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DATE: September 27, 2022  
TIME: 9:19 AM

BELMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS  
August 23, 2022

Chair Alligood called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. The meeting was held as a teleconference through Zoom technology. Also attending were Vice Chair Kathy Keohane, Trustees Gail Mann, Corinne McCue Olmsted, Mary Stearns, Mark Carthy and Director Peter Struzziero. Members of the library staff, Gráinne Breathnach-Griffin, AnnMarie Zocchi, and Ellen Girouard, joined the meeting. Library Foundation Board Member Christina Marsh and Town of Belmont Human Resources Director Shawna Healey also joined the meeting.

Chair Alligood adjourned the public meeting at 7:08 pm and made a motion to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Director Struzziero's FY 2022 performance review with HR Director Healey. The motion was seconded by Trustee Mann. A roll call vote on the motion was held with voting as follows: Chair Alligood: aye; Trustee Carthy: aye; Vice Chair Keohane: aye; Trustee Mann: aye; Trustee Olmsted: aye; and Trustee Stearns: aye.

At the conclusion of the Executive Session, Chair Elaine Alligood called the regular meeting back to order at 8:21 pm. Also attending were Vice Chair Kathleen Keohane, Trustees Mark Carthy, Gail Mann, Corinne McCue Olmsted, Mary Stearns, and Library Director Peter Struzziero. Members of the library staff, Gráinne Breathnach-Griffin, AnnMarie Zocchi, Ellen Girouard, joined the Zoom meeting. Library Foundation Board Members Christina Marsh and Ellen Schreiber joined the Zoom meeting.

**Director's Performance Review:** Chair Alligood summarized Director Struzziero's performance review. She presented two motions to award a merit pay increase. Chair Alligood made a motion, seconded by Trustee Stearns, to recommend a 2.9% merit increase effective 7/1/2022. The vote on the motion was 3 to 3. Trustees Carthy, Stearns and Olmsted voted in support and Chair Alligood, Vice Chair Keohane, and Trustee Mann dissented. The motion did not pass. On a motion by Vice Chair Keohane, seconded by Chair Alligood, the Trustees voted 5 to 1 in favor of a 2.5% merit increase for Director Struzziero effective July 1, 2022 with the stipulation that when the town's pay and classification study is available, the Library Director's salary will be reviewed. The motion passed 5 to 1 with Chair Alligood, Vice Chair Keohane and Trustees Mann, Stearns and Olmsted voting in support and Trustee Carthy dissenting.

Vice Chair Keohane thanked the Library Director for his hard work and commitment to making the library a welcoming place.

Human Resources Director Healey left the meeting at 8:35 pm.

### **Review of Minutes**

The minutes of the June 16 Trustees' meeting, as amended, were approved on a motion by Vice Chair Keohane, seconded by Trustee Mann and voted unanimously.

The minutes of the June 27 Joint Meeting of the Select Board and the Library Trustees were approved unanimously on a motion by Trustee Mann and seconded by Vice Chair Keohane.

## **Library Operations Update**

The Belmont Public Library is now open 7 days a week. The Library Director commended the staff for their willingness to adjust their schedules to provide the needed coverage.

## **FY22 Close out – Budget and Statistical Successes**

The Library Director reported that the library account returned 6.5% of its FY 22 \$2.4M budget to the town's General Fund. He attributed a portion of the unspent funds to staff turnover.

The Library Director will meet with the Trustees Budget Subcommittee in October to begin to prepare the FY 24 budget submission.

## **Building Conditions**

Vice Chair Keohane toured the library's physical plant recently. She documented the conditions she saw and provided a report (which included photos) to the Trustees. She spoke to several of the issues:

- A recent fire inspection found three violations.
- The library replaced the failed outside electrical conduit (which revealed a burned section) used to light the parking lot.
- There have been reports of a moldy musty smell in the building. The town's Facilities Department addressed the water seepage in the Assembly Room wall and repaired the wall. There have been other incidents of water seepage into the building.
- Despite mitigation of areas of visible water seepage, staff and patrons continue to report moldy musty smells.
- The Facilities Department hired a company to test air quality in fifteen spots in the library and reported normal results. However, the smell remains in some parts of the building.
- The Facilities Department conducted airborne mold inspections and found acceptable results.
- One of the roof top exhaust fans is not working.
- There have been repeated failures of lighting fixtures which were replaced recently using Green Cities' funds. Vice Chair Keohane asked the Library Director to investigate this issue.
- More work orders have been issued during 2022 than during calendar years 2020 and 2021.

