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BELMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY

BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

May 19, 2022

DATE: June 21, 2022
TIME: 9:02 AM

Call to Order:

Chair Elaine Alligood called the meeting to order at 5:03 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 Vice Chair Kathleen Keohane, Trustees Gail Mann, Corinne McCue Olmsted, Mary Stearns and Library Director Peter Struzziero. Trustee Mark Carthy was absent. Staff Members attending were Chris Tremblay, Hannah Lee and May Forkin. Alice Liu, a high school senior and Chair of the Belmont Public Library's Teen Advisory Board (TAB), also attended.

Hosting of Teen Advisory Board Representative:

Hannah Lee, Young Adult Librarian, asked Alice Liu to provide an overview of TAB's focus and activities. TAB suggests, plans and puts on activities for teens. One of TAB's goals is to recruit young people who are not typical library users. The 2022 Summer Reading Program theme, "Off the Beaten Path," is designed to incentivize summer reading.

TAB hopes to continue to use the library facilities and would appreciate additional funding.

Review of Minutes:

Trustee Mann made a motion to accept the March 17 minutes as amended, second by Chair Alligood. The motion to accept these minutes passed unanimously.

Trustee Mann made a motion to accept the April 21 minutes and Vice Chair Keohane seconded this motion. The motion to accept these minutes passed unanimously.

Library Operations Update:

The library resumed offering in-building programs in March and continued doing so in April.

Circulation of library materials continued at a high-level in April.

Library staff has experienced more Covid illness. A number of staff have reported being "close contacts."

Chair Alligood asked about the library's current masking policy. The Library Director said most of the staff wear masks. Masks are available to patrons. There are air purifiers throughout the library building. The Library Director will contact the town's health officials to learn what they recommend for this Covid upsurge and will provide this information to the Trustees.

Trustee Olmsted reported that the Belmont School Committee recently voted to encourage optional masking and sent emails to parents recommending masking.

Policy Review Subcommittee:

The Library Director proposed that a subset of Trustees work with him on policies prior to Board submission. Draft policies would be submitted to the full Board for their review and approval. The Library Director proposed setting up a policy review subcommittee composed of himself with Trustee

Stearns and Chair Alligood initially to work on the meeting room policy. Chair Alligood said that subcommittee membership is subject to availability. Trustees Mann, Olmsted and Vice Chair Keohane spoke in favor of this proposal.

Discussion and Vote on Meeting Room Policy:

Discussion of, and vote on the meeting policy, was deferred to a subsequent meeting.

Building Project Update

- Budget Review

Vice Chair Keohane updated the cost estimates for the new library. Vice Chair Keohane said the current \$39.875M cost estimate reflects increased construction costs, technological requirements recently issued in a MBLC report and removal and reinstallation of the library's historical items. The Library Trustees will apply for a CPA grant to cover a portion of the cost of transferring the historical items.

- Fundraising Review

The fundraising efforts are very active. Vice Chair Keohane reported that \$2.3 M has been raised to date from ~ 800 contributors. There are conversations underway with potential contributors and businesses. Community fund raising is active and lawn signs have been distributed. The funds raised can only be used for a new library.

Vice Chair Keohane Asked for Pledges from the Trustees.

Vice Chair Keohane asked the trustees for approval to commit to gifts in excess of \$250K on behalf of the Trustees. On motion made by Trustee Mann, seconded by Trustee Stearns, it was unanimously voted to extend the authority delegated to Vice Chair Keohane to approve naming and recognition opportunities to donors who commit to major gifts in excess of \$250,000, consistent with the naming and recognition opportunities for large gifts developed with the Belmont Library Foundation and previously reviewed with the Trustees.

- Key Dates Coming Up

Vice Chair Keohane said that she and Sally Martin, representing the Building Committee, will update the League of Women Voters on the library project on Friday, May 20. Vice Chair Keohane said that their presentation will address frequently asked questions. To the question, "why not repair the current library," analysis shows that renovation would cost \$30M and yield 25% less space. In response to the question as to why we need libraries today, the increasing use of the Belmont library reveals that people are using the library even more and a new library would offer enhanced technological features. The cost of the new library is due to a sharp increase in construction costs in recent years and the MBLC's requirement of additional technological features.

Liaison Roles & Responsibilities:

The Library Director is deferring presentation of a draft document detailing roles and responsibilities of the trustee liaison roles to a subsequent meeting. The Library Director will ask Trustees for input about their liaison activities to prepare this document.

Friends & Library Foundation Reports:

Vice Chair Keohane reported that the Friends met during the week of May 16th. The Friends plan to hold several events to celebrate their 50th anniversary. These celebrations will launch with a Tea in September at the Women's Club jointly supported by the Garden Club. The Friends will host three author events in the fall and a "Books in Bloom" event, March 31, 2023.

The Friends will staff a table at Belmont Town Day May 21 and hold a book sale on May 21 and 22 at the library.

The Library Building Committee and the Belmont Library Foundation will each staff tables at Belmont Town Day.

School Committee Report:

Trustee Olmsted reported that the School Committee Chair Moriarty has introduced the option to make community relevant announcements at the start of each meeting. She offered to include announcements of upcoming library events. The Belmont Chinese American Association has donated books to the school system recently. The Ice Rink Committee is collecting donations and are offering naming opportunities.

On April 25 the Select Board voted to change Concord Avenue road traffic striping. Trustee Olmsted said this change will reduce parking because it will eliminate spaces near street corners to provide better sight lines.

Director's Report:

Three staff members have resigned; two full time and one part time person.

There will be a feature added to the library web site to calculate the value of the library, a procedure endorsed by the MBLC.

The library web site has added a survey to measure how people use the library.

The Library Director and the Trustees will make an official request to be put on the Select Board's June meeting agenda to hold a joint meeting to report the final cost of the new library building.

Adjourn:

Trustee Mann moved to adjourn the meeting and Vice Chair Keohane seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

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

Exhibits

-Agenda – May 19, 2022

-Minutes- March 17, 2022 v. 4

-Minutes-April 21, 2022, v. 3

-Director's Report

-April 2022 Statistics