



Library Board of Trustees

*John Hall, Chair
Marguerite Cummings, Vice-Chair
Sarah Begg
George Michalec
Donna Montgomery
Sheri McLeish*

www.norwoodlibrary.org

Clayton Cheever, Library Director

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES
Minutes of May 04, 2021 Meeting**

Trustees: John Hall, Chair; Marguerite Cummings, Vice-Chair; Sarah Begg; George Michalec; Donna Montgomery; Sheri McLeish
Director: Clayton Cheever
Assistant Director: Lydia Sampson
Staff representative present: Norma Logan
Recording Secretary: Casey Argyrou

Mr. Hall called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. This meeting was recorded and broadcast by NCM.

CONSENT AGENDA

This month's packet included minutes of the April 13, 2021 minutes for the Board's approval. A motion was made/seconded (Begg/ Michalec) to approve the Consent Agenda items. All voted in roll call to approve the minutes, with the exception of Ms. Montgomery who had not yet arrived. The minutes were approved without opposition.

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: [The following reports were not ready in advance of the meeting due to the change of date of the meeting. They will be sent for review of the Board at a later date] Director's Advocacy/Marketing Report; Assistant Director Activities; Facilities Update; Departmental Reports; Publicity and News Releases

WELCOME AND INVITATION TO SPEAK

The Board welcomed Norma Logan as this month's staff representative. Ms. Logan is the Literacy Volunteer Coordinator at the Library. She shared some challenges the Literacy Program experienced this past year. In March of 2020, the Literacy program was instructed to stop all in person teaching and training, a restriction that is unfortunately still in place. Ms. Logan and Ms. David have continued to serve their students by offering tutoring online and over the phone. They have also been sending out books and material to students and tutors upon request. They hope that students who have been unable to take advantage of online learning will return when conditions improve and LVM permits resumption of in-person services. There is an extensive

wait list of new students waiting to be matched with new tutors. The Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts have offered three remote orientation sessions for potential tutors since March 2021, and the Norwood program has seen 12 new tutors complete this training. The Literacy Department hosted a remote program last Friday for their tutors offering resources and strategies to support students preparing to take their Citizenship test. Despite the challenges they've faced this past year, the program also had some notable successes. Five students received their Citizenship this year, three received their driver's license, and so many others received the English speaking skills needed to apply for jobs, enroll in school, sign up for insurance and get vaccinated! Ms. Logan thanked Mr. Cheever and the Board for their continued support of the Literacy Program. Mr. Hall hailed the Literacy department as "one of the jewels of the Library." Mr. Hall asked if there were any changes that have been implemented over the past year that will continue after things reopen. Ms. Logan believes that some students and teachers may opt to stay remote because it alleviates childcare and transportation issues. Mr. Michalec shared that he was unaware how large and successful the Literacy program was before he joined the Board, and he is proud of this important program. Ms. Cummings also expressed how valuable Ms. Logan is to the program and the Library, as she truly provides the heart and empathy needed to make this program so successful. Ms. McLeish asked how interested parties can go about becoming a tutor or receiving services. Ms. Logan said that the best way to obtain more information is to call them at 781-769-4599.

CORRESPONDENCE

Maura Deedy from the MBLC will be hosting a focus group to compile information from Trustees about their experiences hiring library directors. Mr. Cheever suggested that our Board may wish to participate as they hired a new director so recently. The second piece of correspondence this month was a letter from a patron praising the customer service of our part time Reference and Children's Librarian Stephanie Young.

OLD BUSINESS

- (a) FY21 and FY22 Library Budget Updates- The FY21 budget is on track, and the staff is working on spending the remainder of the funds before the end of the fiscal year next month. Mr. Cheever did a short presentation to the FINCOM last week about the FY22 budget request and a recap of the library's role in the community this past year. The Board attended the presentation, and it was well received. Town Meeting will be held Monday, May 10 to approve the FY22 budget. Mr. Cheever is confident that the community has the information they need to approve the Library's budget request, and our budget request will be sufficient to meet our Municipal Appropriation Requirements. Mr. Hall asked if the Union Contract would be negotiated prior to Town Meeting as the Cost of Living Increase for staff salaries will affect the budget request. Ms. Begg explained that the Union is still waiting on a scheduled date to begin contract negotiation, so it is unlikely to be done prior to Town Meeting.
- (b) Patrons in the Library- As of tomorrow, all library staff will be fully vaccinated against COVID 19. On May 10 the Library will be increasing the hours it is open to the public. There will be browsing and computer access Monday and Wednesday from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Curbside pick-up will be available Tuesday and Thursday from 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. All patrons and staff must be masked, and all patrons should continue to maintain six feet of physical distance between them and other patrons and staff. There are two stanchions in the entryway providing a visual representation of six feet. The Walpole St. entrance will be open in addition to the parking lot

entrance during open hours. There is no longer a greeter desk in the lobby, however capacity is still being monitored in enclosed areas such as the Children's room (six people at a time), the Reading Room (seven patrons at a time), and the Reference Area (seven patrons at a time). Seating is still limited but some chairs have been put back out for patrons to use for short periods of time. A press release and social media advertising will go out on Friday alerting patrons of the changes.

