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BELMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS  
April 28, 2021

Chair Alligood called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. The meeting was held as a teleconference meeting through Zoom technology as a result of the Covid-19 related order preventing gatherings. Also present were Trustees Keohane, Mark Carthy, Gail Mann, Corinne McCue Olmsted, Mary Stearns and Director Peter Struzziero. Members of the Library staff attending the meeting were Ellen Girouard, Gráinne Griffin, and Ann Marie Zocchi.

### **Discussion-Future of the Belmont Library Building Project**

The Library Director opened the meeting by offering a framework for the Trustees' discussion of the future of the library building. His framework included advocating visibly for the library, taking the health and safety of patrons and staff very seriously, making the library building a priority for the next big town project and placing it on the town's agenda. This advocacy should be made to the town's major committees, i.e., Capital Budget Committee, Major Capital Projects Working Group as well as the Select Board. Chair Alligood agrees with this path.

The Library Director submitted two capital requests for the FY 22 budget which have been deferred. In response the library was asked to provide more information on the state of the fire alarm system and an estimated replacement cost that covers everything.

The Library Director, Chair Alligood and the Chief of the Fire Department toured the library building April 28, 2021. The Fire Chief asked the Library Director to find out whether replacement parts are available for fire alarm system, if the system is serviceable and an estimate for a replacement system. The Library Director added that replacing the fire alarm system would require the library to close for a period of time.

Trustees expressed the following concerns; lack of information about a timetable to build a new building, failing major systems such as HVAC, lack of a fire suppression system, incidents of outlets sparking when items were plugged in, a non-ADA compliant building.

Chair Alligood said that the Belmont community needs more information about the value of the library and its benefits. She encourages letters to the newspaper explaining why a new library it needed and why it is needed now.

Vice Chair Keohane reported that the town's Financial Task Force recently discussed what is next for the library. The Trustees emphasized that the needs of the library should be the next large expense for the town and they want information about how to finance the new library building. The Trustees would like the Select Board to take a position on the timing of a new library building and to decide when to put forward actions to fund new building. This is necessary because, if the funding for the new building is 5 or more years out, the Trustees need to address the capital expenditures required to keep the building open and safe.

The Trustees proposed asking for the following meetings to obtain this input from the town's leadership; first with the Town Administrator, Select Board Liaison to the Library and the Capital Budget Committee and then with the Select Board to ask to how to fund a new building within the next 3 years.

If the Select Board's answer is no or far in the future, the Trustees need to present the cost to fix the current building. The 2017 Library Building Feasibility Study concluded that it was not cost effective to renovate the current building. This study said it would cost \$15 M (2017\$) to renovate the building and the renovated building would have less usable space. However certain costs were not included in this estimate such as for relocation and seismic studies.

Adjourn / Next Meeting – **May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 7:00pm**

Chair Alligood moved to adjourn the meeting and Trustee Mann seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary D. Stearns, Secretary