



www.norwoodLibrary.org

Library Board of Trustees

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

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES
Minutes of March 08, 2022 Meeting

Trustees: Sarah Begg (Chair); Marguerite Cummings (Vice-Chair); John Hall; George Michalec; Donna Montgomery; Sheri McLeish
Director: Clayton Cheever
Assistant Director: Lydia Sampson
Staff representative: Michele DeGrazio
Recording Secretary: Casey Argyrou

Ms. Begg called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. The meeting was recorded, and broadcast by NCM.

CONSENT AGENDA

This month's packet included minutes of the February 8, 2022 meeting for the Board's approval. A motion was made/seconded (Cummings/McLeish) to approve the Consent Agenda items. All voted by a show of hands, and they were unanimously approved.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Current FY22 Budget Status Expanded; Current FY22 Special Funds Report, Current FY22 Revolving Fund Status; Current Incidentals FY22

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

WELCOME AND INVITATION TO SPEAK

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

The Board welcomed Michele DeGrazio, Head of Circulation. Ms. DeGrazio has worked for the library for 50 years. There have only been two other employees in the history of Norwood that worked for the town as long as or longer than she has. Of the nine directors the Morrill Memorial Library has seen, Ms. DeGrazio has served under six of them. She has been Head of Circulation for 24 years. Ms. DeGrazio thanked her staff for providing fantastic service throughout the pandemic and continuing to be flexible and adaptive. Nearly every patron that comes in deals with circulation in some way. She and her staff

handle everything from greeting patrons to sorting, pulling and preparing holds and reservations, issuing museum passes, answering questions and providing reader's advisory. Circulation stats and new library cards have been rising steadily each month, returning to to pre-pandemic numbers. Thursdays are the busiest days at circulation, as children and families flock to the library for story time. The Aquarium is consistently the most popular museum pass for patrons, but the library also offers passes for the Isabella Stuart Gardner Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, The Science Museum, the Children's Museum, the Stone Zoo and Franklin Park Zoo and the JFK Museum and Library, and parking passes for all Massachusetts State Parks. The library is still offering curbside appointments upon request. Ms. DeGrazio noted that the library is fine free now, but if a patron would like to make a donation, they are encouraged to donate to the Friends of the Library. Ms. DeGrazio spoke about how she enjoys working with the Pages and encouraging them to continue on as circulation assistants or in some cases as librarians. She told a story of a mother who recently came in with her child to get them a library card. They were so excited the mother took a photo of the occasion and gave it to Ms. DeGrazio. That same day a former library employee came in and was tickled to see Ms. DeGrazio still working in the library as she had been a page when this employee worked at the library. Mr. Cheever and the Board thanked Ms. DeGrazio for being a true ambassador for the Library to the greater Norwood community.

busiest days at circulation, as children and families flock to the library for story time. The Aquarium is consistently the most popular museum pass for patrons, but the library also offers passes for the Isabella Stuart Gardner Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, The Science Museum, the Children's Museum, the Stone Zoo and Franklin Park Zoo and the JFK Museum and Library, and parking passes for all Massachusetts State Parks. The library is still offering curbside appointments upon request. Ms. DeGrazio noted that the library is fine free now, but if a patron would like to make a donation, they are encouraged to donate to the Friends of the Library. Ms. DeGrazio spoke about how she enjoys working with the Pages and encouraging them to continue on as circulation assistants or in some cases as librarians. She told a story of a mother who recently came in with her child to get them a library card. They were so excited the mother took a photo of the occasion and gave it to Ms. DeGrazio. That same day a former library employee came in and was tickled to see Ms. DeGrazio still working in the library as she had been a page when this employee worked at the library. Mr. Cheever and the Board thanked Ms. DeGrazio for being a true ambassador for the Library to the greater Norwood community.

