

Bedford Free Public Library
Library Trustees Minutes for Tuesday, November 15, 2016
7:00PM • Meeting Room

The Trustees gathered and reviewed and signed the bills. Chair Robert Batt called the meeting to order at 7:11 PM.

Present

Trustees: Robert Batt, Chair; Elizabeth Hacala; Emily Mitchell; Rachel Field; and Lynne O'Connor (arriving 7:36pm).

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, with minor corrections. A motion to approve the report was made by Elizabeth and seconded by Rachel. The motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report

The Director's Report was moved by Rachel, second by Elizabeth, and passed unanimously.

- The Bedford Flag is ready to be visited again; Ray has fixed the lighting issues.
- Wireless internet has been upgraded with Comcast for an additional \$100/month.
- Richard met with the Friends, who voted money to support the Bedford Citizen's upcoming town-wide book program.
- Professor Breen will give another lecture series in February/March.
- Classification salary study: Richard spoke with the Town Manager, who confirmed that the Town has hired Human Resources, Inc. to conduct a comprehensive compensation classification study and update, which will affect all departments except schools. Sessions will be held 11/30 at Town Hall; about fifteen Library employees are eligible to take part. Richard questioned whether the company's final report would be ready for Annual Town Meeting.
- The Library received two recent donations: a gift from resident Carla Lele (her annual birthday donation), and a gift in memory of Sal Mazzotta from his son. Rachel noted that the Amherst library has a display about bequests; BFPL might want to consider this. Bob suggested that BFPL have a place to acknowledge donations like this; Emily wondered if it would have more impact as a social-media post. The goal would be to inspire others to make similar donations.
- Richard reviewed the budget. We are about a third of the way through the fiscal year. We now have a deposit line from public printing, so those fees are going directly back into the budget. The increase in Wi-Fi fees for this fiscal year will be covered by a patron donation.
- Richard reviewed the statistical report; we're still 5% ahead of FY16 pace. Elizabeth asked if we have a goal for circulation statistics; Richard and Noreen noted that the rough goal is to have higher circs than the prior year, but not so high as to create capacity issues. Noreen noted that hoopla downloads in particular are growing extensively, but not at the expense of print materials.

Unfinished Business

- Strategic Plan review

Richard reviewed the updated draft (#4) of the Strategic Plan, based on the trustees' comments after our October meeting.

 - o Rachel wondered if 1E could be modified to say “ergonomic needs of the staff **and patrons,**” rather than just staff. Noreen noted that she has to prioritize staff needs and can't guarantee patron needs in this instance, though it's a laudable goal. Lynne wondered if something could be added to the bullet point about furniture; Noreen noted that ADA compliance is the key issue here.
 - o Rachel asked if, under 6C, we could add mention of a suggestion box, as she and Richard had discussed earlier.
 - o Rachel further asked if, under 8B, 8C, and 10A, we could include mention of the VA and Hanscom communities. Richard suggested adding “and Hanscom” to 8B, and including “VA and veterans' communities” to 8C and 10A. Noreen noted that it's very difficult to get new items into the *Hansconian* newsletter, so adding Hanscom to our list of PR opportunities in 10A may not be possible. Lynne wondered if current Hanscom families were aware of the library; Noreen confirmed that we do get lots of Hanscom families at BFPL, depending on their housing location. Elizabeth stated that including in the Strategic Plan a nod to stronger Hanscom outreach is a worthy thing, even if logistically it's difficult to do.
 - o Rachel suggested that the suggestion of a library logo in 10A be specifically noted as gender-, race-, and ethnicity-non-specific. Richard noted that these criteria would be taken for granted; Lynne concurred that best practices for logos and visual identity already encompass this. Lynne asked whether logo and branding had been discussed with regard to the website redesign; Noreen said it hadn't been addressed. Lynne offered her professional expertise and contacts as BFPL explores logo and branding.
 - o Under 12 re: financial stability, Rachel wondered if there was a place to include mention of bringing pay rates in line with the state minimum wage. Emily felt it would not be appropriate in this document. Lynne suggested salaries might be a better fit under point 6, regarding staff.
- Emily moved that the Trustees accept the strategic plan, with the minor corrections discussed tonight. Elizabeth seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

- FY18 Budget Preparation

Richard has been working on the budget, and is awaiting guidelines from the Finance Committee in advance of his 1/19 meeting with them. The resignation of Nancy Tegeler poses the question whether her position should move up from half-time to full-time, given the busyness of the Children's Room; this would add around \$27,000 to the budget. Richard and Noreen are already soliciting resumes from candidates, and are considering asking whether they would want a full-time position if it were possible. Rachel asked for and received clarification that the 20-hour position is benefited. Elizabeth asked when the last time was that we increased hours for a similar position; Noreen confirmed it was hiring Pam as a full-time YA librarian; the position had previously been part-time. [Post-meeting correction from

Noreen: “We were able to offer Megan Statza a move from from part-time to full-time in July 2014 but she left to be Head of Children's Services at Sudbury in Feb. 2015 so Pam's position was the first time we advertised for a full-time YA librarian! She joined us in April of 2015.”]

