



Library Board of Trustees

*Sarah Begg, Chair
John Hall, Vice-Chair
Marguerite Cummings
George Michalec
Donna Montgomery
Leah O'Leary*

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Charlotte L. Canelli, Library Director

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES
Minutes of the February 11, 2020 Meeting**

Trustees: Sarah Begg, Chair; John Hall, Vice-Chair; Marguerite Cummings; Michalec; Donna Montgomery; Leah O'Leary
Director: Charlotte Canelli
Assistant Director: Lydia Sampson
Staff representative present: Jane Bradley, Elizabeth Reed
Recording Secretary: Casey Argyrou

Ms. Begg called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

MINUTES

A motion was made/seconded (Hall/Begg) to approve the Consent Agenda items. All voted to approve the minutes.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Current FY20 Budget Status Expanded; Current FY20 Special Funds Report, Current FY20 Revolving Fund Status; Current Incidentals FY20; FY21 Budget Submission

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Director's Advocacy/Marketing Report; Assistant Director Activities; Facilities Update; Departmental Reports; Publicity and News Releases

WELCOME AND INVITATION TO SPEAK

Mr. Hall thanked Ms. Argyrou for her detailed minutes from the January meeting. The Board welcomed Jane Bradley as today's union representative.

WARRANT

The warrant was presented by Ms. Begg and signed by all Trustees.

CORRESPONDENCE- None

OLD BUSINESS

- (a) Microfilm Reader- The printer for the Microfilm Reader has been installed. Patti Fanning, local historian will be trained by the Technology Librarian, Brian DeFelice on Wednesday Feb. 12. There is a sign on the reader saying "if you would like to be trained on how to use this, please ask a member of staff". Mr. DeFelice and Ms. Sampson will be holding a program on March 4th called "Researching

Your Local History.” They will be featuring the Microfilm Reader and the library’s digitized newspaper collection, showing patrons all the ways you can look into Norwood’s history. Mr. Hall told of a recent visit to the Fall River library where he was able to access their digital archive and filter by “Obituaries Only”. We are currently unable to filter in this way, although our database is indexed and can be searched by name. Ms. Canelli reported that Adult Services Librarian, Elizabeth Reed will be acting as the Library representative for the Sesquicentennial. She has been attending various planning meetings and has been assigned the role of Social Media and Advertising.

- (b) Macmillan Boycott- Ms. Montgomery asked Ms. Canelli for a brief summary of the American Library Association panel she attended recently where John Sargent, CEO of MacMillan spoke. Ms. Canelli reported that the event was very well attended and that it was standing room only. She felt that it seemed as though Mr. Sargent has no intention on rolling back the embargo against libraries, and he appeared to be very against libraries in general. His claim was that libraries are giving things away for free, to people who do not pay taxes, and if he had it his way, no publishers would not sell ebooks to libraries at all. Unfortunately, the Q&A was not taped, so we cannot quote him exactly, but Ms. Canelli reported that she left feeling very disheartened.

Ms. Reed reported that there are now 84 library systems participating in the boycott, including The Ocean State Library System and the Merrimack Valley Library System. There is also a bill proposed in the State of New York, which would make it illegal for publishers to refuse to sell to Libraries, and they must provide the media at a “reasonable rate”. At this point, over 8 weeks into the embargo, MacMillan has been receiving a lot of negative press, they may be losing money, and their employees have been banned from attending the upcoming Digital Book World Conference by Digital Book World. They had assumed that patrons would buy their ebooks if they couldn’t get them from a library, but the data is showing that this is not true. Patrons are waiting until they can get it for free through libraries, or they are reading something else. Other publishers have also decided not to follow MacMillan’s lead after reviewing how the changes were poorly received by the public.

We have made only one Advantage purchase from MacMillan since the embargo. It was for *American Dirt*, which is Oprah’s latest Book Club pick, and it is generating some controversy over its inaccuracies of the Latin American immigrant experience due to the fact that the author is a white, non-immigrant woman. Because this item cannot be included in our Material Expenditure for our State Aid application, as it will only be available for Norwood patrons, it had to be ordered separately and recorded in a different way than our usual ebook orders. This required extra steps and more time processing by staff.

In light of this new information, Ms. O’Leary asked if anyone had changed their mind about the boycott since the last Board meeting. No one had. Ms. Cummings expressed that she would like to wait until Minuteman has decided to boycott before we jump into it alone. She said she would prefer we reach out to authors to make them aware of the embargo. Ms. Reed urged the Board to consider the embargo as not just as a consumerism issue, but also a classist issue, evidenced by Mr. Sargent’s own statements regarding libraries and the income of their patrons. All members of the Board were happy to hear that MacMillan has been losing money and the embargo is not going as they had hoped, but those that were still disinclined to join the boycott at this time remained so. Minuteman

will be voting on the boycott March 18th, and the Public Library Association 2020 Conference will be taking place February 25th-29th, so there should be more information to discuss at the next meeting. The Board agreed to keep this item on the agenda as Old Business.

