

Library Trustee's Meeting  
February 23, 2021 at 4:00pm via Zoom

In attendance: Jacquelin Apsler (Chair); Peter Sugar; Lucy Maulsby; Dennis Picker; Ron Chester; Kathleen Nichols; Barbara Myles, Director; Lisa Rothenberg, Assistant Director; Teresa Horwitz, Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant. Guest: Andrew Pang

Meeting started at 4:00pm via Zoom

Motion was made to approve the minutes from January's meeting with edits by Jacquelin. Lucy moved; Peter seconded. Roll call vote was made and the minutes were approved unanimously.

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

1. Librarian's Report:

- a. Kudos: All the staff have done very well with keeping safe. If they have symptoms they are staying home and getting tested. Only one instance of an employee having COVID, and it was an isolated case, no other staff at the library were affected. The staff's spirits are up.
- b. Library's Plan of Service:
  - i. There is a high volume of reference calls and trying to return them remotely has proven difficult. For example, the Reference Librarians are having trouble reaching patrons by phone because the patrons do not want to answer calls from phone numbers that they do not recognize. Barbara suggested bringing the Reference Librarians back into the building to field these questions and various requests to better serve the community and have patrons' questions answered in a timelier manner.
  - ii. We will continue to have some people working remotely as much as possible to keep the number of people in the building at one time down.
  - iii. We have stopped using paper bags for curbside pickups, except when patrons have many items ready for pickup. This change increases the number of items we can fit into the vestibule and the number of pickups that can happen each day. If the shelves in the vestibule are full, we will put a rolling cart in the vestibule to increase the number of pickups that can happen each day. We are starting with these changes to increase the number of pickups without having to buy additional shelving. Also, in the Spring we will be able to move the curbside pickups outside again and this will also increase the number of pickups that can happen each day.

Question from Dennis: Part of the backlog of the curb side pickups is the lack of space to put them out. Can we increase that space by expanding the pickup area into the building with the appropriate safety measures to keep people only in that area? Barbara was very reluctant to let people into the building yet. She believes that taking away the paper bags and adding the rolling cart and bringing back the Reference Librarians will be enough to get through the backlog of requests for pickups.

Trustees agree that having the Reference Librarians return to the building along with the other changes are a good start to going back to normal at the library at a slow and safe pace.

- c. The children's department has purchased a subscription to online software to help parents with teaching their children at home. Also, we will be rearranging some of the budgeted

amounts so we can spend more money for downloadable titles. Specifically, money will be transferred from Adult Non-Fiction to Adult Audio-Visual as there has been a significant increase in the spending for downloadable titles and reduced spending for adult non-fiction titles.

Question from Dennis: Regarding the downloadable titles. Is there a way to cap how often a title can be used/downloaded? Lisa answered that if we buy a title outright from OverDrive, then yes, we can limit the number of downloads for that title. However, it is less expensive for us to buy titles on a cost per circulation basis from OverDrive. We do not have a way to put a cap on the number of circulations through OverDrive. In contrast, we do have guidelines in place for Hoopla to limit the number of circulations by month to keep costs down.

## 2. Buildings & Grounds Updates

- a. Fire pump replacement update: Work began on the project last week. They have removed the old equipment and are installing the new MI electric cables. The fire pump room is small so only two people can work in the room at a time. The replacement won't be completed until the end of April.
- b. Parapet Repairs Project: Peter Sugar presented the memo at the Community Preservation Committee meeting highlighting the decrease in the costs as well as an anonymous donation to help with the costs. CPC complimented us that we were able to decrease costs so much.
- c. Capital Planning Committee: The deadline for submitting five-year capital plans was changed from the end of September to mid-May. Jacquelin stated that we will begin discussing our five-year capital plan at our March meeting.

3. Landscape Master Plan: Peter Sugar spoke to Naomi Cottrell, our landscape architect, about our thoughts on the memorial tree for Bob Lager. She gave three suggestions for possible trees as well as suggesting that the tree can be planted in either of the two garden areas shown on the master plan.

Dennis made the point that only one of the three options for trees (Amelanchier) is native to Mass. He suggests that we choose the tree that is native to Mass. All agreed. He also asked if both garden areas have good space and a hose hookup for tree watering. All agreed that yes there was room and hose hookups available in both areas. Lastly, he asked if there was a space that was "better" for the tree to grow. The landscape architect had told Peter that all three trees could go anywhere, so it is up to us to pick which space would be best for us.