- (c) Overdue Fines- In March 2020, the idea was introduced to the Board by Ms. Canelli that the Library could and should eliminate most or all overdue fines. It was a network wide decision to waive fines during the pandemic, and that is still the current practice. Mr. Cheever added this item back onto the agenda in hopes that the Board will formally approve waiving overdue fines indefinitely. Mr. Hall and Ms. Cummings both expressed that they remembered the previous conversations, and feel that the Trustees were on board with the change when it was first suggested. Mr. Hall asked that Mr. Cheever write up a proposal that could be voted on during the June meeting. Ms. McLeish asked about the process for reminding patrons when items are due, and she wondered if there is a variance to the process for more expensive items like Library of Things items. Mr. Cheever explained that some libraries don't include the Library of Things as part of their fine-free programs. Ms. Sampson also added that if a patron has an item checked out for a specified time after the standard loan period, the patron's account can be suspended until that item is returned. The specified length of time can be adjusted in accordance to the value of the item. Ms. McLeish asked if people will be given the opportunity to make a donation if they've been late returning an item. Prior to the pandemic, the Library participated in Food for Fines every November, which benefits the Food Pantry. It is certainly an option to always offer this in lieu of cash fines. Mr. Cheever's main goal is that things are circulated, well cared for, and then returned to circulate again.
- (d) Strategic Planning- Mr. Cheever requested that the Board submit any final suggestions of who to approach about joining the Strategic Planning Committee no later than Friday, as he would like to begin inviting people. Ms. Montgomery met with Mr. Cheever last week and provided two suggestions already, and Mr. Hall expressed that he would like to meet with Mr. Cheever later this week. Ms. McLeish asked if members of the Board were approaching the people they were going to suggest about the opportunity or if they were just giving Mr. Cheever their information for now. Mr. Cheever said he would prefer no one be offered a seat on the committee until all suggestions have been considered.

REPORTS

- (a) Personnel Report-The Literacy Department has welcomed back two part time members of staff who are paid for by the grant: Tina Blood and Bonnie Wyler. Pre-Covid, they used to work in the evenings in person, and now they are helping out remotely. We have also hired a new 17 year old page named Vivienne. The page staff will see two members graduating in June. Mr. Hall noted that all of the staff of the Library in every department have been consistently helpful and supportive when he is asking any question. They always take the time to find any answers.

- (b) Programming – Programming report will be forthcoming. There was a successful series of programs with Progress Norwood for Earth Day. The adult services program “Evanston’s Living History” was cancelled last night due to low registration, but [the film](#) is still available on Kanopy should anyone wish to see it. There was also a program with the Trails Committee that was also postponed this week and needs to be rescheduled.
- (c) Maintenance- There has been some landscaping done to ready the Library for spring. Mr. Cheever will be meeting with Facilities bi-weekly from now on. A granite company will be coming to look at the building to address some leaking in the Children’s room. This needs to be repaired before the Capital paint project can begin.
- (d) FOL-The Friends of the Library will be meeting tomorrow. They will be talking about a potential outdoor book sale on a weekend day in May or June. They hope to have the regular fall book sale indoors with a lower capacity than normal. Mr. Cheever recently met with Dan Corzilius, president of the Friends. It has been a difficult year for the Friends and the Library is thankful they have continued to support us. Mr. Cheever and Mr. Corzilius focused their meeting on options for membership development. The ALA recently had a Zoom meeting for Friends groups about using community partnerships to increase fundraising efforts. There will be another ALA Zoom on May 25 about book sales, and an informal chat on May 12 where Trustees can write in any questions or comments that they have. MLA and the MBLC are also offering a series of lectures on Strategic Planning. The next one is May 11. Ms. McLeish asked if the Friends might ever consider bringing the book sale to Central St. downtown. Ms. Cummings explained that this is the first year they’ve considered having the sale outdoors. It will be a very large undertaking to move the books and replenish them as they sell. It would be difficult to transport everything Downtown. Ms. Sampson explained that the Friends have has a small cart sale at Norwood Day in the past, but that is obviously a much smaller scale than their bi-annual book sales. She also shared that two retired book carts have been added to FOL cart sale in the lobby of the Library, bringing the current total to 3 carts.

NEW BUSINESS

- (a) The MBLC has been holding 1 hour info sessions called Deep Dives. Ms. Cummings attended one on “Board Recruitment” and she really found it interesting and helpful. She hopes that others can look into attending some.

SEARCH WARRANTS - none

MISCELLANEOUS ADVISORIES - none

STAFF/PUBLIC REMARKS and Trustee remarks- Mr. Hall decided to combine staff and trustee remarks in order of the faces on his screen.

Mr. Cheever- “The Portable Veblen” by Elizabeth McKenzie

Ms. Begg-“The Book that Matters Most” by Ann Hood and “See No Stranger: A Memoir and

Manifesto of Revolutionary Love” by Valarie Kaur

Ms. Cummings-“The Mother-in-Law” by Sally Hepworth. She also added that there is another Trustee Orientation in April and May coming up. Ms. Cummings will be attending and she recommends it for all Library Trustees.

Ms. Logan- “The Giver of Stars” by Jojo Moyes

Ms. McLeish- “Sweet Treats around the World: An Encyclopedia of Food and Culture” by Timothy G. Roufs Ph.D. and Kathleen Smyth Roufs . She is also reading “The Vanishing Half” by Brit Bennett

Ms. Montgomery-“The Light of Days: The Untold Story of Women Resistance Fighters in Hitler's Ghettos” by Judy Batalion. She’s also been reading Caleb Warnock’s books about gardening and Permaculture. It was recommended that she or anyone with similar interests reach out to Mark Ryan at Town Hall about the Town’s composting efforts.

Ms. Sampson - “Because Internet: Understanding the New Rules of Language” by Gretchen McCulloch

Mr. Hall- “Twisted Twenty-Six” by Janet Evanovich which is the 26th book in the Stephanie Plum series

ADJOURNMENT- A motion was made/ seconded (Begg/Michalec) to conclude the meeting. All approved. The meeting was called to end at 8:57pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Recording Secretary