REPORTS

- (a) Personnel Report & Contract Updates- Mr. Cheever reported that Carla Howard began working this week in her new role as Generalist Librarian: Media and Marketing Specialist. Town Hall and the Facilities Union have reached an agreement on their new contract, but it has not yet been signed. Mr. Cheever is currently working with HR to fill the open Outreach Librarian position, and there is still one vacant position not yet posted for a 10 hour a week Technology Assistant. Mr. Cheever received some correspondence from a patron interested in participating in the senior tax abatement program, and he will be looking to see if they will be a good fit for the Technology Assistant position.
- (b) Programming Report- The Library is seeing greater attendance at programs and more foot traffic recently. With the loosening of mask restrictions and more patron interaction, it is beginning to seem like things are back to normal at the library. Ms. Montgomery asked for more information about the Access to Justice Program that Technology Librarian James Perlman brought up in his department report. Mr. Cheever reported that the Library is teaming up with Norfolk County Trial Court and Access to Justice to provide local residents with virtual access to court hearings. This will allow people to access their court hearings remotely in the library. They can also virtually reach the Registry to receive help via Zoom filling out and filing legal forms. The library will have laptops that people can borrow and private rooms they can use, and Reference staff will be able to offer help navigating the court website. This resource will only apply to the Family and Probate Court for the time being, but it may be expanded to other courts in the future. Access to Justice is also in touch with the Boston Public Library about becoming a virtual hub as well. This program will be rolled out in coordination with Town Hall, Access to Justice, and the courts, with a coordinated publicity effort.
- (c) Maintenance & Repair- There was a leak in circulation, but no material was damaged. Facilities needed to wait for the ice on the roof to melt before it could be addressed, but it has since been patched and should cause no further issue. They are still waiting to do a full building conditions report which will be part of the capital outlay program that facilities is in charge of.

(d) Friends of the Library- The next Friends meeting is 3/9 at Napper Tandy's. Ms. Cummings reported that the Cathy Ripley Green medium program was rescheduled to 4/7. From January 1 to March 5 the Friends brought in \$1,062 from the book cart sales. The annual membership drive earned over \$3,000.

Ms. Cummings received a letter from ALA thanking the Board for nominating the Friends for an appreciation grant, but the Friends of the Morrill Memorial Library were not chosen to receive the award. The Friends are looking for new participants and Board members. Interested parties should reach out to Dan Corzilius (current chair of the Friends), Marguerite Cummings (BoLT Liaison to the Friends), Lydia Sampson (library representative to the Friends), or Library Director Clayton Cheever .

CORRESPONDENCE- Mr. Cheever included in the packet a note from a young patron to one of the children's librarians stating "You are a face that shines," and a presenter wrote in to thank Carla Howard for her graphics promoting their program. Mr. Cheever received a letter from Bill O'Donnell of the Register of Deeds asking for the support of the Board as he requests funding to hire an independent IT department. Each of the Board members also received the letter individually. Mr. Hall had already written in support a few months prior, but he suggested that Mr. Cheever may be better suited to write a letter as he has experience with having an IT department onsite at the Library, then the board could sign in support. Ms. McLeish said that she did not have enough context in order to feel comfortable signing a letter in support without knowing the counterarguments. She would prefer that whoever wanted to respond as individuals could do so without sending one as a Board. Ms. Montgomery and Mr. Michalec were in favor of Mr. Cheever and Technology Librarian Mr. Perlman writing the letter. Ms. Cummings felt that it would be too much to ask Mr. Cheever and Mr. Perlman to research and provide commentary on the needs of the Registry of Deeds. She does not feel that the cause has enough support behind it to warrant so much time and effort. Ms. Begg asked if everyone agreed that the Board would not write a letter. Ms. Montgomery felt that enough of the Board had expressed a desire to write a letter, but she asked Mr. Cheever what he thought. Mr. Cheever expressed that he was sympathetic to Mr. O'Donnell, but he would need to do more research in order to respond in a meaningful manner. He does not feel that the research would be in the best mission of the library. Ms. Montgomery asked if he would call him. Mr. Cheever said he had considered that as well. Ms. Begg asked that the item be added to old business for next month. Also in the packet was a letter from the Mass Board of Library Commissioners waiving the open hour requirements for State Aid this year. Mr. Cheever expressed that despite the requirement being waived, the Library will remain open for patrons as much as possible. Lastly there was a letter of donation from a family in memory of a young boy who died of Covid. Their contribution will be used to purchase Children's material, and book plates will be added in his honor.

OLD BUSINESS

(a) MA H4120- This bill, which focuses on state consumer protection laws of digital and audio material, will be presented to the House in June. Mr. Cheever asked for talking points for us to use when speaking in support of this bill. He has not yet heard back, but he will update the Board as he hears more. Ms. Begg asked to keep this item on the agenda next month, under old business.