Vice Chair Keohane met with the Fire Chief and expressed her concern with having a 30-year-old fire alarm system for a building that houses mostly papers. This concern emphasizes the need for a new fire alarm system. The library must conduct 2 inspections per year with the BFD fire department and 4 fire drills for staff and patrons.

Vice Chair Keohane also sought information about current insurance coverage for the building and its contents from the Town Administrator's office. She will check if the town's insurance policy covers the current building and its contents including technology. She reported that the town officials said that the building is covered for \$7 million and \$3 million for the building contents. The town carries full replacement cost.

As a result of her tour Vice Chair Keohane asked the Library Director to take videos of the library contents and update the inventory of the contents for insurance purposes.

### **Building Committee Update and Building Project Update**

Vice Chair Keohane is working with CHA to revise the cost estimates for the new building or to repair the current building. CHA provides their expert opinion re ADA and Massachusetts building code requirements. She said that the building systems are end of life and failures in any one component will have a domino effect. There are issues with the fire alarm system, asbestos and lead paint, and an overtaxed electrical system. The conditions are sufficiently dire that CHA does not see a path forward for the current building and that the only solution is a new building.

The rink architect Ted Galante met twice with Vice Chair Keohane as a courtesy. He looked at the CHA documentation and confirmed the library building has dire needs.

### **Senior Property Tax Work Off Program**

Massachusetts Laws, Chapter 59, permits senior citizens (age 60 and above) to work in town offices in exchange for a reduction in their property tax liability up to \$1500 per tax year. The Library Director spoke with the Belmont Council on Aging and they will contact the town departments to see if they are interested in participating in this program. The jobs to be performed must be minimum wage positions such as pages in the library. The library cannot use volunteers to perform paid work done by union employees.

### **Library Foundation and Fundraising Review**

Vice Chair Keohane, liaison to the Belmont Library Foundation (BLF), reported that funds available are over 5 million dollars. The Belmont Savings Bank Foundation has committed to the largest grant to date. The BLF is in conversations with other organizations.

On behalf of the BLF Vice Chair Keohane asked the Trustees to review a proposed revision to the Recognition Levels for donations on the BLF web site (See attached Recognition Levels document) prior to placing this information on the BLF web site. The Trustees endorsed the BLF's plan to use the term, "Champions."

The BLF's next meeting is September 12, 2022.

### **Friends Update**

The Friends of the Belmont Public Library celebrate their 50th anniversary this year. The celebration will begin with a Tea in October and conclude with a Books in Bloom event, March 31, 2023.

The Friends of the Belmont Public Library is the lead sponsor for the forthcoming "One book, One Belmont" program.

### **School Committee Updates**

The Belmont Public Schools open on September 7. Director Struzziero reported that the library card drive for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students will be held in September. The PTA will provide a table in the hall to sign up for a library card. Library staff will be present to help with the sign-up process. The Belmont Public Library is participating in a competition with the Watertown and Newton public libraries to see how many new cards holders they sign up.

### **Director's Report**

Program attendance has returned to pre-covid levels. The use of computers in the library is increasing. The use of library e-materials has reached its highest level ever.

The Library Director will advertise part time job openings at the library more widely. He will add the Council on Aging bulletin and the Belmont Helps network to the sources currently used.

Vice Chair Keohane asked the Library Director to hold office hours this fall to share information with the public and recommended that the Trustees also participate. This effort could be held in conjunction with the Library Building Committee.

Trustee meetings will be held September 22 and October 20, 2022.

### **Adjourn**

Chair Alligood moved to adjourn the meeting and Trustee Mann seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Next meeting – September 22nd at 7:00 pm

### **Exhibits:**

- Board of Library Trustees Agenda, August 2022
- Minutes of Joint Meeting, Select Board and Library Trustees, 6/27/2022
- Library Trustees Meeting Minutes June 17, 2022
- State Aid Expenses April through June 2022
- Buildings and Grounds
- Director's Report
- July Statistics Report
- June Statistics Report
- Building Conditions Update
- Library Recognition
- FOBPL April through June