

Bedford Free Public Library
Library Trustees Minutes for Tuesday, September 13, 2016
7:00PM • Conference Room

The Trustees gathered and reviewed and signed the bills. Chair Robert Batt called the meeting to order at 7:06PM.

Present

Trustees: Robert Batt, Chair; Elizabeth Hacala; Lynne O'Connor; Emily Mitchell. Rachel Field (arriving at 7:30); Abby Hafer (arriving at 7:30); and Mike Pulizzi (arriving at 7:30)
Administration: Richard Callaghan, Library Director; Noreen O'Gara, Assistant Director. Dorothy Bergin from the Bedford Citizen also attended.

The Chair asked if there were any public comments. None were forthcoming.

Secretary's Report

The Trustees reviewed the Secretary's Report. A motion to approve the report was made by Lynne and seconded by Elizabeth. The motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report

- The summer reading program was a big success. Chinese storytime will return on September 10th. The adult summer reading program was also very popular.
- The library hosted the retirement ceremony of MSgt. Kaia Santana from Hanscom AFB on August 26th.
- Ray has been working with Comcast to address the Wi-Fi issues. Comcast replaced the modem/router which seems to have helped.
- Richard attended the New England Library Leadership Symposium (NELLS) from August 23rd to the 25th. The program was focused on helping experienced directors improve leadership, mentor staff, and adapted to the changing role of libraries.
- Noreen is now a member of MLA's Conference Committee.
- Richard will attend the Minuteman Library Network (MLN) Membership meeting next month in Natick.
- The Library will be hosting "Coffee with a Cop" on Thursday morning, September 22nd at 10 am.

After review of the Director's written report, the Trustees also discussed the following:

- Richard thanked the Friends for their support of the increased summer programming.
- Bob asked if there was any feedback on the Chinese story time. Noreen said the Chinese story time is very popular and the local Chinese community is very happy and appreciative of the program.
- Richard shared that Sharon McDonald arranged a flag showing with the BHS class of '66 when they requested one as part of their 50th reunion.
- The MLN fee for the year has been paid. The remainder of the budget is largely untouched since it is so early in the fiscal year.

The Director's Report was moved by Emily, second by Lynne, and passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business

- Strategic Plan update

The Trustees reviewed the results from the community survey.

The next steps include reviewing the focus groups feedback, reviewing the library's mission statement, and working with staff on a draft/outline of the new strategic plan.

The current timeline consists of a draft to board next month and a target date of November for final approval.

Emily asked about the few negative comments on the staff. Noreen shared that one case is a member of the public who frequently contacts Noreen with complaints. In general the feedback is overwhelmingly positive.

Noreen commented there were several comments on the survey requesting things we already provide. She and Richard discussed the need to get the word out on a more regular basis so patrons are aware of everything the library does.

Richard noted they added music programs in response the feedback.

Noreen commented that parents ask for programming for older teens, but the teens don't really want nor have time to participate once they are in grades 10+.

Lynne asked if there was an opportunity to work more closely with BHS. Noreen said the high school has a bigger digital library than we do and their patron needs are more focused than BFPL's.

Regarding the completion of the strategic plan, since we are not applying for a grant we have a more relaxed timeline. The target is November completion but more time can be taken if needed.

Rachel asked how the favorable/not favorable results of the survey matched 5 years ago. Richard said the two most positive categories were the same. The somewhat satisfied was not there last year so we cannot compare that to 5 years ago.

Noreen also said many of the complaints we got were outside of our ability to control: MLN services; Parking- under the control of the town; access to eBooks often limited by publishers.

Mike asked if there were two things we could fix immediately due to the survey.

Richard said we had already updated the Wi-Fi and added adult programming both of which were brought up in the survey.

Mike said he could understand people feeling the library is less warm than 5 years ago. Richard and Noreen commented that self-check and self-service holds reduce contact with the staff but are overwhelmingly popular with patrons.

Rachel asked about the automated phone system. Noreen said over all it is a help because people get to the place they want to get to right away.

Elizabeth commented on the flow of the lobby being a bit confusing.

Mike mentioned he recognized fewer of the staff. Elizabeth asked if we could get together with the staff at some point. Rachel said something has been discussed for

years. Bob pointed out the challenges of staff schedules, but said it was worth looking into. No action was taken.

- Website redesign update
The prototype will be live for comment on Friday.
The vendor introduces the new interface to the public and can make a comment tab available so users can submit feedback. Rachel asked if we could make better use of the people interested in the web site. The vendor felt they got better and more representative feedback through the comment tab than by directly soliciting people. Noreen said they are doing testing to verify the web site is accessible.

Rachel asked when the new MLN app would be available. Richard said it went live last week. We still have a contract with Boopsie so we will be transitioning over to the MLN app in the next few months.

New Business

- Bedford Stories Project
Leslie Wittman will be picking up the program. There will be a soft roll out of information at Bedford Day. Leslie has the technical and interview skills needed for this project.
- Beehive Project
Contracting with Best Bees of Boston.
Richard reviewed it with the Town Administrator and Town Attorney.
Ray put down an outside walk way on the roof for safe access.
The contract for the program begins in January with the hive installed in April. The hive will be on the mezzanine roof.
- Town classification & wage review
The town is going out to bid for the review of job classification schedules A&B. This review would cover the 16 merit review staff members. The staff members involved in this will answer a questionnaire on job skills and then the consultant reviews each position as to duties and responsibilities. The review includes all town personnel in these categories, not just library staff.

Other Business

- Richard reminded everyone of the Friends of the Library Book Sale September 16th-18th on Bedford Day weekend.
- Mike mentioned he had read an article about libraries being a place to hide opioids and we should be aware of that as a potential issue in the future.

Adjournment

Abby made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Rachel seconded; it passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 18, 2016.

Meeting minutes are respectfully submitted by Elizabeth Hacala, co-secretary.

Documents distributed during the meeting: Agenda, Director's Report dated September 2016, Secretary's Report July 12, 2016, Statement of Expenditures for August 2016, the monthly Statistical Report for August 2016.