

**Bedford Free Public Library  
Library Trustees Minutes  
For Tuesday October 10, 2023  
7:00 PM • Hybrid meeting: Meeting Room & Online**

*Review and Signing of Bills*

Call to Order

Vice Chair Fahad Alden called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

**Present**

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

Other attendees: Dot Bergin, Bedford Citizen

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

Not Present: Renae Nichols

**Public Comments**

The Chair asked for public comment and none were forthcoming.

**Secretary’s Report**

Elizabeth pointed out the header for the minutes needed to be updated to reflect they were the minutes of the meeting.

The September meeting Minutes were approved as amended. Moved by Mike Seconded by Padma

Ayes: Elizabeth, Rachel, Mike, Abby, Padma, Fahad, Vote 6-0-0

**Director’s Report**

- Richard got an information request from Mass Transparency. Requesting information on book challenges. We had had none for the period in question.
- Rand has helped a patron with vision loss to download apps and use Libby, Hoopla, etc. The Patron was really pleased.
- 38 kids per Wednesday for TAG.
- The Friends had a good book sale despite the weather.
- The new library elevator is getting the control board replaced. It will take about a month to do and is a mandated update.
- Expenditures are on target.
- A library student is helping with the Children’s Room and we have enough coverage for now.

Padma moved to accept the Director’s Report, seconded by Mike. Ayes: Rachel, Elizabeth, Abby, Padma, Michael, Fahad: Vote 6-0-0.

**Unfinished Business**

**HVAC Project**

- Ron Scaltreto and Amy Fidalgo met with the CPC and that meeting went well. The CPC recommended the funds to support the Library HVAC. Since then, both Select Board and

Finance Committee have approved that coming to Special Town Meeting (STM). STM will be held on November 6 at 6:30 pm.

- Trustees and Friends of the Bedford Free Public Library are encouraged to come out for the STM.
- Rachel expressed concern about holding off on the bidding for the project until January.
- Abby suggested we might ask Ron and Amy to come to our November meeting.
- Elizabeth expressed a concern about asking the department to bid at a time that was non optimal in their best professional opinion.
- Padma reviewed her notes from the last meeting and reminded us of the reasons that Ron had identified that specific timeline over the last meeting.
- Rachel expressed further concern about the 12–16-month timeframe and being sure that we understand the impact.
- Several trustees were interested in inviting Ron Scaltreto and Amy Fidalgo to Trustees meetings.
- After discussion of how to stay up to date on the progress and the impact on the Library, Abby made a motion that we formally request Ron Scaltreto, Director of Facilities, and/or Amy Fidalgo, Assistant Town Manager of Operations, to attend the trustees meetings and provide an update monthly until a contract is in hand,  
Rachel – 2nd Ayes: Elizabeth, Rachel, Mike, Abby, Padma, Fahad Vote 6-0-0

### **Strategic Plan Update**

- Richard will file an action plan in December, and we will start on a new plan in the Spring.
- Noreen reminded the board of the complication of doing a strategic plan during a construction project since that seems to overshadow other input the public has.
- Elizabeth encouraged hiring a consultant to help take the load off of staff during the process.
- While discussing how this would fit in with inevitable disruptions during construction, Rachel asked if there were funds to support the moving of the department around the library during the HVAC project. Noreen and Richard and confirmed there were funds available.

### **FY25 Budget**

- We received a guideline of 3.5% increase from Finance Committee. We will be meeting with them on December 14.
- Janel is retiring as of November 30. Richard and Noreen are working on backup training in case there is a gap in coverage of that role.
- The Trustees voiced appreciation for all of Janel's years of service to the Library.
- A celebration of her time with the library will be announced.

## **New Business**

### **Verizon and Power Outages**

- There were power outages on both Sept 9 and 16, 2023.
- There was a Verizon outage on Sept 22, 2023. Verizon account is through Minuteman, they got someone out that afternoon.
- Following Wednesday Verizon service went down, and we were offline with them for a week and had to use a cloud-based workaround.
- Staff did a great job and stepped up to make sure things were as smooth as possible.
- Public computers and the catalog were down but the public Wi-Fi worked.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 14th, 2023 (in person)

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12. Elizabeth moved to adjourn the meeting. Rachel seconded. Ayes: Rachel, Elizabeth, Abby, Padma, Michael, Fahad

*Meeting minutes are respectfully submitted by Elizabeth Hacala.*

*Documents distributed during the meeting: Agenda; Director's Report, Trustee Minutes September 12 2023, Statement of Expenditures as of October 6 2023; the monthly Statistical Report for September 2023 and the FY24 budget.*