

Bedford Free Public Library
Library Trustees Minutes
Tuesday October 8, 2024, 7:00 PM
Hybrid meeting: Reference Room & Online

In attendance: Elizabeth Hacala, Abby Hafer, Padma Choudry, Rachel Field, Gyasi Burk-Abbott, and Emily Prince

Other attendees: Richard Callaghan, Director; Noreen O’Gara, Assistant Director; Emily Mitchell, Select Board; Ron Scaltreto, Facilities; Marie Kelley, Administrative Assistant; Meredith McCulloch, Former Library Director; Mike Rosenberg, Bedford Citizen.

Call to Order:

Rachel Field called the meeting to order at 7:06

Public Comments: none

Secretary’s Report

Elizabeth asked if we could add Meredith McCulloch’s (former Library Director) name in the section where it mentions our invited guest this evening.

Emily moved to accept the minutes of the September meeting and Gyasi seconds the motion. Ayes: Elizabeth, Padma, Abby, Rachel, Gyasi, and Emily.

Vote 6-0-0

Director’s Report

The Meeting Room is not available for patrons and for children’s programs due to the HVAC project. Nicole is working with the Chamber of Commerce to be at the trunk or treat and trying to arrange another story time at the Xmas Tree lighting on the first Saturday in December.

The filing for the State Financial Forms is complete. The Annual Report has been submitted to the town.

The FY25 budget is already through a quarter of the year. All expenses are on target including salaries at 25% expended. Computer service that is the MLN fees is 97.73% expended. Printing is almost 70% because we had a lot of things that needed to be printed early this year.

In state travel and dues/memberships: we have not used these expense lines but will be later in the year. The library is open on Sundays, so employees are earning time and half which also is included in the salaries expense.

Statistical Report:

We are a little behind the print book circulation verses last year at 4.7%, but Overdrive has contributed more to that. It's a little different than last year because we are including Overdrive in the regular statistics this year.

Noreen stated that this includes the conversation she had with Richard and Rand, where they were talking about trying to purchase materials that our patrons are asking for. We are having difficulties getting things like music CDs, and movies on DVD.

The study Nook in the new book section was paid for with funds from the Nickerson Foundation. Nickerson funds our collection on disabilities and autism. Richard sent a letter of thanks to the Nickerson family for funding the Nook.

Rachel asked Richard to email the Trustees a copy of the Annual Report that was submitted to the town.

Abby moves to accept the Directors Report, Padma seconds the motion. Ayes: Abby, Gyasi, Emily, Elizabeth, Padma, and Rachel. Vote 6-0-0.

Unfinished Business

HVAC Project Update:

Ron Scaltreto, Facilities Director attended the meeting and said the work is on schedule and is progressing smoothly.

The work on the front stairs will begin this Friday. Facilities decided to do a repair instead of a replacement. If they did a full replacement, we would have ADA and code issues. Replacing the stairs would require redesigning the front and entry way stairs. Ron is confident that what the builders have proposed to do with the front stairs will make it code complaint, safe for the patrons to come and go, and will last a long time. There are limited funds to do this project. Rachel asked about doing a repair with granite and Ron said it's not feasible because it would make it more complicated and expensive.

Rachel stated that in Richard's Director Report it indicates that there is a roof leak in the new building. Ron stated that in the 6-year capital plan there is a request to address the flat and ballasted roof and if the town approves it, it will be done.

Ron stated that the boilers have been started up and there will be heat in the library. This Friday the library will be closed because the power will be off in the library for electrical work. On October 19 we will be closed because there will be a crane outside taking the old fan out and lifting the new equipment onto the roof.

In the HVAC report, item 6, Rachel asked about the right-hand pump. The pump has a bad bearing and will need to be repaired. Ron stated that pump repair lasts 5-10 years. Ron said the left-hand pump was re-built last year and the plan is to re-build the right pump and buy a spare.

Padma asked Ron if the HVAC work would require more closings. Ron stated that there will probably be a need to close the library on multiple days at some point in time, but right now it is unsure. The builders will provide plenty of notice if there is a need to close the library.

New Business

New Director Search Process

Richard gave the Trustees a copy of the current job description that was put out in 2018 and was reclassified by the town. Richard would like to have the job posted by the end of the month with the Board's approval. Also, Richard stated that we should have a sub-committee to look at resumes so that it would be an executive session rather than a full Board. The subcommittee can look at the resumes. Richard and Noreen can do the administrative part of the process. Candidates must have an MLS to be considered for the position.

The Board was in favor of posting a job advertisement before the New Year, then schedule interviews after the New Year. Rachel suggested that it would be helpful to have a board retreat. It would be an open meeting. Noreen stated that Richard will be going to NELA at the end of the month, and it would give Richard the opportunity to talk about the job opening to many people. Rachael suggested we elect a committee tonight and appoint a sub-committee tonight. Elizabeth, Renae (Rachel will double check to make sure Renae is still interested) and Padma will be on the sub-committee.

Rachel makes a motion to create a 3-person committee, and nominates Padma, Elizabeth, and Renae (if Renae is still interested).

Emily moves to nominate Padma, Elizabeth, and Renae for a 3-member committee for the new Director search. Padma seconded the motion. Ayes: Elizabeth, Padma, Abby, Rachel, Gyasi, and Emily. Vote:6-0-0.

Richard will get the job advertisement ready and send it to the sub-committee. Richard will talk to Stephanie Oliver in Human Resource to make sure the advertisement is legally correct.

The Board reviewed the job description and made some minor changes.

Noreen and Richard will update the job description and send it to the sub-committee to look at it.

Richard will send out dates to have a Board Retreat.

Richard will send out a list of contacts from MBLC.

Richard and Noreen will send out a document on questions to ask and not to ask the candidates.

Rachel will reach out to Renae to finalize the subcommittee.

Emily recapped the dates: Have a meeting within the next 2 weeks. Finalize the job description November 1 and meet on November 12 to look at some interview questions.

FY26 Budget Schedule, the budget increased from last year by 3 1/2%. Richard has just started working on it. Richard plans to have a draft budget for everyone in the next meeting in November. The Trustees can look and vote on it in December.

The Library meets with the Finance Committee on Thursday, December 19th at 7:00pm

Other Business

Appointments: none

Padma motions to adjourn the meeting Abby seconded. Ayes: Abby, Elizabeth, Emily, Padma, Gyasi, and Rachel. 6-0-0.