

**Newburyport Public Library  
Board of Directors  
Minutes of Virtual Meeting  
February 17, 2021**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:16 pm by Ms. Valeriani. Roll call was taken.

**Present:** Kathy Carey, James Connolly, Marcia Edson, Councilor Jared Eigerman, 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:** Mayor Holaday.

**Public Comments:** None.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the January 20, 2020 virtual meeting were unanimously approved.

**Next Meeting**

The next board meeting will take place March 17, 2021. Virtual meetings will continue until further notice.

**Head Librarian Report**

**Library Story**

Bookmarks with quotes about libraries were given out with items at the patio the week of Valentine's Day.

**Budget**

Ms. Stevens is working on the FY22 municipal budget. Capital requests will include replacement of the main alarm panel and future smoke detector replacement. The budget narrative and budget request are due to the Finance Department on February 26, 2021, and will meet the Municipal Appropriations Requirement and the minimum Materials Expenditure Requirement set by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC).

The MBLC awarded the Library certification and State Aid for FY21. The initial State Aid payment is \$14,955.68. A second payment will be made in the spring.

The Newburyport Cultural Council approved a \$550 grant for adult programming on National Parks.

A \$10,890 NAID grant has been received by the Friends of the Library, and microfilm of the Daily News 1980-1985 has been shipped for digitization this spring.

### **Building and Grounds**

Wall repair and painting in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor stacks area and landing area continues. Painting in these areas is expected to be completed by the end of February 2021. Additional areas on the third floor will be painted in March 2021.

Work orders have been submitted to replace and add lighting in the Teen area, with additional work planned to freshen with paint, and reconfigure spaces for browsing, reading, studying, and computer use.

Snow is creating a challenge for the patio pickup service, particularly when melting causes snow to fall from the roof onto the patio area.

A \$68,700 grant-funded lighting project should begin soon. This project will replace the small round recessed fixtures with LED fixtures throughout the building. A similar project replaced the large round can fixtures two years ago.

Repairs have been made to the HVAC controls system. A recommendation has been made for installation of a new NAE (Network Automated Engine) and updated software.

A request for proposals for the Community Preservation Act (CPA) grant-funded project to replace the HVAC units in Archival Center is in final stages. Project should be completed during late spring or early summer. Mr. Moore inquired about the status of the preservation restriction associated with this project. Ms. Stevens shared ongoing research at the City Planner and Solicitor's Offices and final steps involved with this part of the project, along with an estimated timeline for completion. The preservation restriction will not impact replacement of equipment outlined in the grant.

### **Personnel**

The Staff Librarian position in the Reference Department and the Archival Center has been filled. The new staff person will begin on March 1, 2021.

### **Policy**

There were no policies for review this month.

### **Staff Training**

Ms. Kelso is working on developing online training modules for staff.

### **Friends of the Newburyport Public Library**

The Friends are updating their website to make online donations and membership renewals easier.

The Friends are exploring holding more small outdoor pop-up book sales this summer.

The Friends will also be involved in helping the Library celebrate the 20th anniversary of the 2001 building expansion. Commemorative events will be held in late spring and/or early fall, with current public health needs in mind.

### **Old Business**

#### **Josiah Little Portrait**

The donated portrait of Josiah Little will be hung in the Reading Room over the window seat.

#### **New Website Project**

The new website project is currently in the design phase. The site map, navigation and features have been approved.

#### **Library Phased Reopening Plan**

In-building services resumed on February 8, 2021. The Library is offering walk-in browsing, Archival Center appointments, and appointments for computer use, printing, and fax and copier services. Almost 200 individuals were served in the Library during the first week, and 515 people visited the patio. Tax forms are available at the patio and patrons can make a computer appointment to print other tax forms if necessary. Patio pickup of requested items, take and make crafts, and virtual programs continue.

#### **Municipal Conflict of Interest Law**

Most Board members have completed the Municipal Conflict of Interest Law training. Ms. Stevens will send the paperwork to the City Clerk's Office by the end of the month.

#### **Board Bios**

Ms. Stevens will share a Library Board member biography draft template for approval and review at the March 17, 2021 meeting. The Library Archival Center will retain this information as part of its internal records of board membership.

### **New Business**

#### **Calendar**

The Library was closed on February 2, 2021 due to inclement weather. The Library was also closed on February 15, 2021 for Presidents' Day. The Library continues to offer a variety of virtual programs in February including book groups, yoga on Sundays, a Robert Reich author event, estate planning information, a national parks presentation, and a Sojourner Truth program.

### **January Statistics**

The Library was closed for all indoor services during the month of January 2021, impacting circulation and other statistics. Overdrive circulation continues to grow monthly, with a 13% increase in January 2021. DVD, audiobook, and periodicals circulation has decreased significantly, primarily due to fewer there being indoor browsers. Craft pickups decreased in January 2021 due to lower building traffic and inclement weather. Website visits increased during January 2021.

### **Tracy Statue**

Local artist Mr. Jeffrey Briggs spoke with Ms. Stevens about a proposal to place a statue of Mr. Tracy at the Library. Ms. Stevens shared this proposal with Board members and explained limitations of fundraising and placement on building grounds. Ms. Valeriani expressed concern about building access and preservation restrictions that would affect such a project. Additional discussion among board members ensued regarding the proposal. While a historic statue of a local figure would be a nice attraction, fundraising and ongoing maintenance costs among the library and City commissions is not feasible. Mr. Briggs has created smaller statuettes of several notable Newburyport historic figures. Board members suggested a distribution of these throughout the City at various locations of importance, or in a specialized exhibit at a later date.

### **Tax Statements**

Ms. Stevens shared information with perpetuating board members regarding tax statements for the Library Building Fund account.

### **Other Business**

None.

### **Adjournment**

Ms. Valeriani introduced a motion to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 pm.