



Library Board of Trustees
John Hall, Chair
Marguerite Cummings, Vice-Chair
Sarah Begg
George Michalec
Donna Montgomery
Leah O'Leary

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Charlotte L. Canelli, Library Director

VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES Minutes of the October 22, 2020 Meeting

Trustees: John Hall, Chair; Marguerite Cummings, Vice-Chair; Sarah Begg; George Michalec; Donna Montgomery; Leah O'Leary
Director: Charlotte Canelli
Staff representatives present: Kirstie David
Recording Secretary: Casey Argyrou

This meeting was held virtually via GoToMeeting. Mr. Hall called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

MINUTES

A motion was made/seconded (Begg/Cummings) to approve the Consent Agenda items. Ms. Begg and Mr. Hall both have typo corrections to be changed in the minutes, and Mr. Hall wished that references to the Director Hiring Committee be changed to "Screening Committee." They will email Ms. Argyrou with changes. Mr. Hall asked Ms. O'Leary if she'd like to share anything about her recent illness with the Board. Ms. O'Leary reported that she has been sick with a kidney infection that made her septic. Ms. O'Leary was proud to say that she drove herself to Town Hall to vote this week. Mr. Hall then called on each Board member to approve the minutes. All approved.

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

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 introduced Kirstie David, the Literacy and Outreach librarian. This was her second board meeting she has sat in on.

WARRANT

No warrant was presented. It was decided in the September Board meeting that staff would continue to pay all material invoices without presenting a warrant for signature to the Board, following protocol for the summer months when the Board does not meet.

CORRESPONDENCE

A letter from Andrew Howard was included in this month's packet, marking a \$1,000 donation he made to the Library. Ms. Canelli noted that Mr. Howard donates this amount on a yearly basis. This year he asked that the money be split between Kindle books and large print book purchases, which will receive book plates. A thank you letter has been sent.

OLD BUSINESS

- (a) Future Reopening Services- The Board received an email from Charlotte this week with approval from the Health Department to change the visit max time in the library to 30 minutes, up from 20. We are allowing patrons to come into the Reading Room for magazines and newspapers. When they are done reading it, they should bring it to the Reference desk to quarantine the item for 24 hours. Browsing hours are still 8:30am-12:30pm Monday through Saturday, and 8:30am-9:30am Tuesday and Thursday for Senior Hours. We have also allowed more than one staff member (up to 4) in the staff room at one time. Yesterday Charlotte participated in a Minuteman Library Network meeting with 53 other members. She was asked to provide a presentation about how we handled reopening during COVID. About half of the MLN libraries have still not opened. Several of the directors (Natick and Brookline) are expecting they will be closing again soon. We officially received news today at 4pm (unofficially announced at School Committee meeting last night) that Norwood is now designated as "Red" on the COVID map. It is expected that if we are red for a number of weeks, Norwood may respond by rolling back services. We have also recently opened up the study rooms for patron use. We are allowing one patron or two patrons from the same family unit, per room, per day. We do not plan to add any services or hours until numbers improve and the Department of Health approves of changes. Staff met today to discuss that things may be changing. We also discussed the lighting improvement closure next week, and scheduling practices for now.
- (b) Noise in the Library- We have not been experiencing any noise in the library, despite being open to children and families. Ms. Canelli reported that in the MLN meeting yesterday some libraries reported that they are not allowing children into their children's spaces. We have been allowing children in since we reopened. It also has helped that we have been offering the Children's Pop Up Library, which patrons have used and appreciated. Lydia Sampson and Joanne Rabbitt will be joining the Children's Department to participate in next week's Pop Up Library. The Children's Department has been happy to share the fun with other staff, and they plan to continue offering it weekly as long as the weather holds out.

REPORTS

- (a) Library Budget FY21: Ms. Canelli shared that we are right on track as far as the percentage spent of our FY21 budget. In the budget update last meeting we mentioned that our Utilities line had been cut by \$7,000 this year. This line was cut because the Town expects our light bills will go down after the Green Communities light project is completed. Telephone was cut because they didn't think we'd have telephone expenses once we switched to VOIP, although at the moment we are still paying Verizon and AT&T monthly. We will need to make sure our Telephone line is returned to the budget next year. As far as our material expenditure, we are still on track. We expect to spend less on some

areas because we are not fully open and don't have as many patrons coming through, but we are spending more on digital services, so we expect it will even out. Ms. Canelli also noted that our Revolving Fund has seen a decrease in funds received from fines and passport processing, but expenses aren't as high for programming supplies, so again, it may even out. Programming costs are still being spent because the presenters still need to be paid, even when they're virtual. Patrons have been attending these programs, and they are well received. The Board acknowledged the exceptional work of the programming staff. These programs offer contact for residents who otherwise might be isolated due to COVID. Ms. Cummings asked about the Trust Funds notation in the Budget FY21 Special Funds Compilation which was page 12 of 33 in the packet. Ms. Canelli explained that she included her own version of this spreadsheet instead of the one she normally includes. The side calculations are actually only for her reference. She uses it as a check and balance to the spreadsheet she normally includes. Ms. Cummings asked if she can come in to meet with Ms. Canelli about gifts and endowment funds and Ms. Canelli welcomed a visit.

