

## **Minutes of the Board of Library Trustees, Public Library of Brookline**

A virtual meeting of the Trustees of the Public Library was convened on Tuesday, December 14, 2021, at 6:16 p.m. Those Trustees present were:

Burstein, Cawthorne, Chanyasukit, Healy, Hung, Lohe, Livingston, Margolis, Martin-Page, Shakespeare, Vanderkay, Zelkha

Also present were: S. Slymon, Library Director and E. Mitchell, Assistant Director for Technology

All votes were conducted by roll call vote.

No comments from the public. No public present.

**I:** Burstein recognized the Town's new bylaw. Trustees are now required to conduct all votes by roll call votes except for procedural votes. Secretary will record all votes to be amended to the minutes.

### **II: Secretary's Report:**

- A. No news of correspondence.
- B. No substantive changes to the minutes since the draft minutes.

**M:** Burstein moved to accept the minutes. Martin-Page seconded. Minutes were approved.

### **III. Library Director's Report:**

- C. Work started today repairing the ramp in front of the library which causes water in the Rabbit Hole.
- D. Senior Department Heads meeting last week. No update on Omicron. Potential for mask mandate.
- E. Working to clean up records in admin.
- F. Search for a new Assistant Library Director for Administration. We are uncompetitive salary-wise with the cost of living here.
  - 1. Martin-Page wants to explicitly state that there is a continued issue of money in filling roles.
  - 2. Slymon stated that the Assistant Director role also only gets 2 weeks of paid vacation, unusual at that level.

- G. Proposal to reclassify the Assistant Library Director for Administration position was denied. Discussed collecting and organizing data (from MBLC) on comparable libraries with the role. Hours and Staffing committee to put together a report by the February Trustees meeting.
- H. Margolis suggested amending the next year's budget in town meeting.
- I. Discussion of state waivers: Every town in MA needs to fund their library at slightly higher than the previous year to remain certified and be eligible to receive state aid. For the past two years we have not voted to fund the library appropriately to be certified. We applied for waivers and received a waiver last year (as did many others) for COVID reasons. Less libraries applied for 2021 and the decisions have not been made yet. They will vote at their February meeting. We want to avoid this process in the future if possible.

#### **IV. Committee Reports:**

- J. Honors Committee proposed that any retiring trustee in good standing from 2020 onward be honored with an entry in the newsletter. A trustee of 10 years or more will get a bookplate in 500 books.

**M:** Lohe moved to accept the proposal. Shakespeare seconded. Discussion of the honoring entry being sent into the TAB as well. Need to inform the Trustee being honored before placing the bookplates. Unanimously passed.

- K. Public Expression Committee discussed displaying signs/flags on the library building/grounds. Proposed a policy stating that signs can only relate to library services and must be approved by the director. Possible amendment to provide for US, MA, and Brookline flags. The town already has a policy providing for those flags.

**M:** Margolis moved to accept the proposal. Healy seconded. Concerns that the policy restricts advertising programs/services offered by other town departments. Discussed reinstating Pride and Black Lives Matter flags. Trustees feel these flags advertise the library's values and make people feel welcome. Trustees worry about excluding people and where to draw the line concerning which flags to include. Discussion ensued about government neutrality. Suggestion of focusing on programs for oppressed groups instead of more broad signs/flags. Discussion of possible legal issues and the Trustees' willingness to face a lawsuit over these flags. Margolis put forward an amendment to specify that signs relating to library and town programs and services are allowed. Majority voted to deny original motion and amendment.

- L. Strategic Planning Committee will offer a report next meeting.

#### **V. Old and New Business**

- A. Staff Appreciation Party Survey showed majority of staff prefer a gift over a party this year due to the continuing persistence of the pandemic. Gift card to a local business was a popular suggestion. Chanyasulkit requested a total number of staff and budget for the gifts. Legally allowed to give up to \$50 per person. Total budget of \$3550.
- B. Friends Book Sale has a new coordinator (Judith Clark) and will be starting up again soon in the basement, not the lobby. Will limit what books can be accepted and sold. Will add a coordinator for the Putterham book sale.
- C. Recorded Roll Call Votes already discussed.
- D. Museum Passes: Consider allowing non-Brookline residents to borrow them. Many nearby libraries already allow this. Some passes are not widely circulated. Slymon will speak with the Foundation and bring a proposal to the next Trustees meeting.
- E. Proposal to cancel January Meeting. Slymon will not be available most of January.

**M:** Lohe moved to cancel January's Meeting. Livingston seconded. Passed unanimously.

#### **VI: Adjourn**

Livingston moved to adjourn. Chanyasulkit seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjourned 8:21.

A true record.

ATTEST



Koinonia I. Martin-Page

Secretary

2022