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DATE: December 28, 2021

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MASSACHUSETTS

BELMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

BELMONT,
November 30, 2021

Chair Elaine Alligood called the meeting to order at 7:03 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 Kathleen Keohane, Mark Carthy, Gail Mann, Corinne McCue Olmsted, Mary Stearns and Director Peter Struzziero. Members of the Library staff attending the meeting were Gráinne Griffin, and Ann Marie Zocchi. Co-President of the Friends of the Belmont Public Library, Stephanie Cahoon, also attended.

Review of Minutes:

The Library Director asked the Trustees to review and approve the minutes of the July 30, 2020 meeting following communication from the Town Clerk that these minutes had not been received. Trustee Stearns provided these minutes from her secretary's file. Trustee Mann made a motion to accept the July 30, 2020 minutes as amended, seconded by Chair Alligood. The motion to approve passed unanimously. Trustee Mann made a motion to approve the October 21, 2021 minutes as amended, seconded by Trustee Olmsted. The motion to approve passed unanimously.

Schedule Winter BOLT Meetings:

The Trustees scheduled the following meetings; January 13, 2022 at 7 pm, Wednesday, February 16 at 7 pm and Wednesday, March 16 at 7 pm. *(The Board of Trustees voted to change these dates at the December meeting, please check the library website for the final dates)*

Library Operations Update:

The Library Director reported that visits to the library continue to increase. He plans to reintroduce in-building activities in January in line with the practice at other Minuteman Libraries and in communication with the Belmont Board of Health. He will also place capacity limits on rooms lower than the pre-Covid limits and will continue to enforce the town's mask mandate. He will also continue to offer library programs on zoom.

The Library Director reported that the Minuteman Network said materials are getting more expensive. The Library Director serves on the Minuteman Network Finance Committee.

Key Topics:

Building Project Update

Vice Chair Keohane worked with Senator Brownsberger to explore funding for the new building. Senator Brownsberger and Representative Rogers worked to put \$250K into a bill in the legislature to provide state funds for the construction of a new library. Chair Alligood, Vice

Chair Keohane and the Library Director met with the Select Board Member Library Liaison, Adam Dash, on December 1 on general library matters as well as to discuss sources of additional funds for the building project.

Vice Chair Keohane reports that fund raising for the new building is active. Trustee Mann prepared an informational sheet outlining instructions explaining how donors can contribute to the town fund for the new building.

The Library Director, together with members of the Library Building Committee is revisiting on-going operating cost estimates for the new building and the temporary quarters.

Budget Update FY23

The Library Director submitted the draft FY 23 budget per request to the Town Administrator. The Town Administrator will review this submission on December 1 with the Library Director Vice Chair Keohane and Trustee Olmsted. This budget request meets the Municipal Appropriations Requirement (MAR) of the Mass Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), a condition of receiving state funding and participation in the Minuteman Network. The draft FY 23 budget includes adding a full-time children's librarian. This draft FY 23 budget's line item for technology includes a replacement for the library's server, equipment to provide increased WIFI coverage, screens and projectors, zoom licenses, sensors to measure building occupancy and RFID technology which is portable and can be used in a new building.

Friends / Foundation / School Committee Updates:

Friends of the Belmont Public Library

Friends Co-Chair Stephanie Cahoon provided an update on the Friends activities. The Friends launched a fund-raising request in response to a donor's challenge grant offering to match contributions. The Friends membership drive is underway. Membership letters were mailed on Nov 15 and the drive will end January 1, 2022.

The Friends will sponsor an author talk on December 1 about the iconic radio station WBCN. The Boston Globe publicized this event. The next author talk is scheduled for January 12, 2022. The Friends will conduct a flash book sale as part of the Belmont Art Gallery's upcoming Holiday Market on December 11.

Belmont Library Foundation

The Library Foundation recently completed a successful flash fundraiser and are sending thank you notes to donors. The Library Director reported that this fundraiser motivated people to seek information about the library's condition and ask for tours of the library building. The Library Foundation plans to produce a second video given the positive response to their initial video.

