

**Newburyport Public
Library Board of
Directors
Meeting Minutes
May 17, 2023**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:16 p.m. by Elizabeth Valeriani. Roll call was taken.

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

Sara Kelso, Head Librarian and Jessica Atherton, Assistant Head Librarian and Acting Recording Secretary.

Absent: Mayor Sean Reardon.

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

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the April 19, 2023 meeting were approved with minor amendments. A motion to approve the minutes was introduced by Sarah Spaulding, seconded by Sarah Holden.

Next Meeting:

Next meeting: June 21, 2023.

The June meeting will take place in the Director's Room on the first floor.

Head Librarian Report

Budget

FY23 expenditures are wrapping up. Some money may be transferred from the personnel services line to purchase of services as there is a surplus in the personnel budget and a need for additional funding to cover building maintenance and repair expenses in the purchase of services category due to ongoing HVAC servicing and a number of other minor building maintenance needs.

The initial FY24 city budget, which includes the Library operating budget, has been submitted to City Council for review by the Mayor. The first Library budget hearing with City Council will take place on May 23. The final budget approval hearing and vote is scheduled for June 20. No significant changes are expected at this time.

Building and Grounds

Seasonal HVAC temperature changeovers were completed May 10.

Seasonal irrigation systems were turned on May 11.

Personnel

A part-time (20 hour per week) Library Technician has been hired, and officially began training on Monday, May 15.

Policy

A revised draft of the Video, Photography, and Audio Recording Policy was presented for discussion and review. A motion to approve the policy was introduced by Sue Shefte, seconded by James Connolly. The policy was adopted by voice vote.

A revised draft of the Volunteer Policy was presented for discussion and review. Present board members requested additional time to review at a future meeting.

Staff Training

Head of Adult Services Dana Echelberger completed the New England Library Leadership Symposium II regional program on April 27.

Two Adult Services Librarians attended a tour of the Museum of Old Newbury on April 24 to learn more about local history as part of their ongoing training in local history topics to better serve the needs of the Archival Center.

Library Technician Anna McGrath represented the Massachusetts Library Association ParaLibrarian Section at its annual conference May 9.

Friends of the Library

The Friends helped fund the purchase of new furniture and area rugs for the Archival Center ahead of its reopening. Five permanent wooden tables for the Archival Center are expected to arrive the week of May 22.

A new custom cherry book case purchased by the Friends of the Library has arrived and now displays new items and other featured materials in the first-floor lobby area.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Outreach and Community Partnerships

Sharon Spieldenner filmed an interview for Governor's Academy documentary film students on April 26. This interview focused on the history of the Tracy Mansion, and was utilized for educational purposes.

On May 4, Marcia Edson and Elizabeth Valeriani represented the Library at City Hall for a community boards, committees, and volunteer fair, where they shared information about the library and the board, and fielded a number of inquiries and interested parties for future board participation and volunteer opportunities.

The Library also completed a successful partnership with Newburyport Youth Services with facilitated community discussions of a Community Read on the topic of parenting on May 8 and May 10. The book discussed was "*Long Days, Short Years: A Cultural History of Modern Parenting*," by Andrew Bomback.

The Library expanded its Home Delivery service to an additional six recipients in May, doubling the number of patrons who will be able to receive home delivery items on a temporary or permanent basis.

Programming

The Library successfully hosted a full day of poetry readings by the Powow Poets on April 29 for the annual Newburyport Literary Festival. This was a hybrid in-person and Zoom event, which attracted a total of approximately 100 attendees.

Movie screenings for families and adults attracted 87 people in April.

Children's story times had 179 total attendees, and a puppet show event attracted 68 patrons in April. Steve Furlong asked if Summer Reading was for adults. Ms. Kelso indicated that there were options for all ages.

Calendar

The Library was closed on Monday, April 17, in recognition of Patriots' Day.

The Library will be closed on Saturday, May 27 and Monday, May 29, in recognition of Memorial Day.

April 2023 Statistics

The Library was open fewer days and hours in April than in March. Attendance dropped in April compared with March because the Friends of the Newburyport Public Library spring book sale takes place in March. Visits to the Archival Center are up 24% since the reopening of the space at the end of March. Print, DVD, and audio materials circulation are all down in April. Overall circulation decreased 11% in April compared to March. Museum pass usage is up 40% compared to March. Volunteer hours increased in April. Program attendance also increased slightly. Comparing April 2022 to April 2023, total attendance is up 19%, and total circulation increased 12%. Meeting room usage increased 49% comparing April 2022 to April 2023.

Other New Business

Staff skills, assignments, and training, followed by a discussion about the roles of volunteers took place.

Head Librarian Sara Kelso will voluntarily depart her role with the Library effective June 7, with a last onsite work day May 26.

Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at 6:06 p.m.