

Lincoln Public Library Trustees Meeting  
May 26, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.  
All votes taken by roll call

Present: Jacquelin Apsler, Chair; Ron Chester; Lucy Maulsby; Kathleen Nichols; Dennis Picker; Peter Sugar; Barbara Myles, Director; Lisa Rothenberg, Assistant Director

1. Welcome: Paul Blanchfield, Finance Committee's Liaison to the Library  
Jacquelin welcomed Paul to the meeting and we introduced ourselves to Paul.

2. Librarian's Report

a. Kudos

Barbara gave kudos to the staff for their work during the pandemic. The library was closed, and we could not offer any onsite services. Staff have done a great job promoting existing online services and adding new services. An example of a new service is the book match web page where people can ask our librarians to select a book for them based on their interests.

b. Staffing updates

Laura Paryl resigned her position as a part time Reference Librarian. There was concern about whether the position should be filled. If we do not fill the position, the Town saves money but we are not able to provide essential services. Barbara explained that she had already filled the position because she believes we need to provide these services. The library is not open because of the Covid-19 pandemic so patrons will not be able to browse the shelves. They will need our reference librarians to help them select materials.

c. Draft for Reopening the Library

The staff collaborated on a plan for reopening the library. We have Zoom meetings and put the draft reopening plan in a Google doc so everyone could make suggestions. Staff were very engaged with this process. The early phases were easier to develop than the later phases. We do not know when patrons will be allowed back into the library. The schedule set by Tim Higgins, Town Administrator, is: department heads will return on June 1, all staff will return on June 8, and curbside pickup service will begin on June 15.

Jacquelin updated us about the Town's Reopening Planning Group that met today. During this meeting she heard that remote work by Town staff has been praised by Lincoln residents; Zoom meetings with departments have kept them in synch. There is concern about how staff with school age children will be able to return to work with day care centers closed until July and schools closed for the rest of the academic year. Some staff are at high risk of severe illness if they get Covid-19 and there is no vaccine. There was discussion about who will enforce rules and how do we help our businesses to be successful. Tim is developing a work from home policy. Some library staff's jobs don't allow working from home. For example, shelvers cannot shelve books from home and circulation assistants cannot do their work from home.

Jacquelin will bring this to the Reopening Planning Group for discussion.

We agreed not to move from curbside pickup to the next phase until the Trustees discuss it.

d. Articles/Notifications about Library Activities during Shutdown and Plan for Reopening

Lisa Rothenberg, Debbie Leopold, and Kate Tranquada have written many Constant Contact emails to our mailing list updating people about our services and upcoming events. They have done a great job and our patrons can see that we are adapting to our new circumstances.

Jacquelin told us that Lucy suggested she could write an article about what we have done during the shutdown and our future plans. Her article would include big level thinking, not promises. We agreed this is a great idea.

e. Budgeting process

Paul gave us an update of the FY2020 budget. Town Meeting was rescheduled from March 29 to June 13 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Most of the articles will be in the consent calendar. No formal presentations will be made but residents may ask questions. The expected decrease in revenue for FY2021 is \$500,000 from state aid. The Finance Committee thinks FY2021 will be OK. Paul invited us to work with him in the fall on our operating budget.

3. Update Capital Items for FY2020 & FY2021

a. Facility Review

The spreadsheet of repair items identified by Simpson Gumpertz and Heger's 2004 facility review was sent to the Capital Planning Committee.

b. A/C Replacement

This project is almost finished. Remaining items are (1) training on the new controls, (2) a sign off from Northeast Engineering & Commissioning stating that the project finished successfully, and (3) make the last payment.

c. Parapet Repairs

We are waiting for our request for \$35,000 for our parapet repair design phase project to be approved at Town Meeting.

