

City of Beverly, Massachusetts

Public Meeting Minutes

Board: Library Trustees

Subcommittee:

Date: March 28, 2023, 5:00 P.M.

Place: Remote Meeting on Zoom

Board members present: Margaret Altman, Mary Behrle, Ivy Mahan, Colleen Michaels, Kevin O'Reilly, Joanne Panunzio, Myron Schirer-Suter

Board members absent: Marshall Handly, Cathryn Keefe O'Hare

Others present: Allison Babin, Meghan Karasin

Recorder: Meghan Karasin

Kevin O'Reilly presided. Meghan Karasin stated that the meeting was being recorded.

Joanne Panunzio made the motion, seconded by Margaret Altman, to accept the minutes of the meeting of February 28, 2023. Roll call vote approved, 7 to 0, with Altman, Behrle, Mahan, Michaels, O'Reilly, Panunzio, and Schirer-Suter voting in favor. Motion passed.

Public Presentation

None.

Committee Reports

Personnel: Regarding the Director's review, Joanne Panunzio will send out a survey to the staff and share the results with the trustees. In May, the trustees will be asked to complete their evaluations. The final evaluation will be presented in June.

Administration: No report.

Finance: No report.

Long Range Planning: The strategic planning process for FY25-FY30 is about to begin, starting with surveying the trustees regarding suggestions for members of the strategic planning committee. The committee is to be made up of 12 community members. Allison Babin will send out the request (form) after the meeting with a due date of April 7. She is targeting mid-May for the first meeting of the committee.

Report of the Library Director

1. **Fiscal Year 2023 Budget:** Allison Babin shared the FY23 budget to the screen. There are no concerns. The part-time salary line is a little underspent, mostly due to unexpected illnesses of part-time staff. Because of this the library may be able to add additional hours to some staff to accomplish library projects. The city decided to issue stipends, with American Rescue Plan Act funds, to qualified union members who worked during the height of the pandemic. The library's

senior custodian received \$1250, and the former senior custodian received a partial payment as he retired at the end of March 2020.

2. Fiscal Year 2024 Budget: Allison Babin shared the FY24 proposed budget to screen. She was asked to prepare a level service budget. The request is a 2.96% increase over last year's number. The librarians union received a 2.75% raise. There is a requested increase in the part-time line to give raises to staff. Whenever the overall budget is increased, the materials expenditure increases as well, as it must be 13% of the total budget. The budget request includes a \$85,760.00 one-time request for repairing the north elevator. This is in a separate line as a capital request, and accordingly those funds are not included in the overall percentage increase. There may be a possibility to roll this cost into the HVAC financing. Allison Babin will be meeting with the Mayor and the City Finance Director next Wednesday.

Myron Schirer-Suter made the motion, seconded Colleen Michaels, to accept the proposed FY24 budget. Roll call vote approved, 7 to 0, with Altman, Behrle, Mahan, Michaels, O'Reilly, Panunzio, and Schirer-Suter voting in favor. Motion passed.

3. Building Issues: The test well was drilled on March 15. There was some difficulty getting cars out of the lot ahead of the drilling. The test well was drilled down 500 feet and data is currently being collected. Not much physical work is expected until October 2023. The design process is ongoing, focusing on using as little electricity as possible. A preservation specialist will be assessing the Beverly Room and the Barnet Gallery to inform the design process. The Farms bottle filler will be installed in the Conrad Room, allowing the facility to stop using bottled water.

4. Community Engagement: The library's Annual Survey will launch in April. It is composed of 3 simple questions assessing services and a 4th optional question to allow people to supply their contact information.

Ivy Mahan left the meeting at 5:38 PM.

On Tuesday, March 14 The library hosted Sayuri Mojica, a new Beverly High School junior, as part of student government day. The library received many valentines from the community as part of the annual library lovers campaign. The library will host two high school interns this spring, one working with Katie Nelson, Head of Teen Services and the other working with Lisa Ryan, Head of Reference. The library is hosting a sculpture by local artist and member of the Essex County Beekeepers Association, Stéphanie Williams. The ten foot tall sculpture upcycles bee shipping boxes, player piano papers, and other natural objects like honeycombs and feathers. The Assistant Director, Meghan Karasin, attended Library Legislative Day on March 15, meeting with Senator Lovely's staff at the State House. Allison Babin met with Representative Parisella at the library on March 27 to discuss the MBLC Legislative Agenda.

5. Staff Development: Allison Babin, along with Joscelyn Ruelle-Kersker, the Mayor's Chief of Staff, has been asked to mentor the City's new Health Director, Laura DelleChiaie. The Head of Communications, Ona Ridenour, will attend the American Library Association's Annual Conference in June in Chicago. The library covers the registration fee for the conference. The Head of Teen Services and the Head of Children's Services will attend the Youth at Risk Conference for the second year. The Senior Custodian is training for his CDL. This will allow him to drive the

bookmobile when Katie Marsh is out for extended times. On Thursday, April 6, Officer Lane of the Beverly Police Department will conduct an optional Narcan training for interested staff. Taking the training does not obligate a staff member to administer Narcan, which we have had at the library since 2019.

6. North of Boston Library Exchange (NOBLE) Updates: Ron Gagnon, Executive Director of NOBLE has decided to retire after 35 years. In addition, NOBLE's full time PC Support Specialist also announced his retirement.

7. Programs: Adult programming includes the Monday Morning lecture series, a reception for the *Remembering Our Beverly Neighbors: A Celebration in Oral Histories* project, and the opening of the seed library. Teens have an author talk with Luke Reynolds, downtown cleanup, and a LEGO free build. Children's has Science Squad, Musical Mornings with Miz Liz, and an author talk with Rajani LaRocca.

Communications

None.

Unfinished Business

Discussion of the use of leaf blowers on library property.

Margaret Altman stated that she had been in contact with a lot of people this past month regarding this issue but is not getting answers from the city. Kevin O'Reilly suggested reaching out to all the city councilors. Allison Babin stated that the one leaf blower that is under her jurisdiction is the one that the library owns. Margaret Altman stated that replacing gas with electric leaf blowers is good for the environment, but even electric leaf blowers are bad for health.

Allison Babin stated that she can replace the gas-powered leaf blower with an electric one. But it won't prevent other departments from using them on the property. Kevin O'Reilly offered to work with Margaret Altman on the city's use of leaf blowers, acknowledging that this was outside the scope of the Trustees.

New Business

Library Director's contract: Myron Schirer-Suter made a motion, seconded by Colleen Michaels to approve the Director's contract. Roll call vote approved, 6-0, with Altman, Behrle, Michaels, O'Reilly, Panunzio, and Schirer-Suter voting in favor. Motion passed.

List of Documents/Exhibits

- Draft minutes from the February 28, 2023 meeting
- Fiscal Year 2023 budget to date (3/27/23)
- Library Director's Contract April 27, 2023-April 26, 2026

The next regular meeting of the board is April 25, 2023 at 5pm via Zoom.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:25 PM.