

**Bedford Free Public Library
Library Trustees Minutes
for March 10, 2020 7:00 p.m.
Meeting Room**

The Trustees reviewed and signed bills. Chair Elizabeth Hacala called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m.

Present

Trustees: Rachel Field, Dennis Ahern, Elizabeth Hacala, Abby Hafer, Robin Grace Silbert, Mike Pulizzi. Absent: Alma Hart

Administration: Richard Callaghan, Library Director. Absent: Noreen O’Gara, Assistant Director

Guest: Emily Mitchell, Select Board member

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

Minutes

Three sets of minutes from prior meetings were reviewed and voted upon:

December 12, 2019: The acceptance of the minutes was moved by Robin, seconded by Mike, and approved unanimously.

January 14, 2020: These had been amended to correct a spelling error. The acceptance of the minutes was moved by Abby, seconded by Rachel, and approved unanimously.

February 11, 2020: The acceptance of the minutes was moved by Robin, seconded by Dennis, and approved unanimously.

Director’s Report:

The Trustees viewed the Director’s written report. In addition, the Trustees discussed:

- COVID-19 updates:
 - A Bedford resident has been exposed to the novel coronavirus, the virus that causes the disease COVID-19.
 - Richard is creating a Continuity of Operations Plan. This plan will enable essential operations of the library to take place in the event that the library is closed due to COVID-19. An example of an essential operation is payroll, which must continue, regardless of circumstances. [Note taker’s note: The Bedford Free Public Library was closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic as of Friday, March 13, 2020]
 - The Bedford Board of Health will decide on the openings and closings of various buildings, events, and services.
 - Extra janitor hours were encouraged, for the purpose of sanitizing surfaces.
 - Gloves are being available at the circulation desk, for circulation staff and pages to use.
 - It is not clear if the library will be closing.

- Trustees recommended that signs in bathrooms regarding hand washing should be multilingual.
- No staff travel is planned until June, but Noreen O’Gara is in Australia as of the date of the Trustees’ meeting
- The Trustees encouraged the library to take care of the staff.
- Richard said that waving fines in the era of the coronavirus pandemic will be done on a case-by case basis.

The report was moved by Mike, seconded by Robin, and approved unanimously.

Unfinished Business

The lighting project was discussed. Lighting is improved, and LEDs are being used more now. An upgrade of the wireless network needs to be done. Bids are now being accepted. Computer upgrades were discussed as well. A discussion of the boycott of MacMillan publishers was tabled, pending discussion with that publisher.

New Business:

Letter to the Board:

Robin received an anonymous letter, said to be from a member of the library staff. She telephoned the Chair of the Trustees Elizabeth Hacala and spoke with Richard. Trustees have been given copies of the letter.

In their discussion of the letter, the Trustees noted the following:

- A level of unhappiness is apparent.
- More listening, more openness, and more patience with staff ideas is needed.
- Morale is essential.

The following suggestions were made:

- That there be a suggestion box for the staff
- That a meeting takes place between the staff and Richard within the next two weeks.
- That there is an email wrap-up sent to the staff at the end of each week.

Town Meeting:

Town Meeting is scheduled to take place on March 23, 2020.

The budget matter of time and a half for work on Sunday will be in the budget, and Capital projects will include the library HVAC system, the front doors, and the fire panel.

Facilities Improvements:

It was suggested that the library needs to get bottle fillers to replace the water fountains and do it quickly. Funds could be obtained from the Corporation.

It was suggested that the bathroom next to the reference desk needs an upgrade.

July 4 Fireworks:

Every five years, the town presents fireworks as a part of the July 4 celebrations. 2020 is a year in which fireworks are scheduled to take place. The library will close at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 2, 2020. The official holiday is Friday, July 3. The library will be closed for July 3, 4 and 5, in 2020.

Other Business:

The election scheduled in Bedford for Saturday, March 14, which will take place, with accommodations for the social distancing recommended regarding COVID-19.

The Friends' book sale is scheduled for April 2-5 but will be dependent on the state of the situation regarding COVID-19. Richard remarked that rescheduling the book sale is exceedingly difficult.

There are no new appointments.

Next meeting: Tuesday April 14, at 7:00 p.m.

Adjournment:

Was moved by Robin, seconded by Dennis, and approved unanimously.

--Minutes respectfully submitted by Abby Hafer

Documents distributed during the meeting: Agenda; Director's Report, Statement of Expenditures for February 2020; and the monthly Statistical Report for February 2019.