

BELMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY

BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

February 17, 2022

DATE: March 18, 2022

TIME: 11:08 AM

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. Staff Members attending were Gráinne Griffin and Ellen Girouard.

Review of Minutes:

Trustee Mann made a motion to accept the January 12 meeting minutes as amended, seconded by Vice Chair Keohane and the motion was approved unanimously.

Library Operations Update:

The Library Director said in-person programs started 2/14/22. Four programs were held during this week. Programs for children will begin in March with limits on the number of participants initially.

The library will follow Town of Belmont mask rules but will have masks available upon request. When the town announces changes to the mask rules the Library Director will review the impact of these changes on library policies with the Trustees' Chair and Vice Chair.

FY23 Budget Update:

Vice Chair Keohane and Trustee Olmsted worked with the Library Director to prepare the FY 23 budget submission and to respond to the Town Administrator's request for a cut. The FY 23 budget request as revised is a 4.5% increase over the FY 22 budget. The Town Administrator presented the revised budget to the Select Board and to the Capital Budget Committee.

Chair Alligood noted that the FY 23 budget will introduce health and wellness programs for library employees which will result in credits from the town's health insurer.

Vice Chair Keohane noted that the FY 23 budget includes process improvements with the addition of self-checkout machines, self check out app, and the requested RFID capabilities.

Trust Fund Review:

Vice Chair Keohane and Trustee Mann reported on the library's trust funds which are managed by the town. The library can draw on 80% of the annual trust fund income for operations as permitted by the terms of the gift. Several trust accounts are restricted to capital expenses. They reported that as of the end of the calendar year approximately \$695,000 in trust funds can be applied to the cost of the new building. *(This was updated subsequently at a later date).*

Trustee Mann said that funds pledged on Gift Intention forms will be paid to and held by the town. The call to honor these pledges will happen after an affirmative vote on a debt exclusion for the new library.

ITAC Representative:

Paul Roberts, Chair of the ITAC and ITAC liaison to the library, attended this meeting to provide a quarterly report to the Trustees on the ITAC's activities.

The ITAC advises the School Committee, the Select Board and the library on technology matters. Recently the ITAC has focused on cyber security and ransomware and has prepared a report on 21st century government. This report advocates for extending permission for remote meetings when the Governor's order expires April 1 and meetings revert to the Open Meeting Law requirements. (On Feb 12 Governor Baker extended the emergency order to July 15, 2022) The ITAC has recommended to the Select Board that the town web site be modernized. He said that the ITAC is available to give talks at the library.

Trustee Carthy tasked Roberts to ask the ITAC to advocate to allow town committee members to participate remotely permanently and to clarify quorum requirements.

Vice Chair Keohane asked if the ITAC is addressing the issue of town wide Broad Band and Roberts said they will look into it. Trustee Carthy asked that the ITAC speak to him on this topic.

The Library Director asked Roberts to target three things the ITAC could do to benefit the library this year. He asked the ITAC liaison to contact him to work with the library's technical team.

Roberts' ITAC appointment has expired. Chair Alligood made a motion, seconded by Trustee Olmsted, to reappoint Roberts as the library's liaison. The motion passed unanimously.

Building Project Update:

- Adam Dash - Chair of the Select Board and Select Board Library Liaison

Vice Chair Keohane and member of the Library Building Committee gave Board Chair Dash an update on the progress of the committee. The OPM (CHA) and the architect (Oudens Ello) are updating cost estimates for the building project to reflect current costs. She reported that the Belmont Library Foundation is active and receiving positive responses. Last fall's Fall Flash Drive was very successful. The current fundraising focuses on major gifts. Town Counsel has reviewed and approved a Gift Intention Form to use in soliciting pledges. The Building Committee has received the state's paperwork for the \$250K intended for the design, development and construction of the new building.