4. Reports

a. Friends of the Lincoln Library

Dennis reported that the Friends agreed to buy the banner with the uplifting quote, "Reading gives us someplace to go when we have to stay where we are," by Mason Cooley. They also agree to purchase a 10-foot by 10-foot yellow canopy for our new curbside pickup service. They offered to pay for more digital content. The monthly book sales have ended due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Book sale revenue is limited to online sales. Two book collection bins were installed in town (one at Tracey's gas station and the other near Donelan's). A company that does online book sales for the Friends will share revenue from selling books that were collected at the book

collection bins. Two new board members have replaced two board members who have resigned. Jaki will write a note to the Friends thanking them for all their support and especially for the sign that will be installed over the front entrance of the Preston Building facing the flowerpot.

b. Finance Report

The Town has asked us to stop non-essential spending. Unspent funds will go back to the Town at the end of June. We have stopped ordering physical books but we are ordering eBooks, eAudio and eVideos to fill holds.

5. Other Business

Lisa gave kudos to Barbara for working at the library a few days per week during the shutdown.

6. Executive Session

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m. to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter. The meeting will not reconvene in open session at the end of executive session. A roll call vote of the Trustees was taken to enter executive session.

**Vote:** Yes=6, No=0

Meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Myles

## **LIBRARIAN'S REPORT**

**April 7, 2020**

**TO: Trustees, Lincoln Public Library**

**FROM: Barbara Myles, Librarian**

### **Coronavirus Pandemic Causes Library Closure**

As described below, events happened quickly, and it is a very scary time. Nothing like this has happened in our lifetimes and we have no playbook for this situation.

- March 10 – Governor Baker issues Executive Order 591: Declaration of a State of Emergency.

As of March 10, 92 Covid-19 cases were reported by the Department of Public Health, with 6 of the 14 counties in the Commonwealth impacted.

- March 10 – Governor Baker issues an emergency order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law. Effective immediately “(1) A public body, as defined in section 18 of chapter 30A of the General Laws, is hereby relieved from the requirement of section 20 of chapter 30A that public bodies conduct their meetings in a public place that is open and physically accessible to the public, provided that the public body makes provision to ensure public access to the deliberations of the public body for interested members of the public through adequate, alternative means” and “(2) Public bodies are hereby authorized to allow remote participation by all members in any meeting of the public body. The requirement that a quorum of the body and the chair be physically present at a specified meeting location, as provided in G. L. c. 30A, § 20(d) and in 940 CMR 29.10(4)(b), is hereby suspended.”
- March 12 – Schools were closing across the state and Lincoln Public Schools were in the process of deciding when to close. They decided to close as of March 13 and reopen on Monday, March 30.

As of March 12, 108 Covid-19 cases were reported by the DPH, with 6 of the 14 counties in the Commonwealth impacted.

- March 13 – Towns were closing their buildings to the public, but no mandate was made by the Selectmen that the library would close at their 7:30 a.m. meeting. As chair of the Board of Library Trustees, Jacquelin Apsler made the decision to close the library effective March 14 through March 29. It was a scary time. Staff wore gloves as they worked at public service desks to protect themselves. Jacquie Weekley and Tory Black worked at the Circulation Desk, Kate Tranquada worked at the Reference Desk, and Sarah Feather worked at the Circulation Desk. Residents came into the library at a higher rate than usual to check out library materials for the two week closure. Staff told every person they assisted that the library was closing at the end of the day for approximately two weeks, due dates would be extended, and no fines would be charged while the library was closed as well as for a period of time after the library reopened.