Marcie Schorr Hirsh has been named President of the Belmont Library Foundation succeeding David Stievater who will serve on the Foundation Board.

Belmont School Committee

Trustee Olmsted reported the Belmont School Committee Chair resigned and the School Committee and Select Board members appointed Ralph Jones to serve the remainder of the former Chair's term. The Belmont School Department is conducting pooled Covid testing weekly if a family opts into the program. If someone is identified as a close contact, they are tested daily. The town has held clinics to permit children ages 5 to 11 to receive their first dose of the vaccine and plans to offer community testing in coordination with Lexington. The School Committee released the results of the Youth Risk Behavior survey which may have useful information for the teen librarian.

Policy Reviews and Votes:

Museum Pass Policy

The Library Director recommended a change to the library's museum pass policy to allow for access to members of the Minuteman Network. He proposed that the current Museum Pass policy be amended to allow nonresidents to book a museum pass, if unreserved, 48 hours prior to the date of use. The Library Director prepared a statement of his rationale for proposing this change to the museum pass program which is paid for by the Friends of the Belmont Public Library. The Library Director said the current usage rate of these passes is slightly more than 50% and that a number of other libraries allow non-residents access their museum passes. He mentioned sharing of resources is a core principle of the Minuteman Network. Co-President of the Friends of the Belmont Library, Stephanie Cahoon, also spoke in support of amending the current museum pass policy. Co-President Cahoon suggested a middle ground where museum pass access would be limited to Belmont residents during school vacation weeks.

The trustees discussed the proposed revision to the Museum Pass Policy. Trustees Stearns, Carthy and Olmsted did not support the proposed revision for the following reasons; the pandemic may have artificially lowered Belmont's usage and there needs to be a concerted effort to publicize this benefit, there is a need for greater awareness of this benefit and the pass program is an essential Belmont benefit. Chair Alligood, Vice Chair Keohane and Trustee Mann supported this amendment to make more effective use of one of the Friends' biggest expenditures, to endorse the partnerships provided by Minuteman Network membership and the proposed 48-hour rule ensures priority for Belmont residents. Trustee Carthy "called the question" to terminate discussion. A vote was taken with a resulting 3-3 vote. Without the necessary 4 votes needed, no changes to this policy were made.

Vice Chair Keohane asked that more information be provided to the public about what is available at the library and outreach extended to groups such as COA, local day care centers. She added that it would be helpful to post available opportunities on a weekly basis.

Tangible Gifts Policy

The library has a tangible gifts policy. A subgroup of the Trustees is reviewing the library's policy for accepting tangible gifts for the new building and will provide their recommendations at a subsequent meeting.

Naming Rights Policy

Vice Chair Keohane and Library Foundation Board Chair Marcie Schorr Hirsch are identifying components of the new building suitable for naming opportunities in support of fund-raising. They will provide information on their proposed procedure at a subsequent meeting. Vice Chair Keohane and Trustee Mann confirmed that defining the policies for naming rights reside with the Trustees.

Director's Report:

Employee Recognition

The library staff will have a Holiday Brunch on December 16 from 10-1 pm to recognize the staff's outstanding work during the pandemic. The library will open at 1 pm on December 16 to provide the staff time to attend.

Holiday Hours

The library will be closed on December 24 and 25. The library will reopen on December 26. The library will be closed on December 31st and January 1.

Trustee Olmsted asked if the new library will have electric vehicle charging stations in the parking areas. The Library Director confirmed that there are plans for such charging stations.

Next meeting – December 21st, 2021 7:00pm

Adjourn

Trustee Mann moved to adjourn the meeting and Chair Alligood seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary D. Stearns, Secretary

Exhibits:

- Agenda - November 30, 2021
- Minutes- July 30, 2020
- Minutes-October 21, 2021
- Director's Report, November 30, 2021
- October 2021 statistics
- Museum Pass Policy
- Collection Policy for Tangible Gifts
- Museum Pass Data
- Naming Rights Policy
- Museum Pass Ideas and Recommendations