Board Chair Dash is looking forward to the vote on the library building project in November. In response to a question from Vice Chair Keohane as to whether Select Board Members can advocate for the library building project, Board Chair Dash said he supports the library building project. He offered to meet with potential donors to show his support for this project. Vice Chair Keohane offered to provide the Select Board periodic updates on the library building project and also to address the May Town Meeting. Board Chair Dash said that the case for a need for a new library has been made successfully and that the video did that very effectively. Vice Chair Keohane offered to keep Board Chair Dash apprised of the library issues. In response to Board Chair Dash's question, Vice Chair Keohane said they are developing contingency plans in case the building has a catastrophic failure.

Vice Chair Keohane asked about existing funds to contribute to the cost of a new library such as the Kendall Fund. She also asked Board Chair Dash to help the trustees identify other funds that could support the new building. The Library Director asked Board Chair Dash to attend a Trustees meeting in the next quarter of the year.

Board Chair Dash also updated the Trustees on the status of plans for a new ice rink. There will be an item at the May Town Meeting to appoint a new building committee for the rink. The rink effort is using

the \$250K state funding to hire an architect and an OPM. The deadline to be on the November ballot requires that the BOS vote to approve the addition before August 1, 2022.

Foundation / School Committee / Friends Update:

The Belmont Library Foundation is identifying major gifts. In the April to June 2022 time frame the Belmont Library Foundation will solicit gifts town wide. Vice Chair Keohane asked all trustees to pledge to donate to the new library. The Foundation is drafting letters to be sent to encourage pledged donations.

Vice Chair Keohane said the Foundation has developed naming and giving opportunities for significant donations for the new library. Pledge forms will be sent to the library and the Trustees will retain the originals in a safe place to maintain privacy. Vice Chair Keohane and Trustee Mann will coordinate this effort.

Trustee Olmsted reported that the Select Board has appointed a preliminary rink design committee which includes one former member from the Select Board and one from the School Committee. They expect to have a schematic design prepared for the May Town Meeting. This committee is interviewing three companies for design services. The estimated cost of a new ice rink is \$ 15-20M.

The Library Director reported that the Friends ran a very successful “Love the Library” program on Sunday, Feb 13. The Friends are working on their 50th Anniversary celebration to be held early winter 2022-23. Vice Chair Keohane is a member of the 50th Anniversary Committee. The Friends plan to designate a place in the Children’s Room to be called “The Friends’ Bookstore” which will have a children’s “Everyday Book Sale.” The Friends will cover the set-up costs of this new feature.

Director’s Report:

The Library Director reported that the library’s Technical Service group is working very effectively despite a vacant position.

State library circulation numbers show that the Belmont Public Library continues to be 10th place in circulation state wide despite the virus.

Chair Alligood adjourned the public meeting at 8:51 pm. Trustee Olmsted made a motion to move into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and to discuss confidential information. The motion was seconded by Chair Alligood. The roll call vote to move into Executive Session was as follows: Chair Alligood: aye; Trustee Carthy: aye; Vice Chair Keohane: aye; Trustee Mann: aye; Trustee Olmsted: aye; and Trustee Stearns: aye.

Trustee Mann made a motion to move out of Executive Session at 9:10 pm. The motion was seconded by Trustee Olmsted. The roll call vote to move out of Executive Session was as follows: Chair Alligood: aye; Trustee Carthy: aye; Vice Chair Keohane: aye; Trustee Mann: aye; Trustee Olmsted: aye; and Trustee Stearns: aye.

The public session resumed at 9:12 pm.

Trustee Olmsted asked the Library Director to provide the following information at a future Trustees' meeting. She would like to see the funds spent on programs for adults and programs for children separately, including totals and sources of these funds.

Adjourn:

Trustee Mann moved to adjourn the meeting and Vice Chair Keohane seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Next Meeting: March 17th at 7:00pm: Via Zoom

Exhibits

-Agenda – February 17, 2022

-Minutes- January 12, 2022

-Director's Report, February 17, 2022

-January 2022 statistics

-State Aid Spending, Q4 2021

-FOBPL October 2021-January 2022

-4 photos from the FOBPL Library Love Event Feb 13, 2022