Staff brainstormed about what needed to be done before a two week library closure. This was an unprecedented situation. Only eSources would be available. If someone's borrower card had expired, they could not access eSources. To help mediate this, Tory Black ran a script that identified all Lincoln patrons whose borrower cards had expired between January 1 and May 1, 2020 and reset each patron record their expiration dates to June 1, 2020. She also contacted Massachusetts Library System, Commonwealth Catalog, and Optima (the delivery company) to inform them of our closing and to stop fulfilling borrower requests and

stop deliveries. Kate Tranquada updated the website with messages about the library closing for two weeks, added a web page that allows patrons to ask questions of librarians while the library is closed, updated the library's telephone greeting, and made signs for the front door notifying people about the closure. All events during the two weeks were marked cancelled on the library's online calendar. Lisa Rothenberg contacted vendors to stop shipments on all orders. I went to the Post Office and stopped US mail. When I contacted FedEx and UPS about holding our mail, I learned that they do not hold mail as the Post Office does. After three attempts, the shipments are returned to their senders. We will need to figure out which deliveries we did not receive and reorder those materials when the library reopens.

As of March 13, 123 Covid-19 cases were reported by the DPH, with 6 of the 14 counties in the Commonwealth impacted.

- March 15 – Governor Baker issues an emergency order temporary closing all public and private elementary and secondary schools effective March 17 through April 5. He also banned gatherings of 25 or more people. The DPH recommended cancelling large events and practicing social distancing.

As of March 15, 164 cases of Covid-19 cases were reported by the DPH, with 10 of the 14 counties in the Commonwealth impacted.

- March 16 – Ginny Turpin and I met at the library to make the payroll. We were the only two people at the library. There were few cars on the roads and the parking spaces along Library Lane were nearly empty.

As of March 16, 197 Covid-19 cases were reported by the DPH, with 10 of the 14 counties in the Commonwealth impacted.

- March 16 – Town of Lincoln postpones its Town Meeting from March 28 to April 25 and its Town Elections from March 29 to April 27. (Massachusetts law limits extensions of these events to 30 days. Extensions may be further extended for additional 30 day periods.)
- March 17, 19, and 20 – I went to the library for a few hours on these days to work on the papers on my desk. I put a sign on the door instructing FedEx and UPS drivers to put packages in the vestibule but no deliveries were made.

As of March 17, 218 Covid-19 cases were reported by the DPH, with 10 of the 14 counties in the Commonwealth impacted.

As of March 19, 328 Covid-19 cases were reported by the DPH, with 12 of the 14 counties in the Commonwealth impacted.

As of March 20, 413 Covid-19 cases were reported by the DPH, with 12 of the 14 counties in the Commonwealth impacted.

- March 22 – I have first symptoms of a mild case of Covid-19.

As of March 22, the DPH had reported 646 cases of Covid-19, including 5 deaths, with 13 of the 14 counties in the Commonwealth impacted.

- March 23 – Jen Keefe went to the library to check in books that were returned to the library since our March 14 closure.

Governor Baker issues Covid-19 Order No. 13, that restricts “all unnecessary activities outside of the home during the state of emergency.” The order defines, “Covid-19 Essential Services,” which may continue operations. “All businesses and other organizations that do not provide Covid-19 Essential Services shall close their physical workplaces and facilities (“brick -and-mortar premises”) to workers, customers, and the public as of 12:00 noon on March 24, 2020 and shall not re-open to workers, customers, or the public before 12:00 noon on April 7, 2020.” Gatherings of more than 10 people were prohibited.

Covid-19 Order No. 13 also states, "This Order supersedes and makes inoperative any order or rule issued by a municipality that will in any way impede or interfere with the achievement of the objectives of this Order."

As of March 23, the DPH had reported 777 cases of Covid-19, including 9 deaths, with all of the counties in the Commonwealth impacted.

- March 24 – DPH issues "Stay at Home Advisory for Individuals over 70 and for those with underlying health conditions; and Safe Practices for the General Public."

As of March 24, the DPH had reported 1,159 cases of Covid-19, including 11 deaths.

- March 25 – Governor Baker issues an emergency order extending school closures until May 4.

As of March 25, the DPH had reported 1,838 cases of Covid-19, including 15 deaths.