- (b) Personnel Report and Director Search: There has been a membership change on the Director Screening Committee. While the Board agreed that Patti Fanning would be a great fit for the Committee, she was otherwise occupied and declined. The Board reached out to a few other people and decided to add Joe Greeley to the Committee. Mr. Hall asked if anyone had heard from Bernie Lynch about the applications he has received so far. Ms. Cummings reported that the search had been closed, and said she thought the size of the pool was "medium". Ms. Canelli reminded the Board that 3 other staff members will also be leaving staff this year, Jane Bradley, Nancy Ling (will be resigning, not retiring) and April Cushing. The first job posting will be for the Children's Department, and it will go up next week after Jane Bradley retires October 30th. Human resources plans to fill each position one at a time. Mr. Hall asked if anyone had any questions for Ms. Canelli about Personnel matters, and there were none.
- (c) Friends of the Library-Ms. Cummings reported that the Friends of the Library will be hosting a virtual program with author Ted Reinstein on Dec 8th. They had discussed having an event at Little Bird, but decided against it because of COVID. They will be doing a promotion with the Chateau Restaurant again. The Friends will receive a portion of sales. No date has been chosen for the promotion yet. The Friends' membership mailing will be going out with the light bill in December. They have also discussed doing some kind of a zoom dance program in the winter. Ms. Canelli reported that the Friends received a check for \$280 from the last Chateau promotion. Ms. Canelli reported that there are many libraries (such as Belmont) that are having book sales outside, or inside by appointment. She hopes that the Friends would be open to that idea when the weather gets better. We cannot do it inside now because so much is in storage in the Simoni room. Mr. Hall asked if anyone had thought about doing an online book sale. Ms. David answered that she has suggested the same to Ms. Sampson, but they determined that building the infrastructure for that might be too much for the amount the Friends would make in return.
- (d) Programming Report: In this month's packet, Ms. Canelli included a compilation of the program promotion that Carla Howard has done for the Adult and Children's recent programming. Ms. Canelli reported that staff has been ramping up their virtual programming, and the attendance numbers have been promising, though they are still not as good as the numbers we normally receive for in

person programming. Liz Reed and Irene Gotovich have been holding one-on-one Stitch Doctor Appointments recently. They hold them outside and are finding that patrons have been very appreciative for the help. Liz and Irene hope to be able to continue these in the Simoni room as 1:1 appointments once the weather gets bad. Mr. Hall asked what the plan will be for offering services once the weather is colder, and presumably the COVID numbers continue to rise. Ms. Canelli reported that she expects we will just move “backwards”, taking services away in the order we had added them. We may end up just doing curbside again if we get closed down. This will depend on guidance from the State and the Health Department. Ms. Canelli assured the Board that as we were ready to serve the public at the start of COVID, we will be ready for any upcoming changes.

- (e) Maintenance and Repair: Charlotte has been very impressed with Town Wide Facilities thus far. They have been taking care of the Library Lighting Project, getting everything switched over to LED. This project is being paid for with a grant, so the capital money that was earmarked for this will be returned to the Town. The Library does need the linoleum replaced in the back hallway and some windows replaced once the lighting project is done. We also had a painting project planned for this year in the Capital Outlay Plan, so that will need to be addressed in the near future. Charlotte will be reaching out to Town Wide Facilities for updates.

