

DATE: October 24, 2022

TIME: 9:42 AM

BELMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
September 22, 2022

Chair Alligood called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. The meeting was held as a teleconference through Zoom technology. Also attending were Vice Chair Kathy Keohane, Trustees Gail Mann, Corinne McCue Olmsted, Mary Stearns, Mark Carthy and Director Peter Struzziero. Ellen Girouard, member of the library staff, joined the meeting. Members of the public, Susan Lewis and David and Jane Otte, also joined the meeting.

Review of Minutes

The minutes of the August 23 Trustees' meeting, as amended, were approved on a motion by Trustee Mann, seconded by Chair Alligood and voted unanimously.

Library Operations Update

- **Building Conditions**

The Library Director reported a mold mildew smell persists mostly on the ground floor despite repairs and other mitigating actions and testing. He is taking steps to remediate the smell by installing aroma dispensers and replacing several hallway ceiling tiles. One of the rooftop exhaust fans was found to be inoperable and he has ordered a replacement. Installation of the fan will require a crane to lift the equipment onto the roof. He contacted the town's Facilities Department to identify a company to perform another air quality assessment. Vice Chair Keohane urged the Library Director to prioritize the installation of the exhaust fan and urged him to continue to be very attentive to staff and patron concerns about this matter.

The Library Director reported that the 3-year-old air compressor failed. A replacement was ordered and is pending installation. The air compressor regulates temperature in the building and must be operational for the heating season.

- **Summer Reading Program**

The Library Director described the summer reading program at the library and provided the attached write up of this program. The summer reading program conducted a total of 65 programs with over 450 participants signed up and 1450 attendees at summer reading programs. The Children's Room staff conducted a very successful "read and bead" program and offered "pop-up" read aloud programs at 16 locations throughout the town. Vice Chair Keohane asked the Library Director to collect quotes about the program from program participants.

- **Annual Report Information Survey Surprise**

The FY 22 ARIS report included a number referring to "total collection use" which, for Belmont, was 676,640. The library's Coordinator of Technical Service, Ellen Girouard, led the process to prepare the data in this report data.

Building Project Update

- **Budget and Fundraising Review**

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Trustees updated the Select Board (SB) on the status of the library building project. They provided the SB final information on the project costs. Their slide deck is attached. The SB members expressed continued support for the library building project.

Vice Chair Keohane reported that the Belmont Library Foundation has raised more than \$5M to date. Vice Chair Keohane mentioned that they are exploring additional potential sources of funding including plans to apply for a CPA grant to cover cost of removing and reinstalling the library's historical items.

Vice Chair Keohane reported that the Town Treasurer will ask Town Meeting to authorize a \$34.5 M debt exclusion. The \$34.5 M net project cost includes a \$1.9M reserve. This number was recently finalized after analysis by CHA and Oudens Ello.

Vice Chair Keohane met with the Town Treasurer to develop estimates of the cost impact on the tax rate per \$100,000 of valuation and on the property tax bill of the average single-family home.

Vice Chair Keohane noted that all funds raised or pledged for the library are expressly intended for a new building. To date fundraising has raised ~12.5% of the overall project costs.

Trustee Carthy asked if the cost estimate reflects the increases in interest rates. Vice Chair Keohane said the cost estimates were completed by the Town Treasurer based on current interest rates.

Trustee Olmsted asked about the assumptions on building estimates and if they are done consistently for all projects. Vice Chair Keohane said that the town's Permanent Building Committee held a meeting with the Rink and Library Building projects to discuss leveraging standard methods across the projects. It was noted that the CHA Cost Estimating department is and has developed the cost estimates for the two projects. There may be differences in contingencies for the projects but that the public should expect to have those details clearly outlined in the cost proposals for each.

The Library project costs include standard contingencies for design, construction and OPM. Additionally, the library project cost includes a market volatility reserve above and beyond the noted contingencies.'

- **Building Committee Update**

Vice Chair Keohane said that the Library Building Committee voted to retain CHA as project manager and will vote separately on the architect.

