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DATE: January 20, 2023
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BELMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
December 13, 2022

Chair Alligood called the meeting to order at 5:02 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 public, Susan Lewis and Barbara DuBois-Hoag, and Larry Link, Belmont Library Foundation, attended the meeting. Paul Joy, Town Meeting Member Precinct 7, joined for part of the meeting.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Review of Minutes

The minutes of the November 17, 2022 Trustees' meeting, as amended, were approved on a motion by Vice Chair Keohane, seconded by Trustee Mann, and voted unanimously.

Library Operations Update

• **Building Conditions**

Following several recent alarm failures, the Belmont Fire Department told the Library Director to have the equipment manufacturer inspect all the fire alerting systems in the building. As a result, many sensors had to be replaced. Repairs affecting health and safety will be made to keep the building operating safely.

• **Retirement Announcement**

The Library Director announced that the custodian will retire in early 2023. He has been at the library for 29 years and is a much-valued employee. He has agreed to work limited part time hours beginning in January as the search for his replacement gets underway. The town's Human Resources Department will post this position shortly. In the interim the Library Director will reach out to the town's Facilities Department for back up assistance.

Building Project Update

Vice Chair Keohane, a member of the Library Building Committee, along with Trustee Mann, reviewed the guidance that the Town Counsel, George Hall, provided on November 17 (exhibit titled Supporting Information for Warrant Article) to explain the Town Meeting Warrant article voted on at the November 30 Town Meeting. His guidance clarified the status of grants or gifts received by the library, referencing Massachusetts General Laws. The Town Meeting does not appropriate money received by the Town in the form of a grant or gift; accordingly, the November 30 Town Meeting Warrant Article, and borrowing authorization specified therein takes into account the approximately \$5 million of funds expected to be

granted or gifted for the library building project. The Trustees control the money raised for the library building project and deposited with the Town.

Timeline Forward

The Building Committee will meet on December 13 to refine the time line and review contracts with CHA and Oudens Ello.

The Town Treasurer's Office is receiving and depositing funds sent by donors in satisfaction of their gift intentions.

Naming Rights

Vice Chair Keohane updated the Trustees on the naming rights and sponsorship process for portions of the new library building. The chart showing "Recognition Opportunities" identifies places in the new library to be sponsored and places reserved based on gift intentions received. Two quiet study rooms remain available for naming rights. Groups of individuals as well as individuals can sponsor a designated place in the new library. She recommended that people seeking information about design elements contact the Building Committee.

Vice Chair Keohane clarified that the recognition addendum provided to donors notes that the donor is committing to the recognition request and is subject to change due to final design constraints.

Community Preservation Act (CPA) Grant

- **Submission and Status**

Vice Chair Keohane applied for a CPA grant focusing on three items in the current library, namely the stained glass windows in the Children's Room, two bronze relief plaques and the Veterans' Memorial plaques. The CPA Committee will review the applications at their December 14 meeting and will notify applicants if they are selected as finalists. The finalists' proposals will be submitted for approval at the spring Town Meeting.

FY24 Budget Review

The Trustees' budget subcommittee, Vice Chair Keohane and Trustee Olmsted, and the Library Director prepared the FY 24 operating budget using data from the past five years. Vice Chair Keohane said their goal was to develop the most effective and efficient organizational structure assuming an assistant director. They analyzed five years of the library's actual and budgeted expenditures and identified areas where there was give back of funds. They looked for opportunities to optimize the library personnel structure including redoing job descriptions and assessing the number of direct reports. The Library Director said that unfilled staff positions made it possible to realign budgeted funds. The library will request a 1.65% increase for its FY 24 operating budget.

This FY 24 budget request includes creation of an assistant library director position and anticipates the need to acquire or reuse a town vehicle for transport between temporary library sites. Trustee Carthy asked if this proposed budget covered the cost of the additional position and the proposed budget does

include this cost. Trustee Mann asked whether Cola increases were included. They were not because union negotiations are ongoing.

Trustee Olmsted asked that the Building Committee consider the library's need for a vehicle as part of their planning. Trustee Mann asked about the process to find an available vehicle in the town's fleet and if a vehicle could be borrowed from another department. The Library Director said a long-term vehicle rental is an option.

Friends Update

Chair Alligood attended the 12/13 Friends' meeting. After a budget review, the Friends said they plan to increase their financial support to the library.

The Friends are planning two ticketed fundraising events; "Books in Bloom," April 28-29, and indoor mini-golf, March 10-11, one day for adults and one day for children.

Foundation Update

The Library Foundation met on December 12. They are defining the procedures to move their funds to the Town so that bills related to the new library building can be paid.

The Library Foundation will be responsible for the new building's "Wall for All" recognizing all the donors to the new library. The Building Committee will oversee this effort.

The Library Foundation will remain operative to receive gifts of appreciated securities.

Vice Chair Keohane reported that Cityside Subaru intended to make a donation to the new library for the outdoor event terrace.

School Committee

Trustee Olmsted said that the School Superintendent plans to retire before September 2023. The School Committee has begun the search for a new superintendent.

The School Committee reported that, while total Belmont Public School enrollment has declined, high school enrollment has increased and elementary school enrollment declined.

Trustee Olmsted noted that, when the new middle school opens in September 2023, middle school students will be closer to the library and may make increased use of the library due to its proximity. The Library Director said he is working collaboratively with the Superintendent to ensure the library meets student needs.

Trustee Olmsted will attend the January School Committee meeting to give an update on the library.

Director's Report

The Library Director commended the staff's performance and thanked the Belmont Media Center for donating a large screen television to the library.

Trustee Annual Calendar

The Library Director distributed a tentative 2023 Trustees Calendar listing the expected events and proposed that the Select Board library liaison meet with the Trustees at the January meeting.

The Trustees will review the Library Trust funds held by the town at the January meeting.

The Trustees will meet on January 19 at 7 pm, February 9 at 7 pm and March 16 at 7 pm.

Adjourn

Chair Alligood moved to adjourn the meeting and Trustee Olmsted seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

Next Meeting: January 19, 2023, 7 pm

Exhibits:

- Board of Library Trustees Agenda, December 13, 2022
- Library Trustees Meeting Minutes, November 17, 2022
- November Statistics Report
- Director's Report
- Trustees' Calendar
- Recognition Opportunities
- Supporting Information for Warrant Article