



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

Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 6, 2020

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

From the Library: Janice Weir, Library Director

Others: Tom Walker, Alternate Trustee; Bob Mantegari, BOS Liaison

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.

Liz joined via Zoom.

Tracy called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

On a motion from Lynn, with a second by Tom, the June minutes were unanimously approved as written.

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. Janice highlighted data points regarding online program attendance, circulation statistics, social media engagement, usage by patrons of digital platforms to access movies and books, etc.

Summer Reading Program has 50 registrations as of today. Sue Mayo, a Swasey teacher, is promoting the program to her students and is donating her prize tickets to children participating in challenges she set up.

Curbside pick-up began June 29, with 213 circulated items – 113 more than the same two days last year when the library was open to the public. Janice stated that curb-side pick ups are offered M-F during the hours listed on the website with no appointment necessary; patrons can come at their convenience after being notified that their order is ready.

Action: Lynn asked Janice to double check the wording on the website regarding curbside pick-up. She said there's a section that has a warning symbol and statement saying appointments are required to pick up books.

Regarding the MEB website traffic and page view data, Lynn asked Janice if the library is using Google Analytics (GA) for these figures. Lynn commented that visit and view figures can often include the website work (i.e. posting content, updating web pages, etc.) giving a skewed number. She said that monthly GA reports, which are free, provide a wealth of important data related to all elements of web traffic. Lynn said there's a lot of time and effort going into creating our digital content, and the monthly GA information can show us where we're having an impact in engaging with our web users, which pages are most popular, how successful we are at driving web traffic through our IG and FB posts, etc. She thanked Janice and Heather for their continued efforts.

Action: Janice will investigate using Google Analytics.

Janice stated that the initial book returns, which required appointments to drop off, went well and that it wasn't the prolonged deluge her initial return process was structured to combat. She stated that book returns no longer require an appointment. The book-drop slot is still not being utilized per our phased plan; an un-staffed outdoor canopy is dedicated for return drop offs until further notice.

Lynn asked Janice what sort of programs or engagement opportunities will be offered for adult patrons, including senior patrons. She said that it is important to serve the whole community, and many older adults may be craving social-distancing outdoor library programs to engage with, or online program opportunities. As an example, perhaps reach out to the knitting group or book club to see if they'd like to sit outside under a canopy or shady tree while social distancing.

Lengthy discussion followed regarding the importance of serving adult patrons, in addition to children and families, and the risks regarding losing library patrons to Amazon, other libraries, and other sources.

Tracy stated that it's important for Janice and the board to keep in mind that these aren't just library patrons; these are voters. She said that having library services "speak" to them is where they realize the value of library, their tax dollars, and that we need their support when budgets are presented, etc. She said that we need to ensure that our library news is reaching them, that they know they can get books now, etc. Janice stated that it's a struggle to know if social media messaging is being seen, if MEB and WOWbrary emails are being read, etc.

Lynn asked Janice if she has considered comparing the materials check-out list of adult patrons from June 2019 to June 2020 to see which patrons haven't requested curbside yet. She said perhaps Janice could give those folks a personal call to let them know that books and movies are available, etc. She said that these are the folks who don't want digital downloads, they want to hold a magazine, put in a DVD, etc. Lynn said that there are a lot of adults who may not be on FB or IG, nor going online, and therefore not seeing any of the library news; a personal touch can go a long way.

Bob mentioned that he's been buying books on Amazon and via Barnes & Noble, and expressed concern that once a patron moves to other sources it can be hard to win them back.

Action: Janice concurred that reaching out to adult patrons who had typically been active patrons and haven't yet requested curbside pick up was a good idea. She will work on this and will reach out.

Regarding quarantining returned materials, Janice reviewed the IMLA/OCLC/Battelle REALM project round one results that she had included in her director's report: "After one day of attenuation, there was no recoverable virus (below LOD) for the hardback book cover, paperback book cover, or the DVD case. " Plain paper pages inside a closed book and plastic book coverings took 3 days (72 hours) to show no recoverable virus. The second half of the study is expected to be completed by the end of July.

Janice reviewed the quarantine process she is planning to implement at MEB, which would quarantine books for 7 days instead of 72 hours. She explained her thinking, saying that books returned on a Monday would be available for check out the following Monday, etc. She said this would simplify things from a staff/organizational perspective.

Tracy stated she's concerned that Janice's 7-day process makes patrons wait additional days to get their materials when only 72 hours is required. She explained that, as a library director herself, her #1 goal is always to get books into patron hands as quickly as possible. Tracy explained the process she uses at her library, whereby she and the assistant librarian quarantine materials for 3 days and then check the materials back into the system. She stated that they fulfill as many requests as they can throughout each workday, taking breaks to focus on other required work, etc. She said sometimes a high-demand book can go right back out after 72 hours, but sometimes it may be one day longer because of her workload and other director duties. Lynn thanked Tracy for her sharing her experience. She commented that the board is fortunate to have a library director as a member, because no one else on the board has that experience to help guide us. Lengthy discussion followed regarding the quarantine process

Action: Janice will work with a 3-day quarantine and getting the materials checked in/available for curbside in a timely manner. She agreed that she would not use the 7-day waiting process she had proposed to the board.

Regarding the plexiglass purchase for the library, Tracy stated that the board should have had a discussion and a vote on the \$2000 expense for plexiglass for the circulation desk. Tracy commented that, as at her library, Janice is only permitted to spend up to \$500 (excluding books and collection materials) without seeking board approval first. Janice stated that she understands this now. Janice stated that the plexiglass expense is supposed to be reimbursable through one of the COVID grants; she's submitting paperwork to Karen at Town office. Tracy asked where in the budget this money is coming from prior to getting fully or partially reimbursed by the grant. Janice stated it's the building maintenance line item.

Discussion followed regarding installation of the plexiglass.

Action: Janice will ensure that the plexiglass will not be screwed into the circulation desk; it's not to be permanently installed nor is it to damage the desk.

Janice stated that she purchased 3 new laptops from Staples which are going to be reimbursed from the COVID grant as well.

Janice asked the board for feedback regarding weeding the 900s section (nonfiction) and the cumbersome Dewey Decimal system patrons slog through to find a book. She said that some NH seacoast libraries are taking a more "retail" bookstore approach to organizing that section. Specifically, the 900s would be arranged in sections based on category topics (American History, Civil War, etc.) and then by number, rather than the Dewey system.

All agreed this was a great approach for Janice to take.

Tracy stated that Brian Duffy notified her that he was resigning as an alternate trustee. She reminded all that he was recently elected to the school board, and that the reason he gave for resigning was that there evening meetings leading up to the monthly school board meetings, and he can't do all of those and MEB. Tracy said she thanked Brian for his years of dedicated service and guidance on the MEB board. All agreed he will be dearly missed. Janice said she was sending a thank you note to him and would include thanks from the entire board.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

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

BOARD BUSINESS:

2020 COVID-19 Phased Library Services Plan for Mary E. Bartlett Memorial Library

Janice confirmed we are still in Phase 2, Part B. She stated that the plan is available on the MEB website. It was mentioned that 4 libraries in the seacoast areas opening to the public this month.

Next meeting: Monday, August 6, 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. Lynn commented that perhaps we should consider changing our monthly meeting to the first Monday rather than the third. Janice commented that the first week would better align with her director's report timing. The board will discuss this at our next meeting.

Tracy adjourned the meeting at 7:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Z. Austin

Board Secretary