- **Library Tours**

Vice Chair Keohane said there will be tours of the library building in October to allow the public to see the condition of the library.

Policy Discussion and Votes

The Library Director proposed an amendment to the circulation policy to use lease agreements as a proof of residency. Lease agreements would be one of two forms of identification used to prove residency.

Chair Alligood moved to change the circulation policy to accept lease agreements as proof of residency, seconded by Vice chair Keohane, and the motion was adopted unanimously.

The Library Director proposed revisions to the meeting room policy. He met with the Policy Subcommittee, Chair Alligood and Trustee Stearns, to draft revisions to the current policy.

Trustee Mann asked whether religious groups can book a meeting room. The policy states that groups that are civic, cultural, or educational in nature can apply to book a room and that the Library Director reserves the right to restrict use of the meeting rooms at his/her discretion.

Trustee Olmsted asked if the stated room capacity limits are in accordance with Fire Department requirements. The Library Director said that the capacity limits follow the Fire Department and the town's Building Inspector's limits.

Vice Chair Keohane noted that the room rental fees should be intended to offset the wear and tear costs. The fees revert to the town currently but that we would like to discuss this arrangement with the town in the future.

Chair Alligood proposed a motion to accept the meeting room policy as amended, seconded by Trustee Mann, and the policy revisions were voted unanimously.

One Book, One Belmont Update

The keynote event for this year's One Book One Belmont is an author's night on October 12 in partnership with the Newton Public Library. The author of "The Library Book," Susan Orleans, will give a talk on Zoom and streaming.

Friends Update

The Friends of the Belmont Public Library celebrate their 50th anniversary this year. They are planning a series of events during the coming months to celebrate this anniversary. Their celebration will kick off with a Tea on October 6 at the Belmont Women's Club.

The Friends have produced a history of the Friends of the Belmont Public Library thanks to the efforts of Friends' member Pam Dalala and Chair Alligood.

The Friends have introduced a new logo to celebrate their 50th anniversary.

The Friends will hold an in-person Book Sale at the library on October 22 and 23 at the library.

School Committee Update

The Belmont Public Schools are holding curriculum nights the weeks of 9/19 and 9/26. The library will be represented at these events. The Library Director reported that the library card initiative for the fifth and sixth grade students is underway.

Trustee Olmsted reported that the number of parking spaces at the "jug handle," across from the pool after a new rink is built, is likely to be 31 which is the current number of parking spaces.

Director's Report

Trustee Olmsted asked about the circulation data for the Children's Room which showed a drop between 2019 and 2022. The Library Director noted that the data speaks to fiscal years.

Vice Chair Keohane asked whether town rooms will be outfitted with new technology like what is in the SB room in Town Hall. The Library Director does not have this technology. He has an OWL, a projector, and a screen in his meeting room. He will reach out to the town on the availability of the technology and potential for the library.

Vice Chair Keohane asked that the Library Director publicize that the library is open on Sunday. The Library Director said patron traffic shows growth since its August opening on Sundays suggesting users are becoming more aware of these additional hours.

Trustee Carthy asked about the library's 11 am opening on Thursdays. The Library Director said every library department meets with their staff from 9-11 am. The Library Director said he will review this practice to see if it can be adjusted to minimize the impact on the patrons.

The Library Director introduced the idea of concluding the Trustees' meeting with a call for remarks "for the good of the order." Chair Alligood said this would be an opportunity for visitors to the meeting to make comments. Trustee Carthy complimented the Library Director for doing a great job with his vendor to clean up the overgrown foliage behind the library.

Adjourn

Chair Alligood moved to adjourn the meeting and Trustee Mann seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Next meeting – October 20th at 7:00 pm

Exhibits:

- Board of Library Trustees Agenda, September 2022
- Library Trustees Meeting Minutes V1, August 23, 2022
- Summer Reading Write-Up
- Director's Report
- August Statistics Report
- Meeting Room Policy with Track Changes
- 2022-09-20 SB Mtg VF.pptx