

BELMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY

BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

April 21, 2022

DATE: May 25, 2022

TIME: 2:21 PM

Chair Elaine Alligood called the meeting to order at 7:06 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 Ann Marie Zocchi, Gráinne Griffin and Ryan Green. Belmont Historical Society members attending were Mary Ann Scali, Jane Otte and Allison Lenk.

Voting of Officers:

The Trustees voted unanimously to re-elect Trustee Alligood as Chair of the Board of Library Trustees for the upcoming year upon motion by Trustee Stearns, seconded by Trustee Mann. The Trustees voted unanimously to re-elect Trustee Keohane as Vice Chair of the Board of Library Trustees for the upcoming year upon motion by Chair Alligood, seconded by Trustee Stearns. Trustee Mann nominated Mary Stearns to continue to serve as Secretary, seconded by Trustee Olmsted, and she was voted unanimously to serve as Secretary to the Board of Library Trustees for the upcoming year.

The Trustees assigned the liaison roles as follows; Trustee Olmsted will continue as liaison to the School Department, Trustees Keohane and Mann will continue as liaisons to the Belmont Library Foundation until December 2022 for fundraising activities, Trustee Carthy will continue to serve as liaison to the Conservation Commission and the Traffic Advisory Committee. Trustee Mann will continue as liaison re the Library Trust funds and to represent the Trustees in union negotiations. Trustee Keohane will be the liaison between the Friends of the Belmont Public Library and the Trustees. Vice Chair Keohane asked the Library Director to prepare descriptions of the roles of the Trustee officers and liaisons for review at a subsequent meeting.

Hosting of Historical Society Members – Discussion of the Library Building Project:

The Library Director introduced an officer and two members of the Belmont Historical Society attending this meeting, Vice President Allison Lenk and members Jane Otte and Mary Ann Scali. The Belmont Historical Society has been a partner with the Belmont Public Library since the Memorial Building opened and library leadership wants to clarify and solidify this relationship in anticipation of the proposed new building.

The Library Director said that the current plan for the new library building includes space for the Belmont Historical Society. He asked the Belmont Historical Society to confirm that it wants to be housed in the new building.

The Library Director asked the Belmont Historical Society to support the plan for the new library building.

The Library Director mentioned his concern about the safety of the current building and the historical artifacts in the Claflin Room. He called attention to a recent incident when the library's external fire alarm system malfunctioned; one of several incidents that highlights the need for a new building.

Assuming interest in being housed in the new building, the Library Director and Trustees requested that the Belmont Historical Society consider what accommodations they would need in the space allocated for them in the plans for the new building and assuming a debt exclusion is successful, discuss these accommodations and the Society's plans for funding them with the Library Director and Trustees.

The Library Director described the planning necessary to care for the library's valuable items during demolition and construction of a new library building. The Library Director will need to find removal and storage facilities for its valuable items, including the stained-glass windows in the Children's Room and the Veterans' Memorial. The Library Director noted that he planned to explore applying for CPA grants to cover the costs of moving, refurbishing and reinstalling historical items the library owns, and he noted that the CPA grant submissions must include estimates and vendor quotes for these costs.

The Library Director emphasized that the historical artifacts in the Claflin Room are the property of the Belmont Historical Society; when the current library was built, the Claflin Room was outfitted with private funds. The Trustees noted that the Society is responsible for removing, storing, preserving and reinstalling these items should the new building effort proceed. Vice Chair Keohane suggested that the Belmont Historical Society explore sources of funding to deal with their materials, such as applying for a CPA grant.

The Trustees described the CPA grant time line. Grant applications must be submitted in the fall of 2022 to be voted on at the May and June 2023 town meetings. This timing is important to consider for requesting funds to remove artifacts. A CPA application requires cost estimates and vendor quotes. The preliminary application is due in September 2022.

Trustee Mann asked that the Belmont Historical Society develop a timeline of when they expect to affirm their desire to be in the new library building. Trustee Mann noted the anticipated timeline for the project, assuming a positive debt exclusion vote, including removal by the Historical Society of all of its property currently in the Claflin Room by the end of calendar year 2023.

Trustee Carthy noted that the new library will be a safer place for the Belmont Historical Society materials and these materials would have broader viewing if placed in glass cases.

Vice President Lenk said she will speak with the Belmont Historical Society Board. The Library Director offered to meet with the Historical Society Board.

Review of Minutes:

The review of the March 17 meeting minutes was deferred to ensure the Trustees have an opportunity to review the amended version. The March 17 meeting minutes will be reviewed at the May 19 meeting. Trustee Mann made a motion to accept the March 31 minutes as amended and it was seconded by Trustee Keohane. The motion to accept these minutes passed unanimously.

Library Operations Update:

Replacement of the outside electrical conduit has mostly been completed. The space outside of the building is now lit at night, only one section of work to be done remains for this project.

Library circulation keeps increasing. March circulation is the highest in two years at 56,000.

As of April 2022, the library is now permitting outside groups to request use of the Assembly and Flett rooms.

Vice Chair Keohane asked the Library Director to provide a time line of the dates when the library was closed, partially open, when staff was in the building and when programs restarted during the pandemic. The initial closing due to the virus occurred March 13, 2020.

