

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

August 20, 2020

DATE: September 28, 2020

TIME: 2:08 PM

Chair Kathy Keohane called the meeting to order at 7:04 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 Elaine Alligood, Mark Carthy, Gail Mann, Corinne McCue Olmsted, Mary Stearns and Director Peter Struzziero. Members of the Library staff attending the meeting were Ellen Girouard and Gráinne Griffin. Also attending were Elaine Westermarck and Pamela Delalla, Co-President and Secretary, respectively, of the Friends of the Belmont Public Library.

**Review of Minutes:**

There were no changes to the minutes of the Trustees' June 29<sup>th</sup> meeting as submitted. The minutes were approved on a motion by Trustee Stearns, seconded by Trustee Mann and voted unanimously.

**Library Operations:**

*Expansion of services*

The Library Director said library services will increase using a phased approach during September. The phased approach under consideration would resume library services one at a time throughout September including booking 30-minute technology appointments starting on September 8 and in-building pick up of library material around September 21. This reopening plan is evolving with input from the library department heads as well as the experience of library directors in other towns. The goal is to limit the number of people (including staff) in the library at one time. Parking lot pick up will continue for the timing being and the Library Director will add Saturday pick up slots soon.

*Next Steps*

The Library Director is working with the Town Facilities Director to fog the library building about once a week at a time prior to staff use. Trustee Alligood asked that the Facilities Director consider the impact of the library's ceiling height on the air quality.

*Library Communications*

The community survey, which will provide input for the Long-Range Plan, is underway with the support of Trustees Keohane and Olmsted. Survey results will provide input to help shape the 5-year Long Range plan.

The Library emails a monthly Newsletter to all the library card holders and it has a 35-40% opening rate.

**Budget Update:**

The Town administration has asked the Library Director for two FY 22 budgets assuming 10 and 15% cuts. The current lean FY21 budget has no increase over the previous year except for statutory required increases, overall the budget went down this year. If the FY22 budget is less than the current FY 21 budget, it is anticipated that the Library will need to request a waiver from the Mass Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) to remain eligible for state funding and participation in the Minuteman Network.

**Friends/Foundation Update:**

The Friends' Co-President said that they expect a revenue decline this year. Membership dues provide about half of the Friends' revenue and that is likely to be stable. The remainder of the revenue comes from Book Sales, both occasional and "Everyday" and sales to book dealers. The virus-related library shut down has stopped these sales. The Friends are working on plans to offer a safe form of book sales including quarantining book donations. Two volunteers from the Friends have begun to accept book donations on Friday mornings.

### **School Committee Update:**

Trustee Olmsted reported on the Belmont Public Schools plans for reopening. The School Department's feasibility study showed that the school buildings lack the capacity to ensure required three foot spacing between students at full capacity. The Belmont Public Schools will open in phases starting September 16. The first phase is fully remote except for high needs and complex profile students. The second phase will bring back grades K and 1 and several other categories. The third phase will be hybrid with two alternating cohorts spending 2-3 ½ days in school and the remainder in remote learning. The fourth phase is when all students return to the schools full time. The phases (1,2 and 3) suggest that the library may be important for students as there will be either no school library instruction or it will be virtual. There will be more information forthcoming from the School Department.

### **Key Topics:**

#### *Update from MBLC*

The MBLC is expected to offer more leniency regards waivers due to the impact of the virus and will provide guidance to libraries later in CY 21. The MBLC has advised Public Libraries to create their own work from home procedures going forward.

#### Long Range Plan Process:

The Library Director has proposed people to participate in the Long-Range Planning Committee which is expected to meet over the next two months. The Library Director read the names of the proposed participants. Trustee Stearns made a motion to accept the slate of names for the Long-Range Planning Committee which was seconded by Trustee Alligood. The Library Trustees voted unanimously to appoint the candidates identified to the Long-Range Planning Committee. The committee's task is to produce a long range (5 year) plan. The first deliverable is due in the October/November time frame and it will be distributed for comment. The final version will be ready in the November/December time frame. Elaine Alligood, Trustee Vice Chair, will work with the Library Director on this document together with the committee members.

#### One Book One Belmont:

The Library Director is assembling a committee including Belmont Against Racism (BAR) to plan One Book One Belmont and identify the book dealing with race issues. The events which will be virtual and may be held in the fall or possibly in the Spring of 2021.

#### **Director's Report:**

Circulation remains high despite the virus shut down for 4 months of FY20. The figure is 521,000 for eight months versus 599,000 in FY 19 for 12 months. The parking lot pickup has increased its throughput by 125%, and now serves 115 patrons per day.

Starting in September the Library will no longer acquire CDs for the library collection and instead will acquire vinyl records. Several turntables will be placed in the Library of Things.

The library plans to hold the first ever virtual Fire Safety Story hour with the Fire Department including a virtual tour of the firehouse.

The library is planning to hold the first ever “movie in the park” in coordination with the Recreation Commission and the Council on Aging.

The Library Director has hired a new teen librarian, Hannah Lee, and she has started work.

**Schedule Oct-Dec Meetings:**

The Trustee’s meetings for the remainder of 2020 will be held on September 24, October 22, November 19 and December 17.

**Adjourn:**

Chair Keohane moved to adjourn the meeting and Trustee Mann seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

**The next regular meeting will be held via video/teleconference on Thursday, September 24, at 7:00 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Mary D. Stearns, Secretary

**Exhibits:**

- Agenda – August 20, 2020
- Minutes- July 30, 2020
- Buildings and Grounds Spreadsheet
- Director’s Report, August 20, 2020
- July 2020 Statistics