

**Bedford Free Public Library Trustees Minutes**  
**Tuesday September 12th, 2023**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Hybrid meeting: Meeting Room & Online**

*Review and Signing of Bills*

Call to Order

Michael Pulizzi called the meeting to order at 7:07pm

Trustees: Rachel Field, Padma Choudry, Fahad Alden, Michael Pulizzi, Renae Nichols, Elizabeth Hacala. Abby Hafer joined later.

Other attendees: Emily Mitchell, Select Board; George Lee, Finance Committee; Ron Scaltreto, Facilities Department

Administration: Richard Callaghan, Director; Noreen O’Gara, Assistant Director

Public Comments

Secretary’s Report - May minutes - amend

- Abby motions to accept the minutes
- Elizabeth seconds
- Aye: Mike, Renae, Elizabeth, Rachel, Abby- 5-0-2

Director’s Report

- Sing Hanson, local artist, former Art Steering Committee member passed away. Sing also designed the art work for One Book, One Bedford programs.
- Noreen and Richard met with the new superintendent of Bedford Public Schools, Cliff Chuang
- Elevator in the old building was finally inspected and is now able to be used
- Friends of the Library will have a booth at Bedford Day
- Expenditures for July and August- we’ve paid our Minuteman bill, the largest bill of the year
- Statistics report for July and August- up for July, down in August
  - Richard will send the link for the Conversations with the Authors programs - link is on the website
- Question about the strategic plan
  - Will be put on the agenda for October
  - Extension of previous plan was filed
- The Corporation board allocated \$2500 to be used to purchase materials related to the indigenous population of Bedford
  - Sharon McDonald and the historical society will be consulted
  - A display can be created perhaps in the Bedford History Room

*Elizabeth motions to approve the director’s report; Rachel seconds*

*Ayes: Elizabeth, Rachel, Padma, Abby, Fahad, Renae, Mike; 7-0*

## Unfinished Business

- HVAC Project update - Ron Scaltreto, Facilities Director
  - details about the project going forward
    - more control with the new system for individual rooms
    - Facilities; Richard, and Ron want to go forward with the net zero goal for the HVAC plan
    - if funding doesn't come through, something will be done
    - the hope is that at special town meeting in November, additional funds will be secured (still working on the final number)
    - then would go out for new bids in February (bidding process takes 6-8 weeks for the whole process)
    - advertisement goes in the Central Register for 10 days
    - we give 2-3 weeks between sub-bid and general contractor bid
    - People in the trade predict more competition in the spring, which will hopefully lead to a good price
    - Current bids were off because of delays to the project due to COVID
      - comment that there's a worry we won't get the extra funding
        - Ron hopes the town will see the value of the project and the town will get behind it
      - comment that this is something we knew was coming, and now it's time
      - question about why wait until February to get bids
        - holidays and winter slows things down, it's more advantageous
      - question about whether the contractor responsible for overruns
        - contractor should give accurate numbers, but there can always be unexpected things
        - a good contractor will be pretty accurate
        - 8-10% set aside for overruns
      - Given climate change, there may be grants available - is there someone who looks for those? We would encourage that
        - it may not work for our project, it depends on what's available
      - what about rebates?
        - rebates are built into the design, generally goes to the contractor
      - who is the person who looks into grants?
        - Erin Dorr, Facilities Department
      - F.W. Webb is based in Bedford. Does Facilities use them? Do you approach them?
        - It's up to the contractor
      - Do the initial funds expire?
        - Emily responds: They don't automatically expire. If the project is ongoing or pending the money stays. The funds for this project are safe.
      - Ron is looking to get more than what the lowest bid was under the guise that he's been told the bidding will likely be better
      - If we don't get the money, or if the HVAC breaks down in the winter, what is the plan?
        - we'd have to look at a 1 for 1 replacement at that point

- comment that we stand to lose a large portion of the collection if the HVAC fails in certain places
- How's our insurance? Given we know there's a problem, is there an additional liability? Do we need to increase our insurance?
  - the insurance is through the town
- Can the question about insurance be raised?
  - Ron will ask
- The state vets the contractors. You can look at their history. We don't have to take the lowest bid. It's the lowest responsible bid.
- A comment that there is some frustration due to how long this project has taken (started in 2019) and the police station was finished (not delayed due to COVID?)
- questions about if community preservation funds can be used
  - Emily responds: the old part of the building is old enough to be considered historic, the project can use those funds
- don't know if we have department of revenue approval
  - If we have to close due to an emergency will we need to provide services in another location?
    - we were advised to ask for more money, that the net zero design was a better project, so we don't anticipate the need to do that
  - question about when we might need to replace the roof
    - it's in the capital project- maybe 2026 or 2027
  - could the roof have solar panels
    - the library might have panels in the parking lot
    - whenever we look at roofs, we consider solar panels
  - what will be the indoor air quality in the new project
    - MERV 13 filters will be part of the design
  - is there a band aid option available to prevent issues this winter
    - Richard is more confident in the heat than the air conditioning- we have 5 boilers, if one fails we'll likely be ok
    - When the A/C goes off, it's not certain if it will go back on
  - is there anything we can do with the money we already have approved- phase 1 and phase 2
    - legally we need to have all the funds
  - do you have a start date in mind if there are no snafus
    - ideally early May, expect to take 13-15 months
  - we'll have to see what other wear and tear comes as a result of having more traffic in one part of the building while the other part is being worked on
  - 100 attendees needed a special town meeting, majority vote needed
  - September 19th Community Preservation Committee meeting
- Bathroom floor refurbishment
  - Nicole mentioned that Burlington (where she used to work) had bathrooms cleaned, sanitized, glazed
    - SaniGlaze New England
  - two main bathroom, children's bathroom, tech bathroom

- question- should we wait until HVAC is done
  - no, it's good to do it now
- question about getting the automatic faucets
  - that would be up to Facilities Department

### **New Business**

- FY25 Budget preview
  - Finance Committee requested we meet earlier this year, maybe after our December meeting
  - Hoping the guidelines will come out this week
- Children's Librarian - candidate search
  - previous librarian won't be continuing
  - we have strong part time people willing to fill in until a replacement is hired

### **Other Business**

- Migrant families
  - The library is trying to help.
  - Children's books have been supplied, thanks to staff and the Friends
  - Nicole will do story times if space is available at hotel.
- Friends of the Library book sale - September 21st-24<sup>th</sup>
  - coincides with Bedford Day
  - no masking asked for this year
- Appointments: None

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 10th, 2023

When Richard sends the agenda and materials, trustees should reply if they will attend in person or via Zoom

Adjournment

*Rachel motions to adjourn the meeting at 8:29pm; Abby seconds*

*Ayes: Elizabeth, Rachel, Elizabeth, Mike, Abby, Padma, Fahad; 7-0*