Building Project Update:

- Budget review

Vice Chair Keohane described the current review of the library building project budget. Costs have increased due to increase in materials cost and market volatility factors. The updated cost numbers will be presented to the Select Board and at the Town Meeting next month.

Vice Chair Keohane gave an update on fundraising. Lawn signs will return in May to start community fundraising.

There will be a public forum on the library building project tentatively scheduled for June 7 to present the refreshed information. This will be an opportunity to enhance community awareness of the library building project and get community feedback.

Vice Chair Keohane anticipates that there will be a joint meeting of the Select Board and the Library Trustees prior to the Select Board taking a vote in July on moving forward with the library building project.

- Community Preservation Grant Possibilities

The Library Director has looked into opportunities available through Belmont's Community Preservation program to support removal, refurbishment, storage and reinstallation of historical items in the library. He met with the Historic District Commission and requested a letter of support for this component of the library building project. On April 12, 2022, the Historic District Commission voted unanimously to support the Library Board of Trustees efforts to receive Community Preservation Act funding to preserve the Public Library's Veterans Memorial plaques, stained glass windows, as well as additional plaques and historical components in the current building that include removal, refurbishing and reinstallation.

Library Foundation & Friends Updates

The Belmont Library Building Committee met with the Belmont Library Foundation to provide information about naming opportunities in the new building.

Vice Chair Keohane reported that there has been keen interest in making donations to the new library. As of now \$2.1M is available for the new library and more than 700 families have donated.

The Friends of the Belmont Public Library launched "the Bookstore" on April 24 in the Children's Room, which is an everyday book sale for children's items.

The Friends will sponsor a Stars Wars themed event at the library on May 7.

The Friends 50th Anniversary Committee will sponsor a tea at the Homer House in September.

School Committee & Rink Updates

Vice Chair Keohane and Trustee Olmsted attended the April 12 School Committee meeting to update them on the library's activities. Vice Chair Keohane described the Library Building Committee's proposal to name the collaborative study rooms after Belmont schools past and present. This idea was well received.

The School Superintendent stated his appreciation of the Library Director's many efforts on behalf of the schools.

The School Committee elected a new Chair, Meg Moriarty and new Secretary Amy Checkoway.

There was a meeting showing the four concepts for a new or refurbished ice rink.

Discussion and vote on Meeting Room Policy:

The Library Director presented a revised meeting room policy necessitated by the introduction of an online application process for the meeting room calendar to end the use of paper reservation forms. He asked the Trustees to review this revised policy. Introduction of an electronic calendar permits the public to check room availability on line. The policy revision also included updated costs for room rentals. The Library Director said that acceptance of this revision will require a by-law change to be submitted as a follow-up to the acceptance of the revision.

Trustee Carthy asked whether room rental will be limited to Belmont groups. Vice Chair Keohane asked that pandemic language be added to the draft revision. Trustee Mann asked that the revision give priority to Belmont nonprofit groups.

The Library Director said that this revision is for the current building. The policy will be reviewed for applicability to the library when operating in temporary space and again when the new building opens. The Trustees asked for more time to review the policy and action was deferred on the request for approval.

Director's Report:

State law defines public meetings and the state has permitted remote meetings to continue for 2 more months. If Belmont decides to have hybrid meetings, Belmont would have to adopt the state mandates for quorum requirements for hybrid meetings.

The Library Director and staff recently acknowledged the 100th birthday for long term library employee Muriel McGinty who worked for the library for more than 50 years

The Library Director, a member of the Minuteman Library Network Executive Board, has been nominated to become Vice President of the Network.

Vice Chair Keohane, Trustee Mann and the Library Director reviewed the funds currently available for the new building. The Library Building Project Fund was established in 2020 and has been in a non-interest-bearing account. To achieve consolidation of capital building funds Trustee Mann moved that the Library Director instruct the Town Treasurer's office to consolidate funds held by the Town for the Library designated as the Library Building Project 2020 into the existing Library Capital Building Fund, with such consolidated fund to be renamed "Library Capital Building Fund 2020, and with all current and

future funds deposited and held in such fund to be subject to the March 3, 2020 memorandum of understanding from Kathleen Keohane, then chair of the Board of Library Trustees, to Floyd Carman, Town Treasurer. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Keohane and passed unanimously.

Going forward there will be a quarterly reconciliation of the library funds. The Trustees will see reports at fiscal and calendar year ends.

To transfer Belmont Public Library's state aid moneys into a new interest-bearing fund, Trustee Mann moved that the Library Director instruct the Town Treasurer's office to set up a new special interest-bearing fund for the library entitled "State Aid", and to instruct said Treasurer's office to transfer \$200,000 held by the Town for the Library into this new special fund. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Keohane and passed unanimously.

Adjourn

Vice Chair Keohane moved to adjourn the meeting and Trustee Mann seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:36 p.m.

Next Meeting: May 19th at 7:00pm: Via Zoom

Exhibits

- Agenda – April 21, 2022
- Minutes- March 17, 2022
- Minutes-March 31, 2022
- Director's Report
- FOBPL Expenses, Q1-2022
- BHDC-Belmont Public Library-CPC Letter of Support 4.12.22
- March 2022 Statistics
- State Aid Expenses, Q1
- Meeting Room Policy with Track Changes