The next steps: The Building & Grounds Committee will research Amelanchier trees to find out how much they would cost, and how much water, sun light, shade etc. that the tree will require. Once we have that information, we can choose which garden area would work best for the tree. The Buildings & Grounds Committee will get back to us at our next meeting.

Last question was, is if this fit into what the staff had wanted for the memorial. Barbara agreed that this plan is in line with what the staff wanted.

4. Reports:
  - a. FOLL: nothing special to report on. At the Friends' last meeting it was reported their financial reserves are good. The book drops for donations are collecting many donations. One of the boxes was inaccessible for a time due to the snow.
  - b. Finance Report: We are 58% of the way through the fiscal year and the percent of spending for the expenses are right on track with that number. No other questions on the report, all committee members are very happy with the up-to-date reporting.
  - c. Staffing: There is no forward movement at this time for the hiring of a new Archivist. Once the building is open again, and concerns about COVID are under more control, the hiring process will take place.
  
5. Approve the Meeting Minutes for January 26, 2021: Peter moved, and Lucy seconded. Roll call vote was taken and the minutes were approved as amended unanimously:

**VOTE: YES:5 NO: 0**

6. Other Business:

Kathleen would like to address the issues that have been raised by Andrew Pang in that he believes that the library could be serving the constituents better. There is no reason that the Library should not be open to the public for use without appointments. Jacquelin stated that we have been trying to continue to serve the people with our curbside pickup service even though it went against what Tim Higgins (Lincoln's Town Administrator) wanted as Barbara reported. Lisa made the point that we were having appointments to limit the number of people allowed into the building to keep in line with the current CDC guidelines and to have contact tracing in the event that someone in the library does have COVID. Ron added that he did some research at the Weston Library and they have stayed open without appointments throughout the whole pandemic and they have not had any instances of COVID spreading there. The point was made that the Weston Library is larger and more updated than the Lincoln Library and therefore they are better equipped to keep the area clean and safe. Lisa added that when we did open up to the public for a short time with appointments and, if there were unfilled appointments, walk-ins were welcome. Andrew wants us to eliminate the need for appointments or having the doors locked. Dennis made the point that he saw no evidence of appointments being a deterrent to people coming into the Library.

Jacquelin suggested that we can work on opening to the public with appointments sooner than the next trustee's meeting. However, she agreed that the appointments are needed for now to keep the number of people in the building controlled and at a minimum. Barbara stated that we should first get the curbside pickups under control (i.e., no longer behind with a long wait for pickups). She further stated that we are part of the community and do not want to go against Tim's closure of non-essential services. We will have to bring back more staff first to help get curbside under control. Kathleen asked if the Library could repurpose some of the rooms in order to spread out the staff and patrons? Both Barbara and Lisa assured her that we have already repurposed all the rooms available. Lisa made the point that we are thinking of keeping the staff as well as the patrons healthy, safe, and able to use the Library. Andrew added the point that we could use the experience of the other libraries in the area to show that we can open to the public now without anyone getting sick.

Jacquelin stated that we will continue to move toward reopening, but we need to bring back people in a phased way. Slower than some may like, however. We want to make sure that all are

comfortable, and we do not want to move too quickly. We need to keep a good balance. We would like to have the Library open, but it needs to be at a safe pace. Kathleen added that there was a reassessment of the surface transmission where now we don't need to quarantine the returned books for three days, would this free things up? She also made the suggestion that we could get a machine that would check the air quality (air circulation) frequently: this could make people more at ease? Dennis said that as of last night, the CDC guidance provided on its web site was that although the spread of COVID through surface contact is a minor source of spread, a rigorous protocol of cleaning frequently touched surfaces in public areas is still recommended. He also noted that the vast majority of libraries in our area continue the practice of quarantining books as they are returned before putting them back in the stacks. He cautioned that this is not the time to be under cautious. Jacquelin stated that we will work toward opening to the public with appointments within the next two weeks.

7. Question if there was any other business, answer was no.

There was a motion to adjourn: Peter motioned; Ron seconded. There was a roll call vote, and the meeting was adjourned with a unanimous vote:

**Vote; Yes-6 No-0**

Meeting was adjourned at 5:15pm

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa Horwitz