

Newburyport Public Library
Board of Directors
December 20, 2023
IN-PERSON MEETING

MINUTES

Call to Order at 5:17 pm.

I. Roll call

- a. James Connolly, Marcia Edson, Gary Gorski, Christian Hansen, Sarah Holden, Steve Moore, Mayor Sean Reardon, Councilor Heather Shand Sarah Spalding, and Madeleine Whitten
- b. Absent: Kathy Carey and Elizabeth Valeriani
- c. Public Comment: none.
- d. Minutes:
 - i. The September minutes were approved. Sarah Holden motioned; Sarah Spalding seconded.
 - ii. Gary Gorski's commentary was submitted and Kevin Bourque advocated for expanding the notes from November and resubmitting them at the January meeting.
- e. Next Meeting Date: January 17, 2024.

II. Head Librarian Report

a. Budget

- i. FY 24 Operational Budget: 55% expended as of December 12, 2023 warrant.
- ii. Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grant funds: an account number has been allocated and invoices are being paid from LSTA grant funds.
- iii. Commentary
 - 1. Steve Moore asked for clarification on sensory boards, which are part of the LSTA grant purchases. Staff member Allison Privitera provided an answer.

b. Statistics

- i. Attendance: November: 9,856, FY24 55,274.
- ii. Circulation: November: 22,684, FY24: 118327. This makes the Newburyport Public Library the 5th overall in MVLC in circulation.
- iii. Discussion of Statistical Report.
 - 1. Boxford Town Library example. K. Bourque solicited feedback for future board reports.
- iv. Commentary
 - 1. S. Holden and S. Moore expressed interest in the yearly trends.
 - 2. Christian Hansen requested information on programming attendance and reference questions. He asked for clarification on the importance of tracking the circulation of items. K. Bourque gave examples that showed the use of this information in relation to staff time.
 - 3. Marcia Edison shared her interest in focusing the stats on Newburyport needs and referred to previous board handouts. Jim Connolly shared an example of previous stat collections.

4. M. Edson asked for interlibrary loan stats to be collected.
5. Jim Connolly requested data on meeting room use and questions asked.
6. S. Holden asked to go back until 2018 for bigger picture numbers.
- v. Building and Grounds
 1. Coordinated with the Department of Public Services to get an accurate accounting of open versus completed work orders.
 2. K. Bourque met with Mike Bartlett on November 29, 2023 and discussed the capital plan issues, the Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning system (HVAC), historic iron fence, lobby flooring, and front stairs.
 3. CIP priorities
 - a. HVAC – boiler replacement
 - b. Front Steps & granite retaining wall repair
 - c. Commentary
 - i. S. Moore had been the liaison to the Friends for the fencing project and asked about the status of the project. K. Bourque responded that he is going to check with the president of the Friends of the Newburyport Public Library.
 4. Work orders are now begin recorded in a spreadsheet created by the previous Head Librarian, Sara Kelso.
- c. Personnel
 - i. One-hour meetings have been conducted with each member of the library staff.
 - ii. These check-in meetings were an opportunity to for the library staff and the Head Librarian to get to know each other.
 - iii. As part of the Check-in, each staff member was asked the same questions.
 - iv. The answers will be compiled for review by the Administration Team.
 - v. Commentary
 1. M. Edison asked about trends in staff responses. K. Bourque responded that everyone said their favorite thing about the library was the staff. There is a strong sense of community amongst the staff, who are invested in supporting each other.
 2. Mayor Sean Reardon asked Donna Drelick to speak about legalities of discussion internal human resources. She shared that, for legal purposes, it is not possible to discuss personnel situations with the public. This includes executive session.
- d. Volunteer Program Development
 - i. Work is underway on the development of the new Library Volunteer program.
 - ii. The components that will make up the Volunteer Program currently include: Volunteer Policy, Volunteer Position Descriptions, and Procedures for Recruitment, Training, and Termination of Service.
 - iii. Subjects of focus: teens, adults, and library school interns are currently being considered as the major subjects of focus.
 - iv. Feedback
 1. Feedback was gathered through an online survey to volunteers and email survey of library staff.

2. The information gathered will help create a better picture of the volunteer experience including, tasks performed, special project assistance, and potential new volunteer positions.
- v. Commentary
 1. S. Holden commented that there might not be a lot of volunteer work available in the Archival Center. K. Bourque responded in the affirmative with clarification.
 2. S. Holden and C. Hansen discussed the creation of a history club.
 3. The Mayor mentioned that there were liability issues that should be avoided.
 4. J. Connolly asked for training to be encouraged and supported. K. Bourque shared that Dana Echelberger, who has been trained in Archives, has been training staff so they can learn the collection.
 5. S. Holden asked about staff rotation in the area and asked if there would be a permanent staff member in that space. K. responded that the focus is currently on first-hand staff experience and training, which is being supported by D. Echelberger.
 6. G. Gorski asked about the patron feedback and attendance in the Archival Center. Attendance is tracked and has been consistent.
 7. S. Moore asked about the designated staff member managing the collection. K. Bourque shared that D. Echelberger is working with Sally Rubinstein and Sia Parsa to cataloging items to add to the collection. D. Echelberger is managing the materials according to the scope and mission of the collection. G. Gorski added that cataloging materials would help protect the collection as well.
 8. S. Spalding asked how long the Archival Center had existed before an archivist.
- e. Outreach & Community Partnerships
 - i. On January 23, 2024 the Library will serve as a polling place.
 1. The mayor provided a summary of the major points in the upcoming Whittier vote.
 - ii. The Library continues to provide drop in hours with our city social worker, Trish Boateng.
 - iii. K. Bourque met with James Russell and Jack Santos of the Customs House and Maritime Museum regarding library's ongoing relationship and continued collaboration.
 - iv. K. Bourque had a meeting with heads of Council on Aging (COA) and the Newburyport Recreation & Youth Services (NRYS) to discuss building upon existing and potential new collaboration opportunities.
- f. Programming
 - i. 44 programs offered to library patrons from November 16 through December 19
 1. 17 Adult (6-in person, 11 virtual)
 2. 27 Kids and teens
- g. Calendar
 - i. November Library Closures
 1. Veterans Day, Saturday, November 11th
 2. Thanksgiving, Wednesday November 22nd at 1 pm through Friday, November 24th. (On Wednesday, November 22, the Mayor announced an early closure of City offices and buildings in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday))

- ii. Upcoming Library Closures:
 - 1. Christmas, Monday, December 25
 - 2. Holiday for City Employees, Tuesday, December 26
 - 3. New Year's Day, Monday, January 1, 2024
 - h. Strategic Planning
 - i. Strategic Planning consultants under review
 - 1. Greg Pronevitz, Greg Pronevits Library Consulting
 - 2. Barbara Alvarez, Sage Consulting
 - ii. NPL worked with Barbara Alvarez on the past two strategic plans.
 - iii. Both consultants have submitted proposals including costs as of Friday, December 15, 2023.
 - iv. Current strategic planning goals:
 - 1. Begin the planning process in the middle of January.
 - 2. Have a plan for the board for the September meeting.
 - 3. Each section will be shared with the board as they are completed to prepare for this final review.
 - v. The four-year plan will begin in FY25 and ending in FY29, which is also the 175th anniversary of the library.
- III. Adjournment at 6:49 pm: S. Holden motioned; S. Spalding seconded.