

Westwood Board of Library Trustees
Monday February 13, 2023
Remote Video Meeting
Westwood, MA 7:00pm

Trustee Chair Von Euw called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

The remote meeting was video recorded and will be posted on the library's youtube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@WestwoodplKids>

In Attendance via Remote Participation:

Library Trustees present: Paul Fitzgerald, Mary Masi-Phelps, Maureen VonEuw, Maria Ryan, Mary Beth Person. Nancy Donahue joined during the Director's Report.

Library Staff: Library Director Elizabeth McGovern

Human Services Director: Danielle Sutton

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made/seconded (Fitzgerald/Persons) to accept the minutes from January 9, 2022. The Library Trustees voted unanimously in favor via roll call vote.

Director's Report:

Director's report accepted as submitted. Highlights:

- COA van hand-me-down is now available for the library and will be converted into a bookmobile; the van passed DPW inspection and the Library will be looking to make upgrades; \$30K capital (FY23) is available. Trustees suggested to consider submitting 21st Century grant request for additional funding needed
- The Chirp Birdhouses program January was favorably received.
- Laptops under the stairs with black history display, videos, recordings, etc., has been very engaging for patrons.

Danielle Sutton, Human Services Director:

Introduction of Ms. Sutton who now oversees Library Director as well as Veteran services, Youth & Family Services, Recreation, Council on Aging; Ms. Sutton noted that leaders of these departments have been meeting as a cross-functional group, which is now reflected organizationally.

Ms. Sutton has been advising the Director and staff on ongoing issues with patron conduct at the library. It is common to have a learning curve in the fall as students begin Middle School and students and parents learn expectations for library behavior. Flare-ups also tend to occur around holidays and other "high energy" times. The Library is planning additional staff training on how to manage various situations, and is consulting with the schools and other resources to develop an appropriate program for Westwood. These are common issues in wake of COVID, and the training has a twofold goal: to alleviate disruption to other patrons and to avert staff burnout.

Islington Branch:

The Islington Library is still very busy, with lots of programming and active engagement with families. The facility is especially busy in the afternoons most days. The Living Library program has been adapted for the branch, and various programs are alternating between main and branch. There is now a true crime book group.

Strategic Plan:

Action items were submitted by the interim director to meet deadline as a prerequisite to grant applications. Action items for 2023 include:

- Library of things - expand selection of games, tools, activity kits, etc. - consider having an event to showcase the newer items
- Digital library branch - using web site and other online resources to better reach those not coming to the library
- Conversion of COA van for bookmobile
- Reconfiguring spaces in the library based on history and lessons learned. Balancing bookcases with inviting spaces; high demand for study spaces.
- Work with Westwood media on a podcasting studio space
- Review & update all policies and procedures

State Aid Information:

Director provided information on State Aid in response to questions from the January meeting (in meeting packet). State Aid grant is administered by Mass Board of Library Commissioners based on population, various usage metrics and financials. Westwood is well-supported by State Aid: \$34K this year. Aid is typically used for special projects and other ad hoc expenses after consultation with Trustees. Suggestion (Persons) that we should utilize State Aid more fully.

Budget:

With increased programming post-COVID, the Director is looking to adjust staffing accordingly while still maintaining necessary reference desk staffing. The Library is working with the Town on a plan to use State Aid to help ramp up hours temporarily until headcount can be incorporated into the operating budget on a permanent basis.

Motion (Masi-Phelps/Ryan) to approve planned increase, etc. - unanimous vote in favor.

Question (Masi-Phelps) on the status of the FY23 budget - the Director indicated that the FY 23 spending is in alignment with the budget.

Poet Laureate:

Ms. Donahue reported that the committee met and discussed 2 outstanding adult laureate candidates, coming to a unanimous decision. Ms. Donahue thanked all committee participants. Next steps will be to present to the Select Board. The Director is working with Town Counsel to draft a letter of agreement regarding payment of the stipend by the 21st Century Fund. Ms. Ryan noted that the Cultural Council will be contributing \$100 for expenses.

Information is available on the Town website: <https://www.townhall.westwood.ma.us/Home/Components/News/News/359/15>

21st Century Update:

Ms. Masi-Phelps reported that the Fund board met January 17. In reviewing 2022 -

- Thanks to the expertise and dedication of board members Thorsten Becker and Brian Mulvey, our

endowment weathered what was an extremely challenging year for endowments, with financial headwinds for investments both in stocks and bonds.

- The Fund's fund raising was slightly lower than the prior year, but adequate for our needs, and the board is appreciative of both the repeat and new donors. The board discussed ways of thanking our donors, including sending the tote bags and inviting them to an event at the library. We will also look to create a poster to showcase the Fund's contributions over the years, as well as what might be accomplished in the future.
- Ms. Persons is exploring alternatives for taking care of the Fund's books once she retires from the board later this year.

Acceptances & Expenditures:

Expenditures were approved unanimously as presented (motion made/seconded by Fitzgerald/Persons). Trustees voted unanimously in favor.

New Business:

Question regarding the monthly stats: the door count up 42% but circulation is down - what are the contributing factors? The Director believes this is partially due to a change in the counting system in use. Also attributable to evolving usage patterns, use of study rooms, etc.

Question regarding use of surveillance cameras in the library - there are a few, but they are only accessed via the police station; the facility is being updated to a newer security system.

Public Participation:

None in attendance

Adjournment:

A motion was made/seconded (Fitzgerald/Masi-Phelps) to adjourn at 8:14 PM, with Trustees voting unanimously in favor.

Next Meeting:

Monday, March 13, 2023, 07:00 PM

Handouts:

Agenda, Minutes of 1/9/2023 Trustee meeting, Library Director's Report, Departmental Expenditure Report, Trustees Accept and Expend Report, January 2023 Monthly Stats, WPL Action Plan

Respectfully Submitted:

Mary Masi-Phelps