- March 27 – I sent a message to my doctor through the patient gateway, reporting that I thought I had a mild case of Covid-19, listed my symptoms, and stated that I would not seek treatment unless my symptoms drastically worsened. Surprisingly, a nurse called me less than an hour after I sent this message. After hearing me describe my symptoms and asking follow up questions, she agreed that I probably had Covid-19. She called me later after speaking with my primary care doctor. They both agreed that I probably had Covid-19 and that I was doing OK at home. They did not ask me to get tested due to the shortage of test kits. It did not matter since there is no cure. There was nothing they could do for me.

As of March 27, the DPH had reported 3,240 cases of Covid-19, including 35 deaths.

- March 30 – Board of Selectmen discuss the warrant for Town Meeting if it is held before June 30. There was consensus that if Town Meeting is held before June 30, it would be an "expedited" version. The warrant would consist of only financial articles in one consent calendar. All other warrant articles will be postponed until the fall.

As of March 30, the DPH had reported 5,752 cases of Covid-19, including 56 deaths.

- March 31 – Governor Baker issues Covid-19 order no. 21, that extended the closing of certain workplaces and the prohibition on gatherings of more than 10 people from April 7 to May 4.

As of March 31, the DPH had reported 6,620 cases of Covid-19, including 89 deaths.

- April 3 – At Tim Higgins' Department Heads virtual meeting Town Nurse, Trish McGean, reported that Lincoln has 7 confirmed Covid-19 cases. Police Chief Kevin Kennedy and Acting Deputy Fire Chief Brian Young reported that they were able to obtain more N95 face masks through purchases and donations. EMTs are responding to all calls as though the patients are positive for Covid-19. Abby Butt, Assistant Director of the Council on Aging told us that seniors are not taking the threat of Covid-19 seriously, so she and other staff are calling seniors to stay home. An email from Trish McGean was sent to seniors telling them to stay home. This email will also be posted to Lincoln Talks. Tim reported that Town Meeting will be postponed again. Lincoln's moderator will attend the Selectmen's April 6 meeting to discuss this postponement. There is a chance that Town Meeting may be held outdoors, perhaps at Pierce Park or deCordova.

As of April 3 the DPH had reported 10,402 cases of Covid-19, including 192 deaths.

- April 3 – Governor Baker signed into law Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020, "An Act to Address Challenges Faced by Municipalities and State Authorities resulting from Covid-19," which eases some laws and regulations that cities and towns must follow. Now that we understand that the emergency will extend beyond a few weeks, some deadlines are extended. Many of the provisions of this Bill are for municipal finances and permitting. For

example, it will be possible to delay Town Meeting beyond June 30. If that happens the FY2021 budget will not be approved in time for the start of the new fiscal year. HR4598 states that July 2020 budgets will be no less than the 1/12 of the total budget approved for FY2020.

- April 6 – My quarantine for Covid-19 is over. Yay!  
As of April 6 the DPH had reported 13,837 cases of Covid-19, including 206 deaths.

