

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

A meeting of the Trustees of the Public Library was convened on Tuesday, September 13, 2022, at 6:15 PM. Those Trustees present were:

Burstein, Cawthorne, Chanyasulkit, Fredkin, Hung, Kramer, Livingston, Lohe, Margolis, Martin-Page.

Vanderkay attended via telephone. Zelkha was absent.

Also present were: A. Hirst, Library Director; D. Savin, Assistant Director for Administration; and R. MacKenzie, Interim Assistant Director for Technology.

All votes were conducted by roll call vote.¹

- I. Comments from the Chair
 - A. Chair Burstein welcomed new Library Director Hirst.
 - B. The October meeting will once again be held virtually, via Zoom.
- II. Comments from the Public: None.
- III. Secretary's Report
 - A. Minutes

M: Martin-Page moved to approve the minutes from the August 9th meeting. Livingston seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- B. Correspondence: None.
- IV. Treasurer's Report: None.
- V. Library Director's Report
 - A. In her first four weeks, Director Hirst has enjoyed meeting Library and Town staff. A new Business Manager, Shirley Yang, has started in the administrative team. The Administrative Assistant position remains open.
 - B. Statistical: Comparisons with 2019 show decreases in door counts and circulation. Martin-Page asked about circulation trends at peer libraries. Hirst confirmed that low traffic and circulation are evident at libraries across the nation.
 - C. Financial: Personnel costs, especially for part-time staff, are exceeding weekly forecasts. Hirst is working with Town HR and the management team to

¹ See attachment, "20220913_Trustee Roll Call Votes."

implement a number of controls, including holds on vacant positions (which will be reviewed before they are filled) and limits on extra hours. Budget lines for clothing/uniform allowance and personal day buy-back may have been allocated incorrectly; details will be known at the end of December. Martin-Page asked about the impact of unfilled positions on future years' budgets. Full-time positions can be held unfilled (or changed). Over time, the library has reduced the number of part-time positions. Different roles in the library are better suited to full- or part-time schedules.

- D. Director Hirst has met with DEI consultant Dr. Adrian Carter, who is preparing an update on his work thus far.
- E. The summer reading program was very successful, with more than 2,000 spins of the prize wheel.
- F. The Library's Annual Report Information Survey (ARIS) and Financial reports will be submitted soon to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. This report verifies the budget and metrics required for the Library to retain its certification from the state.
- G. No requests related to the PATRIOT Act.

VI. Trustee Committee Reports

- A. Buildings & Grounds: None.
- B. Programming: The Trustee-sponsored program, "An Evening with Ben Mezrich," hosted by Hank Phillippi Ryan, is scheduled for Wednesday, October 12 at 7 PM (doors open at 6:30 PM), in person at a new auditorium at Brookline High School, with seating for 75 and overflow space in an adjacent room. Promotional materials are nearly ready; Livingston requested support from the Board in disseminating them. (The Library will also use all of its usual publicity channels.) The committee still hopes to return to an annual Brookline Reads program.
- C. Library Services: Livingston thanked Savin for sharing all the information the committee needed to assess several Library policies. The Trustees voted on revisions to three policies: Study Room & Group Meeting Room, Noise Level, and Food & Drink. Updates were primarily intended to make the policies more welcoming and broadly applicable to all three Library locations.

M: Livingston moved to approve all three updated policies. Fredkin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Old and New Business

- A. Brookline Day: The event will be held in Coolidge Corner for the first time this year, on September 18. Trustees will help represent the Library in the "Mini Town Hall" section. The Friends and Foundation will also have tables. Director Hirst will be there for the full day. Trustees discussed materials needed for the event.
- B. Capital campaign for the Foundation: the incoming Foundation President has asked about future campaigns, in order to align the Foundation's efforts with the Board's. The next renovation project will likely be at Brookline Village, but the

timeline is yet to be determined. Trustees discussed the financial background of previous projects. Hirst will gather details and pursue the topic with the Foundation.

- C. Bicycle Parking: Hirst has met with cycling advocates Anthony and David and will be assessing the property with them soon.
- D. Holiday Closures:
 - 1. Close the Library at 5 PM the day before Thanksgiving (Wednesday, November 23). The Library will be closed on Thursday, November 24, and open Friday, November 25 (and all weekend days).
 - 2. Close the Library at 3 PM the day before Christmas (Saturday, December 24). The Library will be closed on Sunday, December 25 and Monday, December 26.

M: Lohe moved to approve both closures. Margolis seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Hirst asked the Trustees to consider voting on all 2023 holiday closures at once during the December meeting.

- E. Other:
 - 1. Livingston asked if Library staff members with different areas of expertise might attend future meetings to educate Trustees about the life of the Library. Burstein suggested social media for a first topic. Martin-Page agreed this was a good idea and suggested that the Trustee Relations committee discuss similar ideas when it meets. Livingston recalled very successful visits to Trustee meetings from the Friends and Foundation, as well.
 - 2. Martin-Page inquired about Trustee liaisons to other bodies, including the Brookline ODICR.

VIII. Remarks for the Good of the Order: None.

IX. Adjourn

M: Chanyasulkit moved to adjourn. Margolis seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 PM.

A true record.
ATTEST



Koinonia I. Martin-Page
Secretary
2022