



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

[www.norwoodLibrary.org](http://www.norwoodLibrary.org)

Clayton Cheever, Library Director

## **MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES**

### **Minutes of February 14, 2023 Meeting**

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

Ms. Cummings called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. The meeting was held virtually via Google Meet. It was recorded and provided to Norwood Community Media for later [broadcast](#).

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

This month's packet included minutes of the January 10, 2023 meeting for the Board's approval. A motion was made and seconded (Hall/Begg) to accept the consent agenda. All voted by roll call, and the motion was approved unanimously.

**FINANCIAL REPORT:** Current FY23 Budget Status Expanded; Current FY23 Special Funds Report, Current FY23 Revolving Fund Status; Current Incidentals FY23

**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 Circulation Chief Michele DeGrazio who Ms. Cummings referred to as the most senior staff member and probably the most recognized person at the library by members of the community. Ms. DeGrazio called the Circulation Department the heart of the library, and she noted how every day and every interaction is different; she never knows what to expect. There have been some personnel changes to the Circulation staff in the past year. Carla, Nicole D. and Kate S. have all been promoted into other departments. Beth, Marg, Gerry and Susan all left part time positions in the department. Susan has continued as a full time staff member. Ms. DeGrazio was also happy to name her other part time staff who in her words "keep the department together." Raceja is a former page who now works at the desk as she pursues her pre-med major. Gauri and Callie are also college students who come back to help the library on their breaks. Jacquie,

Chandrika, Gail, Frank, and Jeanne all work part time throughout the week. Michele looks for focus, organization, and detail oriented people to work for her, and this staff has that. Former employee Beth Porter mentioned in her resignation letter that she was hired in her current position due to those very same skills she honed in her work at the library. Her new employer told her that they believed that her experience at the library must mean that she has a mind of organization and attention to detail. Ms. Degrazio noted that library services are not the only things her staff are handling. The Circulation desk has also been a main point of distribution and sale over the past year for Norwood 150<sup>th</sup> merchandise, tickets for the Boston Pops, Ice Skating tickets, and covid test kits. One thing that many people don't know is that library card applications are available in Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, and Russian. Between January 3 and February 3 there have already been 12,198 items checked out at the Circulation desk, and only 738 of those items were returned overdue, showing the respect the community has for this library. She also noted that of those checked out items, about 60% of them are borrowed at self-checkout stations, and 40% are done by library staff at the front desk. 751 museum passes were used by patrons this year, the most popular being the New England Aquarium and the Museum of Science. The library will also soon be offering the Trustees Pass which admits you to various Trustees state parks, gardens and museums, a museum pass for the Institute of Contemporary Art, and a museum pass for the Fairbanks House. Mr. Hall noted that Ms. Degrazio is the longest serving employee at the library and holds the title for second-longest serving employee in the history of Norwood. The only person who exceeds her in years of service was the original fire chief, who retired nearly 100 years ago. He added that the reputation she has at the library is well earned, and we are lucky to have her. Ms. Cummings seconded the notion adding that Ms. Degrazio offers a smile for everyone, and she is always ready to solve any problem she is faced with. Mr. Cheever added that Ms. Degrazio is a delight, she works long hours, never complains, and easily recovers when faced with challenges. She shares a great wealth of knowledge of the library and the community, and he is proud and thankful to work with her every day.