### **Staff Increase Online Content and Services**

- March 13 – I called Hoopla to authorize the increase of the number of titles that patrons may check out each month from six to ten.
- March 16 – Children’s Department staff updated the Children’s web page and social media with links to homebound resources for young readers and families to access while schools are closed.
- March 17 – Debbie Leopold and Denise Shaver give a St. Patrick’s Day storytime on the Children’s Department’s Facebook page.
- March 20 – Friday Morning Book Group met on Zoom with Lisa Rothenberg and Kate Tranquada. The book group participants had checked out their books before the library closed. The meeting went well. Books for future meetings are available online and are free for Lincoln patrons.
- March 26 – Hoopla’s new Bonus Borrows that are free to libraries and patrons. This limited time offer includes more than 1,100 top titles and Hoopla favorites. Borrowing these titles do not count toward patrons’ allowable monthly checkouts.
- March 31 – Sarah Feather got a Children’s Room Instagram page up and running that will be used for virtual programming. Sarah’s first event was “Crafts From Around the House.”
- April 1 – Photo Share met on Zoom. Eric Smith is the group leader and hosted this Zoom meeting. All photos were sent to Eric in advance of the meeting and he put them into a Google Docs file.
- April 2 – Some book money to purchase physical items was reallocated to OverDrive Advantage to allow staff to purchase additional copies of popular titles and to purchase titles that were not selected for purchase by Minuteman Library Network’s Digital Content working group. Staff are selecting and purchasing titles for Lincoln patrons.
- April 6 – Debbie Leopold held her Together Time Tales book group (for children in grades two and three, and their parents) on Zoom.
- April 6 – Ancestry.com is allowing home access through May. Lisa worked with the Minuteman Library Network to get this working for Lincoln patrons, and continue to troubleshoot glitches. Lisa Welter has used Ancestry.com extensively for genealogy research and volunteered to help patrons with their genealogy research.
- April 9 – Sarah Feather held her Books and Bites book club for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders via Zoom. She also sent out a “Book Club in a Box” boxes to all participants, which included a little bristlebot activity and materials for them to make Peepshi.
- April 10 – Friday Morning Book Group will meet on Zoom to discuss Fitzgerald’s “The Bookshop,” which is available via Hoopla.
- April 16 – Lisa is working with Bryn Gingrich of the Lincoln Land Conservation Trust on a virtual book discussion about Douglas Tallamy’s, Nature’s Best Hope. There is no wait list for Lincoln patrons to download eBook copies from OverDrive Advantage.
- April 27 – Laura Paryl’s Uplifting Book Group will meet on Zoom. April is National Poetry

Month. Laura sent Internet links to her group members of poems for them to read and listen to.

### **Staff Assist Patrons Via Phone and Email**

- Patrons had one-on-one help sessions with Reference Librarians learning how to get started with eBooks and troubleshooting with eBooks.
- A few patron accounts that expired before January 1 were renewed.

### **Staff Maintain Outreach to the Public**

- As new services and content are made available, staff send Constant Contact messages to almost 800 people who signed up for the library's email newsletter and forwarded these to Lincoln Talk. Staff have created 14 update messages so far.
- Updates are made to the library website as new services and content become available, as in-person programs are cancelled and as library closure dates change.

### **Custodians Do Spring and Summer Cleaning**

Our custodians are in a fantasyland and are doing their spring and summer cleaning. They have the library to themselves and can do bigger projects. Usually they spread this work out over months. Since this library closed, they shampooed all carpets, stripped wax off tile and vinyl floors then waxed them. The wood floor of the Tarbell Room was refinished. They are even dusting! They disinfected public surfaces. When I visited the library on April 6, it sparkled!

### **Staff Continue Working in Traditional Ways**

Alyssa Freden, Head of Technical Services continues to order titles so there will be new books when we open, as well as pivoting to order more digital content to make available to our patrons while they follow the stay at home advisory. Bookkeeping work to pay bills and make payrolls continues. I am catching up on paperwork during my recovery.

### **Staff Meetings**

The staff have met three times on Zoom since the library's closure. We are happy to see each other and support each other during this crisis. I have probably benefited the most from these meetings, especially since I caught "it." We brainstorm ways to expand services even though we haven't beta tested them (for example, Zoom meetings). We are doing things online that we used to do on paper before (for example, selecting books). There is a learning curve, but our patrons appreciate how hard we are working to keep the library open if only in an online environment at this time.

### **Friends of the Library**

The Friends met on March 11. Recruiting new board members was the first agenda item. Two potential board members have attended board meetings to help them decide if they would like to join the board. Unfortunately, library staff have not successfully recruited new board members. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the March book sale was cancelled. Heather Anderson is working with Daniela Caride on the spring newsletter. She will write the newsletter by herself after Daniela resigns from the board in May. Barbara Low paid the deposit for the October 17 murder mystery fundraiser.



**Kudos**

Thanks to all staff for coming together during the Covid-19 pandemic. Kudos to me for working through the pain of Covid-19. We are scared together; and together we are finding new and creative ways to serve our patrons.