

**RECEIVED  
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BELMONT, MA**

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

September 24, 2020

DATE: October 26, 2020  
TIME: 4:51 PM

Chair Kathy Keohane 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 Elaine Alligood, Mark Carthy, Gail Mann, Corinne McCue Olmsted, Mary Stearns and Director Peter Struzziero. Members of the Library staff attending the meeting were Gráinne Griffin, Myles Sullivan, Chris Tremblay and Mahmonir Pooladgar.

**Review of Minutes:**

Trustee Olmsted requests several changes to the minutes as submitted. The revised 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 expanded incrementally during September 2020. Computer usage by appointment started September 8. Saturdays were added for outdoor pickup on September 12. On September 21 the Library started indoor pickup for adults and children between 9 am and 7 pm with doors closing at 6:30 pm to accommodate the socially distanced line of patrons for pickups. The week of September 21<sup>st</sup> was the busiest week in phasing so far, with 2000 items on hold for pickup.

The library staff realigned the library interior to protect against the virus with walking paths, plexiglass barriers, documented cleaning of library spaces and bathrooms and other actions. Patrons must wear masks in the library.

**FY 22 Budget Update:**

The town administration asked the library to prepare and submit the initial 2022 budget assuming level funding.

**Friends/Foundation Update:**

*Friends of the Belmont Public Library*

The Friends held its first parking lot "Flash" Book Sale on Sunday, September 20. It was very successful. Elaine Alligood, Trustees' Representative to the Friends, is working with the Friends' Secretary Pam DaLalla, to compile a history of the Belmont Friends of the Library in conjunction with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Belmont Friends of the Library.

*Belmont Library Foundation*

Trustee Chair Kathy Keohane and Trustee Gail Mann attended the recent meeting of the Belmont Library Foundation. Hannah Fischer was nominated to join the Board of the Foundation. At present the Foundation is not conducting active fundraising. Prior to the pandemic the Foundation was starting to pivot from building support to raising capital funds. Trustees Keohane and Mann reported that the Foundation is reframing its message on capital fund raising. The Foundation Board to looking for

additional board members.

### **School Committee Update:**

Trustee Olmsted reported the Belmont School committee now meets weekly. The School Department has completed an assessment of the school buildings' air quality and has purchased air purifiers.

The School Department has started reopening school in three phases; fully remote, hybrid for K-4 and higher need children and finally hybrid for 5-12.

The School Department, with the assistance of parental expertise, is looking into surveillance testing.

The middle school library is planning to offer curbside pickup. There is no browsing allowed at any school library. The elementary schools do not have access to school libraries.

### **Key Topics:**

#### **Long Range Plan Process:**

The Long-Range Planning Committee held its first meeting. Marcie Schorr Hirsch and Peter Struzziero were appointed co-chairs, while Hannah Fischer was appointed Vice Chair. At this meeting the Committee defined their mission and vision, set their schedule and time line, reviewed the last long-range plan and the results of the recent community survey. The Committee expects to have the new plan ready to present to the state by the New Year.

#### **Staffing Update:**

The current practice is for library staff take their temperature when they report to work and sign off that they feel symptom free. They also sign that they are obeying the laws of Massachusetts.

The Library Director estimates he is operating the library currently at 85% of its hours with 50% of the pre-pandemic staff. In March 2020, the library employed 60 people including full and parttime staff. As of September 24, 2020, the library employs 33 people. This decrease is due to 9 vacancies and 21 people still on furlough (several have been brought back). The Library Director needs to fill half of the vacancies now and will wait to see what the needs are for additional staff. There are also two pending maternity leaves which will affect the operation of the Children's Room and the Teen program.

#### **Long Range Planning Process:**

##### **One Book One Belmont:**

The first meeting of the OBOB Committee will be held on September 29. The tentative focus of OBOB will be on systemic racism. There will be an effort to identify materials to address this concern.

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

The Library Director said that returned books are quarantined for 72 hours.

The Library Director said that the issue of browsing is difficult and that every library in the country is thinking through how to do this safely. He offered to provide some creative ideas for browsing safely at October meeting.

The library web site has added new sections including “Library Latest” and “Ask a Librarian Live Chat.”

The summer reading program enrolled more than 686 participants, children and adults. The program ran more than 1900 activities and participants earned more than 600 badges.

Four key staff members have resigned due to job changes and changes in life responsibilities. The Library Director will reassess the design of these positions prior to filling them to reflect lessons learned during the pandemic.

Parking lot pick up, while very successful with more 100 pickups/day, was very staff intensive. It also required booking hundreds of appointments. The Library Director and the staff reported that the community feedback has been extremely positive. Library staff reported that patrons were really happy to see the staff in person during their pick up.

Some additional topics the Library Director will be examining for the, results of the air flows tests in the library and review of the trust funds income.

The library’s holiday closing hours schedule will be also be discussed at the October Trustees’ meeting.

**Schedule:**

Next Meeting – October 22nd 2020, 7:00pm Via Zoom

**Adjourn:**

Chair Keohane moved to adjourn the meeting and Trustee Mann seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

***The next regular meeting will be held via video/teleconference on Thursday, October 22, at 7:00 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,

Mary D. Stearns, Secretary

**Exhibits:**

- Agenda – September 23, 2020
- Minutes- August 20, 2020
- Buildings and Grounds Spreadsheet
- Director’s Report, September 23, 2020
- August 2020 Statistics