

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

April 28, 2020

7 PM

Virtual Meeting

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Library Board of Trustees was conducted via remote participation.

1. **Call to order of Board of Library Trustees Meeting.** Present via Google Meet: Joan Barry, Jeff Billingham, AnneMarie Bird, Nancy Gilbert, Dean Gillam, Deb Lebeaux, Kevin McKenna, Lisa Powers, Chair Clare O'Connor, Library Director Priya Rathnam, and Assistant Library Director Mike Zeller.
2. **Review and act to approve minutes of February 25th meeting.** A motion to approve the minutes was made by Nancy Gilbert, seconded by Deb Lebeaux, and unanimously approved.
3. **Review and act to approve Director's report of activities of February and March 2020.** A motion to approve the Director's reports was made by Nancy Gilbert, seconded by Dean Gillam, and unanimously approved.
4. Financial and Legislative:
 - **Review FY2020 YTD report.** Library Director Priya Rathnam notes that as of March 15th the library was "on target". She also notes that after mid-March the library started to spend more on electronic resources and less on print books.
 - **Update on special request from Town Manager on FY2020 budget.** Town Manager Kevin Mizikar asked all Department heads to predict increases and decreases in expenses for April, May and June. Priya notes that for April these include decreased expense for the new director's salary; decreased expense for the salary of the electronic resources librarian since that position is vacant in April and May; decreased expense for the salaries and wages of pages and aides since those services are not needed while the library is closed; and reduced expenses for both custodial and office supplies. In total for April there is an overall decrease in expenses of approximately \$14,400. This projection will also need to be made for May and June. Priya predicts that we will remain on target with our budget this fiscal year.
 - **Board of Trustees bylaws review.** Trustees Chair Clare O'Connor has suggested some changes to the bylaws that will allow the appointment of a treasurer and finance subcommittee. She notes that many Boards of Library Trustees have a treasurer and finance subcommittee that make quarterly reports to the Board, and that as the finances of our library have become more complicated in the last several years, that it might be in our interest to do the same to assist Priya in managing the finances. Clare also notes that she changed the wording of the bylaws so that it states very specifically that they should be reviewed every five years. A motion to approve the amended trustee bylaws was made by Dean Gillam, seconded by Jeff Billingham, and unanimously approved. A tangential conversation was initiated by Nancy Gilbert about transferring money from the state aid account to the Library Foundation, perhaps \$200K of the \$350K that is currently in the state aid account. Nancy notes that this would be helpful as the Foundation is currently working towards raising \$500K over the next several years, that this would allow the money to grow through investment, and that the money of course will still be available to the library. After some discussion the Trustees decided that we will hold off on transferring any money at this time of economic uncertainty, but that we will revisit this issue again in the future.
 - **Elections postponed (will affect those whose terms expire in May).** The town election has been postponed and will be rescheduled.

5. **Programs and Services: Director's report of virtual services offered since library closing on March 15th.** Library Director Priya Rathnam explained that following the governor's declaration of a state of emergency, a decision was made to close the library to the public on March 16th. On March 25th it was decided that all staff would work remotely. Library staff decided to focus their attention to promoting online services, e.g. story-times via social media, digital media, virtual homework help for teens, genealogy databases, digital language learning resources, downloadable materials, streaming of music and movies, computer training courses, virtual book club meetings, a virtual walk through the woods with an accompanying talk about trees, etc.. Priya shared some usage statistics from April 2020. As compared to April 2019, the use of Overdrive is up 70% (Overdrive is the platform that the library uses to lend e-books); and that the use of Hoopla is up 400% (Hoopla is the platform that the library uses for patrons to stream movies, and to download e-books and audio books). Priya says that she will share more statistics on the use of digital resources at the next trustees meeting.
6. Facility, Equipment and Grounds
 - **Thanks to Public Buildings and custodial staff.** Priya thanked Public Facilities for cleaning, sanitizing and maintaining the library building while it has been closed to the public. She also extends a special thanks to library custodian Kristy Baldino. Priya notes that the sound-proofing of the quiet room might go ahead while the library building is closed to the public.
7. **Gifts and Grants.** The second installment of state aid was received from the MBLC: \$ 27, 539.10.
8. Personnel
 - **New Assistant Director Mike Zeller.** Two rounds of interviews were held in March. Priya notes with great pleasure that Mike Zeller, who has worked at the library for over six years as electronic resources librarian, will be the new Assistant Director. Mike spoke for a few minutes, expressing his thanks for this new opportunity and stating that he is very excited to move forward in this new role.
 - **Hiring of Electronic Resources Librarian.** Priya Rathnam has posted the position. She anticipates that the first round of interviews will be conducted the first week of May. Mike Zeller will be on the interview committee with her.
9. Shrewsbury Public Library Foundation
 - **Update on appeal sent by the Foundation for National Library Week.** The Foundation held a virtual meeting on April 13. The Foundation has received a few donations in response to the appeal that they recently sent out. Our outgoing Library Director, Ellen Dolan, wants all donations that are offered in her honor to go to the Foundation.
10. Friends of the Library
 - **Update on Friends' activities.** The Friends Board met virtually on April 14. They approved money for some virtual programs.
 - **Book sale postponed.** Due to the covid-19 pandemic and the state of emergency in Massachusetts, the book sale was postponed. The Friends are thinking that August or September might be possible for the rescheduled book sale.
11. Policies to approve
 - **Library of Things Lending Policy.** Two small changes were made to the policy to strengthen the message to the public that borrowers must be responsible so that items are kept in good condition; borrowers should inspect the item for damage before returning it to the library. A motion to approve was made by Nancy Gilbert, seconded by Dean Gillam, and unanimously approved.
 - **Pandemic Policy.** The pandemic policy was updated to note that the Town of Shrewsbury and the Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance are the appropriate entities to offer guidelines and make recommendations in times of pandemic. The policy was broadened so that it covers not only

influenza, but any pandemic disease. A motion to approve was made by Dean Gillam, seconded by Joan Barry, and unanimously approved.

- **Library Program Policy.** The policy was updated to specifically note that the library is interested in receiving program ideas from patrons, and that those ideas can be communicated to the director, the staff or the trustees. A new section on virtual programs was added. It is noted that virtual programs will be offered when the physical building is closed. A motion to approve was made by Jeff Billingham, seconded by Dean Gillam, and unanimously approved.

12. Miscellaneous. Library Director Priya Rathnam notes that the stay-at-home order has been extended until May 18th. She notes that as cases of covid-19 decline and as restrictions are lifted, the library will probably open in stages. For a period of time only staff will be allowed in the library; that might be followed by a period where the library will offer limited curbside pickup. At this time the schedule for reopening the library is very uncertain. Priya notes that she has a large network of library professionals to confer with on these issues, primarily through the MLS and MBLC. Priya also notes that her biggest concern at this time is not being able to serve a large portion of the community who do not have access to adequate technology to access the library's digital resources and virtual programs, e.g. recent immigrants. She says that she looks forward to welcoming the community back to the library when it is safe.

13. Next meeting: May 26th, 2020. A motion to adjourn was made by Nancy Gilbert, seconded by Lisa Powers, and unanimously approved.

Submitted by Library Trustee and Secretary, Lisa Powers