Rachel moved that the Trustees support increasing this position to full-time; Lynne seconded. Richard confirmed that this would be ideal. Bob asked for clarification that we have increased demand within the children’s department to justify the request for the increase; Richard confirmed. Bob also asked if this request had to go through the personnel office; Richard said that last time, he just added the increase to the budget. Lynne wondered if a tradeoff would be needed, and if so, what could be cut. Noreen stated that we’re still short on professional staff in the children’s department, especially on weekends, so we’re behind on needed services. Richard noted that, to increase the YA position, he had made a deal with Finance Committee to reduce the book budget, which was then supplemented with Corporation money. Lynne asked about possible tradeoffs between YA professional services and Children’s professional services; Noreen noted that the in-person needs in YA are as great as children’s, though circulation in children’s is higher. Elizabeth stated that, at Special Town Meeting, the Finance Committee was very cognizant of upcoming building needs and costs within the schools, so this may be a case where the Library should strike while the iron is hot, before additional capital is needed for the schools. Elizabeth suggested we may want to approach the discussion with Finance Committee with Corporation money in mind to supplement non-salary portions of the budget. Rachel’s motion passed unanimously.

- Window Replacement Capital Project

Richard spoke with Tassir Alani from Facilities about this project. We have \$75,000 in the budget to cover this, but the quotes for full replacement with double-pane windows are coming in closer to \$100,000. The windows on the front of the building are currently single-pane windows with storms. The recommendation is to rehab these, and then replace the storm windows with dual-pane windows, which would match the current windows architecturally and aesthetically.

- LSTA Grants

Rachel noted that the LSTA decides at its November meeting on themes around which they’ll offer grants. Prior grant recipients included Lexington and Concord; BFPL has not applied for grants in several years because Richard sat on the grant authorization committee. Rachel suggested that Richard report to the trustees on the available grants every November or December. Richard agreed to review the grant opportunities and report to the trustees (though he noted that Vanessa, our prior assistant director, had reported that the paperwork to receive these grants was extensive).

- Step Raises

Rachel also noted that the step raises we reviewed last month were lower than the state minimum wage, though higher than the federal minimum wage (the Town is exempted from the state minimum-wage law). She proposed that the trustees make a statement encouraging the Town to abide by the state minimum wage of \$10/hour.

This would be a Town Meeting issue, not simply a BFPL issue, since other Town departments (notably, Recreation) also have employees who are paid less than the state minimum. Richard noted that the current lowest pay rate at BFPL is \$9.42/hour, which affects four part-time pages. In prior years, before the state increased its minimum wage, Bedford paid higher than minimum wage. Lynne wondered if increasing the lowest rate would have a compression effect on the higher rates; Richard stated that most increases voted by Town Meeting are percentage increases across the board. Bob agreed with the desire to make BFPL rates match the state minimum, but wondered about the implications of a BFPL recommendation, both for other Town departments and for future budgets. Rachel clarified that she wasn't suggesting making a policy determination, but simply a statement of support. Lynne noted that this might be more appropriate to propose as individuals in Town Meeting, and not as trustees. Elizabeth wondered if the question could be raised at the Fiscal Planning Coordinating Committee meeting. Richard noted that this could be brought to the Selectmen as a petitioner's article at Town Meeting. The trustees agreed that we should table this discussion until Richard has a chance to talk to Amy Hamilton at the Recreation Department, which is likely the only other Town department paying lower than minimum wage, to see if she's been considering the issue this year.

- Visual Budget

Richard noted that the Town now has a visual budget on its website, which offers greater visibility into all Town budgets, including BFPL's. He advised the trustees to be aware that more visibility though a good thing for the public may lead to more questions about the budget.

Other Business

- Children's librarian Nancy Tegeler has submitted her resignation. Nancy will now be the head of children's services in Dover, which is a full-time position close to her home. She has loved her time in Bedford, but this was an offer she couldn't refuse.
- Thursday, November 24 & Friday, November 25: Closed for Thanksgiving
- Friends of the Library Annual Meeting: Saturday, December 10th, 1:00pm. Holiday Book Sale Saturday, 12/10, 2:00pm-4:00pm, and Sunday, 12/11, 1:00pm-4:00pm.
- Massachusetts Library Trustees Meeting is on Saturday, November 19. Rachel is planning to go.
- Richard noted that the Library Corporation needs to meet before his next meeting with the Finance Committee.

Adjournment

Lynne made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Rachel seconded; it passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 13, 2016, at 7:00 PM.

Meeting minutes are respectfully submitted by Emily Mitchell, co-secretary.

Documents distributed during the meeting: Agenda; Director's Report dated November 2016; Secretary's Report October 18, 2016; Statement of Expenditures for October 2016; the monthly Statistical Report for October 2016.