

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, April 12, 2023, at 6:22 PM.

Present: Cawthorne, Hung, Livingston, Lohe, Margolis, Martin-Page, Vanderkay

Absent: Burstein, Chanyasulkit, Fredkin, Kramer, Zelkha.

Trustees voted to convene the meeting.

Also present: Library Director, A. Hirst; Assistant Director to Administration, D. Savin, Ryan Brennan (Supervisor of Collections), Judith Goleman, and Marissa Vogt

All votes were conducted by roll call vote.

- I. Comments from the Chair.
 - A. Margolis is acting as chair for the night.
 - B. The House of Representatives in Missouri has voted for a budget that would defund all of the state's public libraries.
- II. Comments from the Public (5-minute limit)
 - A. Marissa Vogt is a candidate for Trustee for the May election and introduced herself.
- III. Ryan Breannan's Report on Diversity Audit (Supervisor of Collections)
 - A. The Diversity Audit was run by the Library's vendor, Ingram Content Group. They ran a report using all the ISBNs in the catalog to assess the Library's diversity within their collections. Only the print and English items were a part of the audit, using 14 categories to assess if materials are diverse. (Categories: Asian Interest, Black Interest, Indigenous Interest, Jewish Interest, LGBTQIA Interest, Mental Health, Middle Eastern, Multicultural, Muslim Interest, Neuro and Physical Diversity) It is compared to other libraries that have taken the same audit.
 - B. 19% of the Brookline Library's collection fall under these categories, vs 14% of the public library average. 18% of the adult collection is diverse. 17% of the children's collection falls within the diverse categories. 40% of the teen collection falls within the diverse categories. Analysis is based on the content of material not author demographics, as those are not always available.

- C. Ingram also provided a selection list of popular books that are either in our collection or recommendations to be added.
- D. Lohe asks that while it is nice to see our collection is more inclusive than average, is that enough? Brennan says, no, that this is a starting point for the library to help them improve.
- E. Martin-Page asks, what is the next step? Brennan mentions starting with the selection list provided and then following up with smaller publishers and the content they produce. They also need to decide on what are reasonable goals for each collection, using ALA as a resource in their diversity work.
- F. Martin-Page wants to know if this information is shared with the public besides the minutes, and if there is any way to get feedback from patrons regarding what materials they are interested in. Brennan says that as of now, the information has only been shared with staff and that surveying the public would be a good step.

IV. Secretary's Report

- A. Martin-Page sent out the minutes to the March meeting for review. No revisions were requested.

Motion: Lohe makes a motion to approve all the minutes. It passes.

- B. Martin-Page thanks Carrie Zuttermeister, the Library Admin Assistant, for taking minutes for the Trustees.
- C. Martin-Page reports on correspondence. Martin-Page passed the tax documents to Lohe, who passed them to Shirley Yang, Library Business Manager. Trustees received mail about IT services. There was a thank you note from Jamie Novak for the Trustees for sponsoring her program How to Declutter, and she enjoyed working with Ginger O'Day.

V. Treasurer's report

- A. Lohe sent the Trustees a draft budget, which is also posted in the posted documents. It is different from last year, due to how Covid has progressed and accounts for inflation.
- B. New additions to the budget: increases and line items to encourage staff in innovative projects that don't fit within the previous budget; donation to the Flaherty Innovation Fund for the director to try new initiatives; a line item for a social event for the Trustees, Friends, and the Foundation with staff on the ongoing of the library; bottom line is larger than last year (\$227,625.00). It will be voted on in May.

- C. New line items: Summer reading program, volunteer appreciation, staff development, photographer on retainer to take stock photography of staff to use for social media and presentations, and branded tablecloths and banners for Brookline Day and other town events.
- D. Hirst Thanks the Trustees for the generous budget.
- E. Lohe proposes scheduling a meeting with Friends, Foundation, and Trustees, Who Pays for What, as they have done in the past.

VI. Library Director's Report

- A. The Select Board is voting tonight (April 11th), and they likely will approve ARPA funding for the Bookmobile.
- B. Hirst followed up about the Staff development last month. There was lots of positive Staff feedback. They enjoyed having Rep. Tommy Vitolo as a guest, and invited any of the Trustees to speak at future staff days.
- C. Hirst reports the Library is on track with the FY23 budget and plans to spend any of the municipal budget we have.
- D. Pollinator Pathways- Hirst was contacted by a group on being a part of a path for birds and pollinators with native plants. They have worked with DPW as well. It will be a partnership, along with planting a garden, and will provide informational materials on the importance of planting native plants.
- E. Martin-Page asks about the utilities spending at 91% of its budget, and if the town will help to cover the budget. Hirst says the Town will make an adjustment for the Library, as they recognize how inflation has impacted the utilities spending. The Library has permission to go negative on this budget line from the Town Comptroller. The Library is not alone in the departments who have discrepancies in their utilities budgets.
- F. Martin-Page asks about the personnel charts in the documents. Hirst has provided them at the request of some Trustees inquiring about the staff organization. When FY24 starts, Hirst will have a clear idea of the hours she can offer part-time staff, as well as positions to fill. Hirst says she is happy with the Library staffing when the Library can fill the positions. Hirst will keep the Trustees informed in her report regarding personnel and budget changes.

VII. Trustee Committee Reports

- A. Vanderkay reports that the Friends had questions regarding the Diversity Training, Friends contacted Hirst to ask what the next steps are. Hirst is waiting for Dr. Carter's final reports and plans for a group meeting regarding the next steps as a library community.

- B. Library Services committee- Livingston wants to vote on a bylaw change: The Library Services Committee will be changed to the Library Policy Committee. This will be voted on in May, as a written notice was sent out 30 days prior to the May meeting regarding this change to the bylaws.
- C. Vanderkay recommends having a separate document tracking the committees (i.e. their names and purposes) so that the bylaws don't need to be voted on and changed every time a committee wants to change its name.

VIII. Old and New Business

- A. Martin-Page brings up a news headline about Llano County, TX commissioners convening to decide if libraries in the county should be shut down because a judge in Austin required them to return banned books to the shelves. Martin-Page wants to remind the Trustees to keep these nationwide occurrences in mind. Despite the distance, other states' legislation can affect our own.
- B. National Library Week is April 23rd-April 29th. The theme this year is "There's more to the story."
- C. Hirst asks the Trustees to recognize April 25th as National Library Workers' Day. The Library is planning a small celebration with staff.

M: Livingston moves that the Trustees recognize the Library staff and the fabulous job they do for the community on the 25th of April. It unanimously passes.

M: Lohe moves to adjourn the meeting. It passes unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Minutes drafted by Carrie Zuttermeister

A true record.

ATTEST



Koinonia I. Martin-Page

Secretary

2022-2023