## REPORTS

- (a) Personnel Report & Contract Updates- There is no contract news, and there have been no personnel changes in the past month. Mr. Cheever has been working with Town management on next year's budget, and he has requested funding to open the library on weekends all year. This will require some negotiation with the union as it will involve a change in work environment.
- (b) Programming Report –Mr. Cheever urged that if you see a program on the calendar that interests you to sign up early, as in-person programs have been filling quickly. The staff do keep track of a wait list and confirm registration in order to allow the greatest number of people possible to attend. There has not been as much of a demand for virtual programming, though it is still offered. Mr. Hall asked if there have been any programs that have filled up so quickly that we've offered a second night. Mr. Cheever said that yes, staff will try to arrange another showing whenever feasible. Mr. Cheever listed some upcoming programs. On Saturday February 25 there will be two programs with the Japan Society of Boston on making Onigiri. Every Thursday in February Purnima Thakre has been offering a Stay Fit Bollywood Style series at the First Congregational Church. Tomorrow night there will be a program on Female Anti-Slavery Societies in Antebellum Massachusetts, and also on the subject of Black History Month, the library has been working with Norwood High School and Police Officer Baguma on a celebration of Black arts and culture which will take place Saturday February 18 at Norwood High school from 2pm-5pm. Check out [the library calendar](#) for all of the current program

offerings.

- (c) Maintenance & Repair- Mr. Cheever reported that the parts that were ordered last month for the side entrance doors were unfortunately not the right size, and they needed to be reordered. The correct parts came in this past week and Facilities was able to make the necessary repairs. The automatic doors are now working flawlessly. The library also fared well over the cold snap this past weekend. There were no reported issues with pipes freezing or leaking.
- (d) Friends of the Library- Ms. Sampson and Mr. Cheever met with Catherine Swanson who is the new official president of the Friends, along with Mary Anne Paradise who is the Treasurer. Ms. Swanson shared her vision for the Friends, and they are confident it will be a good fit. Ms. Sampson met again with Ms. Swanson and Ms. Paradise to review all of the different technology and social media accounts at their disposal. The Friends are still working to fill their empty board seats, but there will hopefully be some names to share next month. Former President, Dan Corzillius will continue to be a member at large, and he will be a great resource during this transition.

CORRESPONDENCE- In this month's packet, Mr. Cheever included a letter from the Simoni Foundation regarding their annual donation to the Literacy Department and a letter from Barsha Plumer thanking the Trustees for their donation in Stuart Plumer's name. State Legislative Day is March 15<sup>th</sup>, and Mr. Cheever asked the Trustees to join him in advocating for financial support of public libraries. Mr. Cheever also included an article about a bill centered around access to eBooks for libraries that is now on the House floor. Mr. Cheever submitted the library's portion of the annual town wide Budget Book, as well as a draft of the narrative for the 2022 Annual Report. He will be sending a final draft to the Trustees for feedback soon. Mr. Cheever also reported that the Town will begin using Diligent, which is a program for creating, storing and sharing public meeting agendas and minutes. The public will be able to access this information from a single town wide calendar. It is not yet known how the new procedure will affect how Trustee meetings are run and documented going forward. Mr. Cheever will provide more information on this subject as he finds out more.

#### OLD BUSINESS

- (a) Ad Hoc Committee- The ad hoc committee has not met since the last meeting, but this subject will remain on the agenda as a placeholder because there will be some policies up for review in the future.
- (b) Patrons in the Library- none.

NEW BUSINESS- Mr. Cheever as well as many members of staff will be presenting at the MLA conference in Falmouth on May 8 and 9. These dates will be in conflict with Town Meeting as well as the Board of Trustees May meeting. Mr. Cheever asked that the Board Meeting be moved to May 16 to alleviate some of this stress. All members of the Board were available for the new date with the exception of Ms. Begg who has a conflict and Ms. Montgomery who was absent from the meeting. As the quorum for the Board is four, they will plan to proceed with the date change to May 16 and confirm with a vote at their March meeting.

SEARCH WARRANTS- none.

MISCELLANEOUS ADVISORIES- none.

STAFF AND TRUSTEES REMARKS- Ms. Cummings wished to further comment on the Strategic Plan and Action Plan, thanking the library staff for the exceptionally hard work, and for putting these steps in writing for the community to see.

ADJOURNMENT- The next meeting will be held on March 14th at 6:30 p.m with Head of Adult Services Liz Reed. A motion was made and seconded (Hall/McLeish) to adjourn. All approved by roll call vote, and Ms. Cummings called the meeting to an end at 7:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Recording Secretary