

Bedford Free Public Library
Library Trustees Minutes for Tuesday July 12th, 2022
7:00 PM • Online Meeting via Zoom

Chair Mike Pulizzi called the meeting to order at 7:03.

Present

Trustees: Mike Pulizzi, Elizabeth Hacala, Robin Grace Silbert, Padma Choudry
Other attendees: Emily Mitchell, Selectboard Liaison; Dot Bergin, Bedford Citizen.
Administration: Richard Callaghan, Director; Noreen O’Gara, Assistant Director.
Not in Attendance: Fahad Alden, Rachel Field, Abby Hafer.

Public Comment

None.

Secretary’s Report

The Board will vote on the June minutes during the September meeting, as there were not enough members present to vote for approval of the minutes.

Director’s Report

- DPW is doing some paving near the library and will be storing their equipment in the library’s back parking lot, which will be cordoned off. The paving is expected to start next Monday and go through part of August.
- The Summer Reading program has kicked off.
- The library is working with the Town’s Recycling Coordinator Liz Antanavica to dispose of a dumpster full of old metal shelving to make room for the HVAC project We contacted area libraries but no one wanted the shelving. The DPW put it out to auction but we had no takers who wanted to come pick it all up. The metal recycling company will pay the town per weight and haul it away. The library put up signs because other people have been dumping their own stuff (including trash) into the dumpster. DPW has also picked up some old computers, monitors, printers etc. for recycling as well.
- Richard met with Town Manager Sarah Stanton about staff merit reviews so that has been completed.
- Under the statistical report, there are 2 reports, one of which is the summary of the year. Our statistics are well above last year – not quite up to what we did pre-Covid, but we are getting there.

Robin moved to accept the Director’s Report, seconded by Elizabeth. Ayes: Elizabeth, Padma, Rachel, Michael: Vote 4-0-0.

Unfinished Business

- FY22 Budget wrap up:
 - Salaries line item had \$35,000 remaining, a higher amount than the usual (under \$10,000). This year was unusual because we were not open on Sundays until well in to October. Also contributing to the higher number was not being able to get part-time coverage for sick staff members. Especially with Covid cases. Next year, we expect that it will likely be back to under \$10,000.
 - Supplies show 57.7% expended, but that number should be 87.7%.

- We overspent on library materials, but that's not unusual as it is made up in other line items. Overall, it's been a transitional year, but we see that we are getting back gradually to normal operations.
- HVAC Project: Noreen and Richard met with Facilities Director Tassir Alani and Northeast Engineering. They have a good design and are working to get the bid documents out. We are not expecting to get quotes back until maybe September. A lot depends on the vendor and when they can begin work. The project will be completed in phases, so we won't have to shut down the whole building for an extended period. We are trying to proceed in a way to get all the work done quickly, but with the least disruption to library operations. Nevertheless, the HVAC project may require us to close for a short period but when and for how long are not known at this time. Richard believes that the project will go through the winter, and probably won't be done until spring or summer 2023. We hope to know more in September because vendors will have about 6 weeks to return bids. We have not been making the meeting room available for public use as we don't know when or if we will need to close that space.
- Head of Children's Services Candidate Search: We have advertisements out in the usual places (MBLC, Simmons). We have received 11 resumes though some of the candidates did not have an MLS degree. We have set up 2 interviews with strong candidates. The market has been very competitive; there are some other well-paying children's jobs available at larger local libraries.

New Business

- Reconsideration of Library Materials: During the last meeting, a resident raised a question during the public comments about who has standing to make a request for reconsideration of library materials, and whether they need to be a resident. Richard's general advice was that there is no specific statute saying that only your own residents can make these requests, and he did not recommend this as we are a part of a network and we have patrons from other towns that use our library. Richard noted that at the ALA conference he attended this point was raised, and it was recommended that you have a documented process and you go through all the steps to review materials for reconsideration. Richard said that, for the moment, he would not suggest changing anything, but stated that looking at the Materials Selection Policy would be a good exercise for the Board. Richard also said he saw a webinar from United for Libraries that he would pass along to the Board. The reconsideration form for library materials is available at all our public desks. You do have to do it in person, but it would be available to whomever came into the building. In Massachusetts, the challenges to materials thus far have been at the local library level. If the library were to receive form letters about specific books, the senders would be redirected to the existing policy about the reconsideration of materials.

Other Business

Last month Deb Cullen retired after many years of service in the technical services department. After some internal interviews Jillian Gillespie, who has been working here since 2015 was promoted to Library Assistant II to replace Deb. The position is 30 hours a week. We are happy we were able to promote from within the staff. We also have a new part time page (Tyler Buckley) from the Nashoba Learning Group (for individuals with autism). He will join Josh

Doucette who we hired from Nashoba a few years ago. Both started as volunteers. This is a great way to incorporate diversity into the staff.

The September meeting will likely be remote. At the moment we can have online meetings until December. The House passed a bill that by April 2023, public meetings would have to have a remote participation option, but this has not become official yet. Emily added that the Senate does not have this hybrid requirement, and there's no funding at the moment. While the library can probably make the trustee meetings hybrid, it might be difficult for other meetings in town considering the number of committees that would need the service.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, September 13th at 7PM via Zoom.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42. Robin made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Padma seconded. Approved - Ayes: Elizabeth, Robin, Padma, Michael: 4-0-0.

Meeting minutes are respectfully submitted by Padma Choudry.

Documents distributed during the meeting: Agenda, Director's Report, June minutes, June 2022 Expenditures, June 2022 Statistics and FY22 Annual Stats Report.