



Trustees of The Mary E. Bartlett Memorial Library

22 Dalton Road Brentwood, New Hampshire 03833-6000 (603)



642-3355

Tracy Waldron, Chair James Clark, Treasurer Lynn Austin, Secretary Liz McConnell Greg Coppola
Tom Walker, Alternate

DRAFT Meeting Minutes **Tuesday, Sept 15, 2020**

Trustees attending: Tracy Waldron, Jim Clark, Lynn Austin, Liz McConnell, Greg Coppola

Alternate Trustees attending: Tom Walker

From the Library: Janice Weirs, Library Director; Heather Lindsay, Assistant Director/Youth Librarian

Others: None

NOTE: The trustee meeting was held inside the library. Social distancing was practiced, and everyone wore masks. The public was invited to attend via the Zoom meeting link provided.

Tracy called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

Tracy cautioned Greg about sending emails to the whole board about library concerns as it constitutes a public meeting, which would require that the public be notified as per the related NH RSA. She said she has reminded him several times about this, and stated again that his concerns between our scheduled meetings need to be addressed only to her as Board Chair. She said that this is for all board members to follow. Everyone was reminded that it is permitted for two trustees to speak between meetings about library topics, but that three trustees constitutes a meeting quorum and is not permitted.

Tracy stated she received an email from Bob Mantegari today stating that the BOS meeting conflicted with tonight's MEB meeting and he would not be attending. She said that he stated the August meeting minutes are not on the website and reminded Tracy of the rules governing timeliness of posting the draft. Janice said she noticed that omission today and the August draft is now posted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

On a motion from Liz, with a second by Jim, the August minutes were unanimously approved with the changes discussed.

ACTION: Greg to update the August draft with the changes discussed, and to send it to Janice for website posting. Lynn thanked Greg for taking the August minutes in her absence.

Regarding the draft of the July minutes, Janice provided Lynn with the REALM report with the correct information about book quarantine timeline.

ACTION: Lynn to update the July draft and send it to Janice for website posting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Janice submitted her director's report to the trustees in advance of the meeting per usual for review. She also included the monthly earned time report for her and Heather as a separate document, as well as the REALM Project Test 3 results. Janice also included the following YTD MEB financial reports: Profit & Loss, General Fund, checking account ledger, and payroll.

Tracy asked if there were any questions from the board regarding Janice's August director report; there were none. Tracy asked Janice to highlight one or two items from her report. Janice's highlights included:

- With the launch of limited and controlled in-library access for patrons via advance appointments M-F, Janice stated that MEB is averaging about 3 patrons visiting the library per hour.
- Statewide ILL service is starting up again, however it will take longer for materials requested via ILL due to the materials needing to be quarantined
- The library is being reimbursed \$3,700 for the COVID-related purchases that were made, including the \$2,000 for the plexiglass, 3 laptops, and PPE supplies.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The trustees each signed the August check register which was available for review on a central table. Janice had also emailed it to the board in advance of the meeting as stated above.

Regarding payroll YTD, Tracy expressed concern that only about 33% is left in the payroll line for the remainder of the year. Discussion followed where it was suggested that Janice and Heather as salaried employees should be prepared to re-examine their schedules to ensure adequate library coverage if/when hourly staff time needs to be cut back. Tracy stated it would not be appropriate to show an overage in payroll given the last 6 months. Lynn said the media purchases line is well under where it should be YTD and asked Janice if she plans to ramp up book and DVD purchases, etc. Janice said yes, she will.

BOARD BUSINESS:

Board Participation:

Tracy stated that all trustees – both elected and appointed - need to be participating in our discussions, sharing their viewpoints, suggestions, questions, etc.