- (c) Grandfather clock- The clock is still being worked on by The Clock Shop in Hanover. They are tooling 3 pieces to repair the clock. We do not have an estimated delivery date yet.
- (d) Noise in the Library- Mrs. Bradley reported that the noise is manageable.
- (e) Library fines- Staff will be attending a webinar on Thursday 2/20 called *The Future is Fine Free*. The American Library Association has been very vocal in their support of libraries removing the barrier of fines, but there are still libraries across the country that can't operate without them. Ms. Canelli reiterated that she would like to start by eliminating fines for Children's material and work from there.
- (f) AFSCME Negotiation- Contract negotiations are scheduled to begin March 3rd at 10am at Town Hall. Only one Board member is requested to attend at this time, so Ms. Begg will be attending as representative. This meeting will serve to present the ground rules. There will most likely be a BOLT personnel subcommittee meeting in the future.

REPORTS

- (a) Personnel Reports- Ms. Canelli reported no new changes to personnel.
- (b) Friends of the Library- The Friends of the library will meet at 7:30 on March 11th at The Chateau instead of Napper Tandy's, as the Chateau has agreed to participate in a fundraiser for the Friends on that day. All day long, 20% of the bill for all take out or eat-in orders will be donated to the Friends. You have to let your server know to flag your check. Ms. Sampson requested that the Board start to spread the word. Ms. Cummings credited Ms. Sampson for pushing the Friends to be more assertive with their fundraising. The Friends are also making around \$200 a quarter from Better World Books and \$250-\$350 a month in sales from the book cart in the lobby.

NEW BUSINESS

- (a) Library Budget Submission- The FY21 Library budget submission was included in this month's Board packet prepared by Ms. Canelli. We will find out soon if it is approved.

SEARCH WARRANTS- none

MISCELLANEOUS ADVISORIES

Ms. Canelli wished to make the Board aware of some information that has recently been uncovered regarding the American Library Association. They are a 501C3, and their financial structure is unique in that they have one account, or one "checkbook" which pays for everything, including all eleven of their divisions. Over the past ten years, ALA has been using their division's funds to cover

shortcomings in funding for conference bills and Information Technology, leaving their divisions with no cash savings. At the same time, ALA has been moving toward a restructure which would put their governance in the hands of a very small group of people. Multiple library associations including the New Jersey Library Association have spoken out against the restructure, urging that a Parliamentary structure would provide more transparency and a check and balance as ALA repairs their financial situation.

On a brighter note, Ms. Canelli reported that our renewals doubled this month due to automatic renewal, which went into effect January 1st. Items are automatically renewed two days before they are due as long as no other patron has a request in for that item. Patrons are sent an email or text if an item is on hold for someone else, and not eligible for auto renewal. So far, patrons have been very happy with the change.

STAFF/PUBLIC REMARKS

Ms. Bradley is reading *Into the Water* by Paula Hawkins.

TRUSTEE REMARKS

The Board recommended their latest books.

Mr. Hall- *Becoming Superman: My Journey From Poverty to Hollywood* by J. Michael Straczynski

Ms. Cummings- *Broke* by Jodie Adams Kirshner

Ms. O'Leary- *Aging Concepts and Controversies* by Harry R. Moody and Jennifer R. Sasser.

Ms. Canelli also mentioned that the Library has a copy of *Time it Was, American Stories from the 60s* in which Ms. O'Leary has written a chapter about her year in Vietnam.

Ms. Canelli- *The Feather Thief: Beauty, Obsession, and the Natural History Heist of the Century* by Kirk Wallace Johnson

Ms. Sampson- *The Phantom Prince : My Life with Ted Bundy* by Elizabeth Kendall

Ms. Montgomery- *What Rose Forgot* by Nevada Barr

Mr. Michelac- *Chocolate Wars: The 150-Year Rivalry Between the World's Greatest Chocolate Makers* by Deborah Cadbury

Ms. Begg- *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine* by Gail Honeyman.

Ms. Begg reminded the Board that election papers were due at Town Hall on February 18th.

At 9:13 p.m., a motion was made/seconded (Hall/Montgomery) and approved unanimously to conclude the meeting. All left the room as there was no Executive Session to follow.

Respectfully submitted,



Recording Secretary