(b) Trustee Bylaws & Library Policies: Gift- Ms. Montgomery pointed out that the library mission is included within the Trustee bylaws, and the mission included is not the most recent version. Mr. Cheever proposed that the mission of the library no longer be embedded within the Trustee bylaws, but rather they can reference it, stating that the Board of Library Trustees will approve the mission of

the library and assist in reviewing it regularly as part of the Strategic Planning process. A motion was made/seconded (Hall/Montgomery) to approve the Trustee By-Laws with these new changes. All voted by a show of hands, and it was approved. Ms. Begg was absent at this time.

Mr. Cheever thanked everyone for their edits and suggestions for the Gift Policy, which were incorporated in an amended policy included in the monthly packet. There were a few typos to correct, which Mr. Cheever tracked. Mr. Hall moved to approve the policy as amended. Ms. Montgomery seconded. All voted in favor by show of hands, with the exception of Ms. Begg (who had to step out), and the new gift policy was unanimously approved. Mr. Cheever thanked everyone for their support.

(c) Strategic Plan 2022-2026- The Strategic Planning Committee met for their second of three meetings last week. Ms. Begg and Ms. Montgomery attended. Ms. Cummings reported there was a great exchange of ideas, and she felt as though the members were comfortable expressing their views. Mr. Lynch provided a very thorough compilation of the data from the surveys and focus groups. Ms. Cummings was surprised that so many people who answered the survey seemed unaware of the many resources and activities being offered at the library. Ms. Sampson agreed but was confident that with Ms. Howard in her new role as Generalist Librarian/Media Marketing Specialist, she'll be able to better reach those who may not know the library's offerings. Ms. Cummings also thought that the timing of the survey had an effect on the result. Where many people did not feel comfortable coming into the library during the height of the pandemic, their answers may not have reflected their regular library usage during normal times. Mr. Hall expressed that he was heartened by the fact that people were asking for so many things that the library is already doing, so the only challenge is to make them aware of it. Mr. Cheever noted that one request that kept coming up from the community was for the library to be open more hours. In response, Mr. Cheever has requested extra funding for the next fiscal year in order to keep the library open all Sundays and Saturdays throughout the year. Mr. Hall asked if people requested café space with food and more meeting space, which were both highly requested during the last Strategic Planning process. Ms. Cummings confirmed that people did request those things again this year. Mr. Hall said that if more meeting space was required, the library would need to be expanded, possibly over the parking lot. He suggested noting this in this Strategic Planning document, so that it was clear that the Board was aware of the requests, even if it could not be addressed in the near future. Some people also asked for a book mobile or a library in south Norwood. Mr. Cheever reported that they ended the meeting looking at the mission and the vision of the library. They will be updating those at the next meeting which will take place at the end of this month.

(d) Patrons in the Library- A young patron got themselves stuck in the indoor book drop slot at circulation. 911 was called but the child was freed before they arrived. The child was not hurt, and nothing was damaged.

NEW BUSINESS- none

SEARCH WARRANTS- Mr. Cheever reported that a subpoena of personnel records was issued to the library in regard to a current library employee. Mr. Cheever forwarded the request to Human Resources and they are

Board of Morrill Memorial Library March 08, 2022 Minutes of Meeting Page | 5 complying with the request.

MISCELLANEOUS ADVISORIES- In accordance with new CDC recommendations and dropping Covid cases statewide, the library has removed signage strongly encouraging masking. Mr. Hall noted that the poster for the Norwood 150th Celebration on Ice is still on display at the circulation desk, although the event has passed. Mr. Cheever said he will take care of it. Mr. Hall will be talking with the Norwood 150th committee about creating a new poster advertising upcoming events for the Norwood 150th celebrations. The library will continue to advertise and promote any program occurring at the library as part of the sesquicentennial.

STAFF AND TRUSTEES REMARKS- Trustee book suggestions will again be included in the Staff Picks list. The next scheduled meeting of the Trustees will be Tuesday April 12, 2022 at 5:30 p.m..

ADJOURNMENT- A motion was made and seconded (Montgomery/Hall) to adjourn. All approved by show of hands, and Mr. Cheever called the meeting to an end at 7:54pm (Ms. Begg was still out).

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Casey Argyon". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Recording Secretary