

**Newburyport Public
Library Board of Directors
Virtual Meeting Minutes
March 16, 2022**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:15 pm by Ms. Valeriani. Roll call was taken.

Present: Kathy Carey, James Connolly, Marcia Edson, Gary Gorski, Christian Hansen, Sarah Holden, Steve Moore, Susan Shefte, Sarah Spalding and Elizabeth Valeriani.

Giselle Stevens, Head Librarian and Sara Kelso, Assistant Head Librarian and Acting Recording Secretary.

Absent: Sarah Holden, Mayor Sean Reardon and Councilor Heather Shand.

Public Comments: There were no additional participants in the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the January 19, 2022 and the February 16, 2022 virtual meetings were unanimously approved.

Next Meeting

The next board meeting will take place virtually on April 20, 2022. A decision will be made about the format of virtual or in-person meetings at the April meeting.

Ms. Stevens noted that the Mayor and the City Council President are voting members of the Board, and a quorum is met with seven members present.

Head Librarian Report

Library Story

Ms. Stevens recently received positive feedback from a patron who attended a history program about Zora Neale Hurston.

The Movie Matinee screening held on March 16, 2022 had 51 people in attendance.

Budget

The Library municipal capital improvement plan (CIP) and the draft Library municipal budget and narrative were submitted to Mayor Reardon. The Capital Improvement Plan includes FY23 repairs to the front steps, retaining wall facing State Street, and the drainage system affecting these building components. The CIP also includes a consultation for boiler replacement in FY24. The FY23 Municipal Appropriations

Requirement (MAR) set by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) is \$1,466,663.69 and the budget submitted is \$1,467,406.35 which is a 1.1% increase from FY22. Ms. Stevens met with the Mayor and the City's Finance Director to discuss the proposed FY23 budget. Ms. Stevens shared details regarding the budget process as it pertains to materials, personnel, and other municipal line items.

Trust Fund requests in the amount of \$9,130 were submitted to the City Trust Fund Commission; the requests were reviewed and approved at the March meeting. These funds are requested and used annually to supplement the Library's materials budget in order to meet the MBLC-mandated minimum materials expenditure. These monies can be applied in the current fiscal year but can roll over toward FY23 expenses.

Building and Grounds

The City was not awarded the Green Communities grants submitted for library lighting replacement and for HVAC variable frequency drive (VFD) replacement. The City will review and re-write the grants for the next round of proposals.

Painting and repair to several areas in the building are ongoing, including in the Archival Center lobby, the first-floor lobby, and the columns in the second- and third-floor stacks. The ceiling in the Children's Activity Room has been repainted, and the ceiling in the second-floor Teen Loft is currently being repaired and painted.

Personnel

The Library Technician position has been filled by Lee Lacey. Ms. Lacey was a volunteer at the Newburyport Public Library and has most recently been working at the Amesbury Public Library. She will be working at the Circulation and Children's Room Service Desks.

Policy

The Board reviewed final updates to the Internet and Computer Use Policy. Mr. Moore requested a minor grammatical revision to the policy in the payment section. Ms. Valeriani requested a minor grammatical revision to the policy in the section regarding daily time limits for Library computer use. A vote was taken to accept the policy as revised. The revised policy was unanimously adopted.

Initial updates of the Volunteer Policy were presented for review. The Volunteer Policy was last updated in 2014. Ms. Stevens will revisit the policy and present a draft to the NPL Board for review at the April 20, 2022 meeting.

Staff Training

An all-staff professional development meeting will be scheduled Wednesday, March 30, 2022. The Library will be closed from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. The staff will review updated procedures and attend a workshop presented by the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) on the American Disabilities Act and disability etiquette. Ms. Stevens and the Board briefly discussed the role of service animals in the library.

Staff will resume visiting other libraries as a professional development activity starting this month. Two staff will visit the Sawyer Free Library in Gloucester in March or early April.

Friends of the Library

The Friends of the Library Kids Book Sale on February 26, 2022 had many happy young readers and shoppers, and \$314 was raised.

The Friends of the Library March Great Old Book Sale will be held March 23, 2022 through March 26, 2022. Donations will be accepted March 19, 21 and 22. Only books and audio books will be collected for the sale.

The second-floor microfilm reader equipment and software has been upgraded thanks to funding from the Friends.

The Friends have formed a landscaping committee to refresh landscaping on library grounds. This group will meet again in April to continue discussing the project.

Old Business

Archival Center CPA Grant HVAC Project

The CPA grant-funded project to replace the Archival Center HVAC units continues to be delayed because of an issue with the delivery of the exterior units. The vendor hopes to complete installation and testing of the equipment in March.

Other Old Business

None.

New Business

Calendar

The Library is continuing some virtual programming and has added more in-person programs for adults and children. Virtual programming has offered an opportunity to collaborate with other area libraries with large-scale programs. In-person programs include Open Play twice a week, which is averaging over 20 attendees per session. In-person story hours will resume later this month.

The Next Chapter book group attempted a hybrid meeting in March and will try again in April with other equipment. The adult fiction book group will be offered in both virtual and in-person.

February Statistics

Attendance continues to increase, averaging 30 patrons per hour, or one visitor

every two minutes. Additional in-person programming is expected to further contribute to higher attendance. Ms. Edson inquired about social distancing and capacity limits. Ms. Stevens cited the lifted City mask mandate, resident vaccination rate, and positivity rate for COVID-19 as indicators for ongoing guidance. Some in-person programs will have registration limits to enforce capacity.

February is the shortest month and with two snow days, the Library was open 21 days and 228 hours. The monthly statistics reflect this. Museum pass usage is increasing, program attendance is growing, and computer use has also increased.

Other New Business

No other new business was discussed.

Head Librarian Search

Mr. Hansen gave an update on the Head Librarian search. The Search Committee has met three times, and conducted a library appraisal to identify challenges and goals for the future; the committee also identified desired qualities for a new Head Librarian. The participants are committed to a thorough process and will meet again next week to complete interview questions. The Head Librarian position will be posted by the City Human Resources department this week.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 pm.