

Newburyport Public Library
Board of Directors
Virtual Meeting Minutes
June 16, 2021

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:20 pm by Mr. Moore. Roll call was taken.

Present: Kathy Carey, Marcia Edson, Councilor Jared Eigerman, Gary Gorski, Sarah Holden, Steve Moore, Susan Shefte, and Sarah Spalding.

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

Absent: Mayor Holaday, James Connolly, Christian Hansen, and Elizabeth Valeriani.

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

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the May 19, 2021 virtual meeting were unanimously approved.

Next Meeting

The next board meeting will take place September 15, 2021 at the Library in a socially distanced-appropriate space with optional mask use for attendees. No meetings are scheduled for July 2021 or August 2021.

Head Librarian Report

Budget

City Council will vote on the proposed FY22 library municipal budget on June 22, 2021.

Building and Grounds

A new door counter has been installed. Building attendance statistics are required by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC).

Three windows in the Program Room were broken on Sunday, June 13, 2021. This incident was reported to Newburyport City Police. Police reported a number of recent acts of vandalism throughout the City, including broken store and vehicle windows. Ms. Stevens is considering addition of exterior building cameras to monitor problem areas.

The air conditioning is on after correcting some issues with the new HVAC control software.

Personnel

Interviews are underway for the full-time Library Technician opening. The anticipated start date for this position will be in early July.

A Senior Librarian position in Borrower Services and a part-time Library Technician position will be posted during July 2021. Both positions were created by staff retirements.

Policy

The Meeting Room policy needs to be reviewed in consideration of possible changes. The Children's Activity Room has been used for evening and weekend meetings in the past, but the Library is considering eliminating this space as a meeting room option. The Lyceum classes through Newburyport Adult Education have used Library meetings rooms in the past. These classes are tuition-based and the Meeting Room policy states that all meetings must be free and open to the public.

Staff Training

City department heads, including Ms. Stevens, will attend a three-part training series on Racial Equity for Municipal Leaders during June and July 2021.

Friends of the Library

The Friends held a small outdoor pop-up book sale under the tent at the Council on Aging Community Center on Saturday, June 12, 2021, raising \$1,557.00.

The Friends approved the FY22 pledged budget of \$26,000 and a capital budget of \$12,000 for the Library at their May board meeting.

The Friends are holding a membership drive during June and July 2021.

Old Business

Library Phased Reopening Plan

The Library closed the patio pickup service on May 29, 2021. All requested items to be picked up are now at the main desk. All areas of the Library are open and most furniture and equipment has been returned for public use. Newspapers are available and all school summer reading books are available. The Archival Center is still open by appointment, and public computers in the Teen Loft and Children's Room are not yet available. The Program Room is not available for public use. The Library is currently

determining program and Friends of the Library meeting dates for the space. Library hours are currently 9:00 am to 8:00 pm Monday through Thursday and 9:00 am to 5:00 pm on Fridays and Saturdays. As of July 6, 2021, the Library will return to 9:00 am to 9:00 pm hours Monday through Thursday. Ms. Shefte inquired about potential Sunday hours. Ms. Stevens indicated that the FY22 budget does not include funding for Sunday hours.

Foot traffic is increasing, with 200 visitors daily on Friday, June 11, 2021 and Saturday, June 12, 2021. Over 300 visitors used the library each day from Monday, June 14, 2021 through Wednesday, June 16, 2021.

Masks are now optional for staff and visitors, effective as of June 11, 2021. Ms. Holden inquired about the percentage of visitors still wearing masks after lifting this restriction. Ms. Stevens estimates that 90% of families and children are wearing masks, with roughly 33% of all other visitors choosing to wear masks in the building.

Archival Center CPA Grant HVAC Project

The CPA grant funded project to replace the Archival Center HVAC units received one bid for \$137,670 which is currently under review. The grant will fund \$127,575 and the remaining \$10,095 will be funded by the City and the Library State Aid account.

Other Old Business

Ms. Stevens is still gathering initial appointment dates for Board members.

New Business

Calendar

The Library will be closed Friday, June 18, 2021 for the new state holiday, Juneteenth. The Library will be open Saturday, June 19, 2021.

The Library will be closed Saturday, July 3, 2021 and Monday, July 5, 2021 for the Independence Day holiday weekend.

Book groups and other scheduled adult programs are virtual for the summer. Outdoor yoga is being offered in person at Bartlett Mall. Some in-person programs are currently being scheduled for later in the summer.

May Statistics

Patio attendance dropped last month with increased indoor attendance. The Library continues to issue new cards. Print circulation has been steady. Craft pickups showed a large increase because of added teen crafts.

The Library served 23,857 patrons on the patio from June 2020 to June 2021 (12 months, averaging almost 2,000 patrons a month), and 9,255 patrons inside the building from August 2020 to June 2021 (9 months, with in-building access closed temporarily during January, accounting for an average of 1,030 patrons per month).

Other New Business

The Custom House Museum is in the planning stages of a scavenger hunt fundraiser. The Library will participate as a location for a clue with approval from NPL board members present at the June 16, 2021 meeting.

Adjournment

Mr. Moore introduced a motion to adjourn at 6:10 pm. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 6:11 pm.