NEW BUSINESS

- (a) Meeting Dates for the Fall- Ms. Canelli asked if some meeting dates could be changed so she could get to Florida to deal with her brother’s estate. She does not know how her travel plans will be changed due to COVID. She proposed that the meetings be moved to November 17th and December 15th, so they would work better with her travel plans and they would be in a better position in the month (not so close to the beginning of the month). Mr. Hall asked again if anyone had any specific problems with the two dates proposed. No one did. They were approved to change.
- (b) Recognition Program for Staff: Ms. Canelli wished to make the Board aware of the Staff Recognition Program she created during her tenure in which she gave exemplary staff members a certificate and Ms. Canelli would personally donate into the Anne Francis Fund on their behalf. She doubts a new director would continue this practice, but she hoped that the Board might help the new Director decide on a new way to honor staff. The Anne Francis award is decided by staff suggestions. She hopes staff input would still be asked for when determining who would be recognized. Many other libraries have some kind of Recognition Program (gift cards, hours off, etc.). The staff appreciates it and it improves morale. Mr. Hall expressed that he liked the intent behind the program, but he would like to hear from other Board members to see if they agree the Board should be responsible for discussing this with the new director. Mr. Michalec agreed that it is so important, especially now during COVID, that management acknowledges staff that go above and beyond. He suggested asking potential Director Candidates what they look for when identifying exemplary performance. Ms. Canelli agreed that this would be a good question to ask during the interview process. Ms. Cummings asked for clarification about Ms. Canelli’s Program. Ms. Canelli explained that she donated \$25 a month to the Francis Fund in that employee’s name. The Fund was originally created to pay for recreation, education,

entertainment and staff development by the Francis family after the death of their wife and mother. There's a balance of \$2500 now. There are very few staff members now that knew Anne. The recipients of the award receive a certificate from Carla, and they get a letter that goes into their personnel folder. Most staff display their certificate in their office. Mr. Hall expressed that he liked Ms. Canelli's program, but he'd rather the decision be up to the new director. He does feel though that the Board can bring it up to them and guide them. Ms. Canelli noted that on the Staff Information page there is a staff recognition policy that she hopes the Board will look at. They decided this conversation should be continued at a future meeting.

- (c) Library Budget FY22: Ms. Canelli has not been given a timeline from Town as to when this will be done, but she expects that we will be presenting something by the end of December. Ms. Canelli will set up a skeleton for the budget now, but she feels confident that the staff understands the guidelines for the budget and State Aid enough to help out if needed after she leaves. She also feels that if the new Director has a history in MA, they will be fully aware of the regulations of State Aid. We are normally given about 10 days to prepare the next year's budget by the Town. Ms. Canelli feels that this is a reasonable amount of time, though the new Director will need to remember that there will be no Union contract signed when the budget is first presented. Ms. Canelli agreed to sit down with the Budget Committee before she leaves to offer more information about this process.
- (d) Strategic Plan 2022-2026: The next strategic plan is due in October 2021. The Board and staff and possibly a consultant would work together to create this. Ms. Canelli has spoken with Cathy Carney at Town Hall about the possibility in hiring a consultant. Ms. Carney explained that if the cost is under \$10,000, they will not require a contract bid. Ms. Canelli would like the Board to reach out to Bernie Lynch because he's already done so much work already in the Director Search to develop a town profile. Ms. Canelli feels as though developing a long range plan will be difficult due to the uncertainty that COVID presents. Ms. Hall would like to see a definitive answer on who the consultant is before the end of the year, though he supports asking Mr. Lynch. The consultant they used when doing the last Strategic Plan has retired, and they do not know who else might be appropriate. Mr. Hall noted that Ms. Begg was Board Chair when they started the last Strategic Plan and Cashman Kerr Prince was the Chair when they completed it. Mr. Hall was on both Committees, so he has the most experience alongside Ms. Canelli. Mr. Hall asked that this subject be added to the November Board Meeting Agenda.

SEARCH WARRANTS- none

MISCELLANEOUS ADVISORIES- Norwood has been designated "red" meaning it has at least 8 COVID cases per 100,000 people.

STAFF/PUBLIC REMARKS

Ms. Argyrou had no book recommendations this month as she's been inundated with election coverage.

Ms. David- "Elevation" by Stephen King

Ms. Canelli- "Careful What You Wish For" by Hallie Ephron and "The Last Flight" by Julie Clark. Both are fiction, which is rare for Ms. Canelli. She has found that many people are reading the opposite of what they normally read. People are looking for escapism.

TRUSTEE REMARKS

Ms. Begg- Hasn't been reading much. She's been focused on her knitting and sewing projects.

Mr. Michalec- School is back in session which is keeping him busy with his kids. He has not found much time for reading.

Ms. O'Leary- Leah is a hospice volunteer and has been reading "Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End" by Atul Gawande as part of a group read with her fellow volunteers.

Ms. Cummings- "All the Devils Are Here" by Louise Penny. It is Louise Penny's most recent release.

Ms. Montgomery- "Girl Waits With Gun" by Amy Stewart.

Mr. Hall- Mr. Hall has been researching the history of the business of early Norwood. He has found lot of unprocessed historical material on Norwood, and he is enjoying going through it.

A motion was made/seconded (O'Leary/Montgomery) to end the meeting. All agreed, and the meeting was called to an end at 8:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Casey Argyron".

Recording Secretary