



Westwood Public Library Update 8 May 2019

Staffing

Staff Retirement:

This week we learned that Susan White will be retiring from the Westwood Public Library effective June 28th. Susan has been a member of the staff for 18 years, starting first as an intern in 2001 -- when she retired from the Bank of Boston. We have truly been the lucky beneficiaries of that choice -- as many of you have had the opportunity to experience first-hand Susan's love of laughter and sense of humor as you've worked with her throughout her library career. Susan has indicated that she would like to keep her hand in as a part-time substitute, but she will also be taking time to travel, play bridge, and visit her very large group of friends! Susan, thank you for everything that you've done! You've brought so much joy and happiness to all those who work with you - and to our patrons as well.

Best wishes always!

Posting of Part-Time Library Assistant (Circulation Department): With the approval of Joan Courtney Murray (Director of Human Resources for the Town of Westwood), we are posting the position internally to determine if there may be an in-house candidate. If we do not receive applications internally, the position will be reposted. Internal applications are due by Friday, May 24th. (This is a 14 – 19 hours, non-benefit eligible position – Job Posting is attached.)

Teen Mentors:

The Teen Mentor Program will be concluding as of May 22nd – and we want to thank particularly the three students who participated throughout the year – and a special thank you to Maria Kontogiannis, who was also a teen mentor last year, and is a graduating senior this year. We will have a cake to celebrate their accomplishments on Wednesday, May 22nd at 2:15 pm in the Gallery.

- Maria Kontogiannis
- Parsa Masomi
- Bonnie Liu

Teen Librarian – I met with the Select Board on Monday, May 29th to seek approval for posting the position as a 35 hour full-time position. The Select Board tabled a decision for that evening -- asking that additional context and data be provided – with a directive that the Board would add this to a future agenda item (possibly on Monday, June 3rd).

In looking at our experience, we have advertised the position twice at 19 hours and twice at 24 hours; and have lost qualified candidates to full time positions in other towns, or for personal reasons. The most recent pool of candidates did not yield a high percentage of applicants who were actually interested in working with teens, which I think has been something which we have seen throughout this process. And in looking at the landscape of eligible librarians, the “pool” of teen librarians is a small one relative to some of the other specializations of public librarianship – there are many more children’s and adult services librarians; so finding that capable and qualified candidate who truly embraces teen services is already a more challenging process.

Based on our lack of success in filling this position for almost a year, and given the limited universe of Teens' Librarians in general, the Town Administrator and Head of Human Resources recommended making this position a full time (35 hour) position so that we can attract and finally hire a qualified professional for this important role.

I have reached out to some of the critical stakeholders in the broader Westwood community who will be most positively impacted by the addition of a full-time Teen Librarian to the Library staff and have asked them to provide additional input and context that can be shared with members of the Select Board.

Molly and Lizzy have also provided letters as well, and I am including them in the packet for the Trustees' meeting on Monday.

If we do succeed in getting the position approved by the Board, we would hope to have a candidate on board before the start of the school year in September.

Building Update

Hans Gabriel (Cheviot Corporation) was in the Library on Thursday, May 9th to resolve all of the outstanding ceiling tile issues.

Study Table Lamps are all installed and operating!

Ver-Tex Shades – we continue to be in discussion with the company to determine if a resolution might be reached for the inoperable “bottom up” triangular shades. Jim McCarthy is monitoring the situation as well, and Ver-Tex has promised a response in terms of “next steps” by Monday afternoon.

Islington Center Development

No new information at this time.

Friends of the Westwood Public Library: The Friends of the Library hosted Juliette Fay on Wednesday, May 8th – and also conducted the business of their annual meeting. We are very pleased to share the news that Tina Bronkhorst has been elected President, and Megan McCarthy Schmidt has taken on the role of Vice President.

Programming

Planning for the **Summer Reading** Program is underway, and this year the theme is “Universe of Stories.” We will be hosting three programs again this year, targeted for a variety of ages, including children, teens, and adults. New “Summer Reading Champion Lives Here” signs will also be featured again this year. A special event is planned for July 31st featuring “Mini Whinnies” – miniature ponies and bunnies (with the Sunny Rock 4H Group!).

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND AUTHOR EVENTS

Seussical The Musical-Westwood Players presented Seussical! The Musical (Theatre for Young Audiences)! Free show at the Library was completely sold out!

Opioid Spoon Honor Tour: Tuesday, May 14th from 4 pm – 6 pm.

Book Buzz Panel - Favorite Reads from your Westwood Librarians:

- Thursday, July 18th (please note date has changed!)

Keepsake Garden Stepping Stones–Saturday, June 15th from 9 – 1.

Seeding It Forward (Seed Lending at the Westwood Public Library): The Library has received a donation of seeds from the Bentley Seed Company (located in Cambridge, NY). We will be sharing these with library patrons and asking that they try to “harvest” some of their seeds in anticipation of a “seed swap” next year.