

**RECEIVED
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BELMONT, MA**

DATE: September 18, 2023
TIME: 9:26 AM

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

June 29, 2023

Co-Chair Kathy Keohane called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. The meeting was held as a teleconference through Zoom technology. Also attending were Co-Chair Elaine Alligood, Vice Chair Corinne McCue Olmsted, Trustees Mark Carthy, Gail Mann and Mary Stearns, and Library Director Peter Struzziero. Staff members Ellen Girard and Grainne Griffin, and members of the public, Larry Link and Susan Lewis, joined this meeting except for the Executive Session. Human Resources Director Kelli King joined the meeting and remained through the conclusion of the Executive Session referenced below.

Public Comments

Co-chair Keohane and others reinforced the Trustees' commitment to professional leadership development for the Library Director and the staff of the Library.

Co-Chair Keohane advised participants that the meeting would be moving into Executive Session and that the regular meeting would continue thereafter and would be open to staff and public participants. Co-Chair Keohane moved that the meeting move into Executive Session, with the motion seconded by Trustee Mann. The roll call vote to move into Executive Session was as follows: Co-Chair Keohane, aye; Co-Chair Alligood, aye; Vice Chair Olmsted aye, Trustee Carthy, aye; Trustee Mann, aye, and Trustee Stearns, aye.

Executive Session

The Trustees met in Executive Session for one hour. Trustee Mann moved to return to the regularly scheduled meeting, seconded by Co-Chair Keohane, and the motion passed unanimously.

Director Struzziero's Performance and Compensation

Co-Chair Keohane thanked Director Struzziero for his efforts throughout the year, particularly as he and others worked through the myriad transition issues as the Library prepares for construction of a new building. She reported that the Trustees recommend approval of a four-year contract and a merit increase of 2.5%. Trustee Mann moved that the Trustees approve for Director Struzziero a revised four-year contract, with a four-year term commencing July 1, 2023, and a merit increase effective July 1, 2023 of 2.5%. The motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report

Director Struzziero referred to his Directors' report, highlighting accomplishments. He also reported on the summer reading programs and the upcoming retirement of valued, long-term employee AnnMarie Zocchi.

Library Operations Update

Director Struzziero noted that building maintenance continues to be a challenge. As previously reported, until move-out the focus will be on items potentially affecting health and safety. Director Struzziero and

Co-Chair Keohane highlighted the author talk by a Chenery Middle School student who has already published two books. Director Struzziero presented an update on the RFID project, noting the team goal of completing the project by the spring of 2024.

Review of Minutes

The minutes of the May 25, 2023 Trustees meeting, as amended, were approved unanimously on a motion made by Co-Chair Keohane and seconded by Trustee Stearns.

Building Project Update

Co-Chair Keohane confirmed that she will be providing project highlights at each meeting. She reported that the design work is nearly complete, and that the project cost will be re-estimated again after the design is complete. She reported that there have been continuing discussions with Belmont Media and the Belmont Historical Society regarding their proposed operations in the new building.

Co-Chair Keohane confirmed the plans regarding temporary space after move-out and during construction. The staff will be housed at the Chenery Middle School, Children's Services will be provided at the Benton Library, and all remaining services will be provided at the Beech Street Center. She noted that MOAs with the Town and the Friends of the Benton Library are being finalized to memorialize agreements with respect to temporary space. It is not expected that any commercial space will need to be leased.

Co-Chair Keohane reported that the golden bowl in front of the Underwood Pool is expected to be used by contractors during the construction phase. Plans for this usage, as well as usage of temporary space, will be presented to the Select Board in July, with abutters, neighbors and other interested parties to be invited.

She noted that the Library Building Finance Working Committee meets with the appropriate Town staff monthly to review the project cash flow, budget and invoice and fundraising receipts and transfers. The new Town Treasurer, Leslie Davidson, is now in place.

Friends/Library Foundation Update

Co-Chair Keohane reported that Ed Barker, the newly elected BLF President, would be reaching out to the Trustees. While not actively fundraising, the BLF is still receiving donations and continues to pursue grants.

Trustee Stearns advised that the Friends' Annual Meeting was held on June 13th. The new Friends President is Kristin Carte-Smith and Pamela Delalla is the Vice President. The next book sale is scheduled for September 23 and after that no new book donations will be accepted as the building prepares for move-out and demolition. There is no decision as of now on potential book sales during construction. The Friends sponsored an ice cream truck at the Library for children who are participating in the summer reading program.

Lucia Gates of the Belmont Garden Club is working with the landscape architect for the new building on native plantings and erosion mitigation. The Friends has funded many of the plantings around the Library and intends to donate/make available the plantings to Veterans and Friends' members.

School Committee Update

Vice Chair Olmsted and Chair Keohane attended the School Committee meeting where the plan to locate Library staff at the Chenery during construction was discussed. The plan calls for three rooms to be made available to staff for two years. Since the upper school is moving to the new middle school in September and the 4th grade move-in to Chenery is not scheduled until September 2024, additional space will be allocated to the Library for the first year for the RFID program. The temporary Library space at Chenery will not be public facing.

With John Phelan's retirement, the new School Superintendent, Dr. Jill Geiser, will start on July 1.

Other Business

Trustee Carthy noted that he has discussed with the Office of Community Development potentially adding another crosswalk on Concord Avenue to facilitate safe access to the new library for those parking on the opposite side of the street. Co-Chair Keohane noted that the Town would likely take a holistic approach to this once the details of the pending Concord Avenue construction projects are finalized and that Trustee Carthy should raise this again with the Traffic Advisory Committee and the Office of Community Development at that time.

Next Meeting: July 27, 2023 7:00 p.m. No other meetings have yet been scheduled.

Adjourn

Co-Chair Keohane moved to adjourn the meeting and Trustee Mann seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail S. Mann, Secretary

Exhibits:

- Agenda, June 29, 2023
- Director's Report, June 2023
- May 25, 2023 meeting minutes
- May 2023 Statistics
- Building Project Update, June 29, 2023

