The Chair of the Investment Committee is speaking with Steve Taub, a former candidate for Trustee, in regard to joining the Investment Committee.

Anti-Racism Training

There was a discussion to authorize up to \$40,000 for anti-racism training for Trustees, staff Friends, and Foundation members, with \$20,000 coming from this year's budget and \$20,000 from FY'22 budget. B. Zitin and the Director sent a proposal to the Board of Library Trustees. The Director will send a draft to the Board to be decided at next month's meeting, so she may put in a Request for Proposal. The Board will also reach out to the Foundation and Friends asking for their financial support.

FY21 Major projects

M A motion was made and seconded to approve the FY'21 Major Projects Action Plan. This motion passed unanimously.

Annual Motions

Will be discussed at next month's meeting.

M **Library Advocacy:** Continuing to follow up on the advocacy suggested by State Rep. Tommy Vitolo, the Director will forward to other library boards of trustees the letter the Trustees sent to the Secretary of Health and Human Services, to encourage them to advocate similarly.

Diversity Meeting

K. Martin-Page, on behalf of the subcommittee of C. Lohe and K. Martin-Page, formed at the January board meeting, reported on their actions and findings with respect to achieving Trustee representation on the Commission for Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations (CDICR). The CDICR has added the Board's request to its March meeting agenda and has invited the Board to attend and talk about its request for a liaison to the CDICR. C. Lohe will represent the Board at that meeting, and all Trustees are invited to attend the meeting, happening on March 17, 2021 from 6:30-8:30 pm. The subcommittee also shared that the CDICR is interested in having a librarian join its Patterns on Racism committee that expects to document and archive incidents of racism in Brookline. The Director agreed this collaboration would be a good fit, as the library has two archivists on staff. K. Martin-Page will follow up with emailing the CDICR Chair and the Director so that the CDICR can provide next steps.

IV. Adjourn

M There being no further business to come before the meeting, upon motion duly made and seconded, the roll call vote was unanimous in favor:

Voted: To adjourn at 9:09 p.m.

A true record.

ATTEST



Koinonia I. Martin-Page

Secretary

2021