Opening the Library on Saturdays:

Discussion moved to why the library has not yet offered Saturday operating hours even though the August meeting minutes seemed to indicate that it was a directive. Greg and Janice stated they didn't interpret it as a directive. Tracy and Lynn felt that it was a directive. Lynn shared with the board that she had emailed Tracy, as board chair, prior to the August meeting raising the concerns she has received from some patrons about the inconvenience of not being able to have curbside/library access on Saturdays per usual for the past 6 months. She said that we know Saturday demand is popular because shortly after Janice was moved into the director position from children's librarian, Janice asked the board to increase Saturday hours from 9-1 to 9-3 due to the high demand. Lynn stated she sent Tracy a follow up email when she saw that the library had posted only M-F hours again after reading the minutes draft. She had interpreted it as a directive. Lynn asked Tracy what she did, as Board Chair, with her follow up email. Tracy said she emailed Janice for an explanation because Janice had said in the meeting that she would "make it work". Liz read the draft of the minutes that Greg had taken, which he had captured as "...potentially opening based on scheduling..."

Tracy did not read Janice's email to the board, but asked Janice to share her explanation for not opening on Saturday with the board. Janice said that she had given it further thought after the meeting since she had not interpreted it as a directive, and felt that MEB staff who typically work at the library on Saturday needed time to adjust to the remote learning school situation with their children. She stated she hadn't received any complaints about being closed on Saturdays, and would hope people would come to her with any concerns. Tracy stated that she has received complaints about Saturdays not being resumed yet. Lynn said that not everyone is comfortable complaining directly to library employees, and they seek out others with whom to share their concerns, most especially trustees. Liz stated that it would be helpful to have action items clearly listed as such in the minutes to avoid misunderstanding in the future.

Janice said she had always planned on reinstating Saturday hours in October.

Regarding Saturday staffing, Tracy stated that the expectation is for Janice and Heather to be part of the Saturday work schedule at least 1x per month. For the one or two Saturdays where neither Janice nor Heather is scheduled – or if they are on vacation or sick --either Joyce, Kiki, or Mary needs to be scheduled.

Tracy stated that working inside the library on Saturday doesn't necessarily mean a 6-day work week for Janice; a different day off can be taken Monday thru Thursday during the week. Tracy clarified that Friday isn't an option for Janice to take off since Heather was hired with the understanding that she teaches on Friday and is not available to work inside the library.

MOTION: On a motion from Lynn, with a second by Greg, the library is to be open from 9am -1pm for in-person (by appointment) and curbside service beginning Saturday, October 3rd, and the board will revisit resuming the 1pm-3pm extension each month as we move forward in 2020/2021. **Motion passed unanimously.**

ACTION: Janice to do library messaging announcing Saturday hours, and update the library hours on the website information where needed.

ACTION: Janice to send Tracy the staff schedule each month, with her and Heather each scheduled to work at least one at least Saturday per month, beginning with the October schedule.

Opening the Library to Patron Access Without Appointments

Tracy asked Janice when she envisioned opening the library to patron access without the need for advance appointments. Janice said she didn't know, and that she feels doing away with appointments puts the her, the staff, and the patrons at risk for COVID. Tracy said she's concerned that we may need to shut down the library again during the added confusion of flu season, and that we should be striving to let our patrons back into the library without their needing to have to schedule their library visit in advance before this happen.

Tracy went on to explain the process she uses as director of East Kingston Library whereby patrons can show up, ring the doorbell (the door is always locked to limit the number of patrons inside the building at one time), and then be allowed inside. She said folks may need to wait a few minutes depending on the number of people already inside the building. She said she is in complete control of how many people are inside the library, and can monitor and wipe surfaces, book covers, etc. after they leave.

Janice reassured the board that she has had patrons call her and/or ring the bell without an appointment and ask if they can come by to pick out a book, and she lets them come in if there are no appointments. Heather said there are a lot of nooks and crannies where people can touch things and we may not see it, so having appointments is helpful. Tracy replied this can be monitored given the staff that are scheduled to work.

Tom said that it might be even more of a psychological hit to patrons if we open the library fully without appointments for a few months only to have it shut back down during a potential COVID resurgence this fall. Janice said she wants people to feel comfortable coming into the library, not fearful.

Liz asked if we're asking patrons if they have traveled outside of our area as part of the survey questions before they enter the library; Janice said yes. Janice stated that she and Heather greet and handle the in-person appointments, and the rest of the staff (Joyce, Mary, Kiki, Katie, Olivia, and the Library Pages) handle the curbside.

Net/net: A firm date to re-open the library fully without appointments was not established.

Lynn suggested that Janice and Heather do messaging to let patrons know that appointments to come into the library don't need to be made days in advance; something friendly and welcoming that signals our flexibility and availability could make a positive difference. She suggested something like "Driving by and have an urge to get a book or movie? Ring our bell!"

ACTION: Janice to send messaging out to patrons and community letting them know that appointments don't have to be scheduled days in advance; they can stop by or call on the spur of the moment to see if space is available.

Library HVAC System – Upgrade Needed For COVID Compliance?

Greg asked if MEB needs to upgrade our HVAC system before opening fully to the public since schools were having to do this. Tracy stated that she didn't believe so, plus our budget would never accommodate this. Lynn stated that this is a question for Bob Mantegari, the Health Officer for Brentwood, since he has been doing the COVID inspections for the school, etc.

Janice asked what the procedure is if a patron who has been in the library notifies her that they have tested positive for COVID? Lynn said this is a question best answered by Mantegari. She suggested setting up a meeting for Tracy and Janice to meet with Bob to discuss the HVAC and contact tracing, and anything related to COVID. Heather asked to be included in the meeting. Janice stated that she has also been trying to get a Joint Loss Committee meeting for town department heads, but that she's been unsuccessful in getting the town to resume these.

ACTION: Tracy to reach out to Bob Mantegari to set up a meeting. Janice and Heather to join the meeting.

ACTION: Tracy to send an email to Karen or the BOS requesting a Joint Loss Committee meeting for department heads.

MEB Pandemic Policy

ACTION: Tracy to send the draft of the library's pandemic policy to the board for review. This will be reviewed and approved at the October trustee meeting.

2021 BUDGET PREPARATION:

Janice stated that town administrator, Karen Clement, said more information would be provided by the end of September regarding expectations and timing for department budgets. Janice asked if the budget preparation process is going to be the same as it has typically been, whereby Jim and Janice draft the budget and present it to the trustees for discussion and approval.

ACTION: Janice and Jim to get together per usual to draft a 2021 budget and present it to the board for discussion and approval.

Annual Performance Evaluations:

Janice is in the process of conducting performance evaluations for the library staff. She asked Tracy how her own evaluation is going to be handled. Tracy replied that the board is going to utilize a 360 evaluation process, meaning that MEB staff and trustees will be completing an evaluation form so that Tracy has input beyond her own, thereby providing a holistic assessment.

ACTION: Tracy to send the evaluation form to the trustees for their completion.

At 7:36 PM, Tracy stated that we need to go into nonpublic meeting session to discuss topics related to NH RSA Section 91-A:3, II (a)and (c). Greg left the meeting as per agreement to remove himself from any discussions related to MEB staff in order to avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest since his wife is an MEB library employee. Heather was excused as well.

At 7:40 PM, on a motion by Tracy with a second by Lynn, all ayes – Tracy, Lynn ,Liz, Jim and Tom – the remaining board members, as well as Janice, went into NonPublic Meeting Session per NH RSA Section 91-A:3, II (a)and (c).

At 8:09 PM, on a motion by Jim with a second by Tracy, the board came out of Nonpublic Session and voted to seal the nonpublic minutes. All ayes – Lynn, Tracy, Liz, Jim, and Tom.

Lynn reviewed the action items from tonight's public meeting.

Janice stated that she and Heather are updating job descriptions for each of the positions at the library, and will send them to Tracy for initial feedback and review. They will then be presented to the board for discussion and approval. She noted that correlating job evaluations for each of the positions may need to be tweaked as well.

At 8:20 PM on a motion by Lynn, with a second by Jim, the meeting adjourned.

Next meeting: Monday, Oct 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM. Meeting location is inside the library for the trustees. Since the library is still closed to public access, the public may join via the Zoom link that will be provided in the meeting notice.

Respectfully submitted, Lynn Z. Austin Board Secretary