

**Bedford Free Public Library
Library Trustees Minutes
Tuesday June 11, 2024, 7:00 PM
Hybrid meeting: Meeting Room & Online**

In attendance: Elizabeth Hacala, Abby Hafer, Renae Nichols, Rachel Field, Gyasi Burk-Abbott, Padma Choudry, and Emily Prince

Other attendees: Richard Callaghan, Director; Noreen O’Gara, Assistant Director, Emily Mitchell, Select Board, and Marie Kelley, Administrative Assistant

Call to Order:

Chair Rachel Field called the meeting to order at 4:36

Public Comments; none

Secretary’s Report

Due to an email error, the May minutes will be reviewed at the July meeting.

Director’s Report

Richard received an email from Elaine Yang who runs the AARP Tax program. She was very appreciative of the library giving her the room for the program. They had 91 clients for our tax returns. As they were a little short on volunteers last year the library will help her recruit more volunteers in the fall.

On Sunday Nicole and Pam were at the Bedford Pride celebration on the common, which went very well.

Commenting on the expenditures, we are getting towards the end of the year, so there is not a lot of money left in the regular non-salary budget. We are going to have some money left in the salary budget because we have had an open full-time position in the children’s room for three quarters of the year.

Statistics, we are down about 2.3% for the year for circulation. Foot traffic was high. In the second half of May it starts to slow down and now that the kids will be getting out of school the foot traffic will be even slower until summer reading begins.

- Elizabeth moved to accept the minutes and Abby seconded. Vote to approve: Ayes: Rachel, Padma, Renae, Elizabeth, Emily, Abby and Gyasi. Vote: 7-0-0.

Unfinished Business

HVAC Project: We met with the HVAC contractors and Facilities Department on June 5th. They have been doing a lot of preliminary work. For the past two weeks we have used a dumpster to clean out things in spaces the contractors will need to work. There were a lot of things up in the HVAC room on the top of the library that had been in storage for a long time. We tried to recycle/reuse as much as possible. The Recreation Department took two tables that had been in the children's room.

The contractors will be starting upstairs in the HVAC room tomorrow. Richard has been working with Friends of the Library to make sure that the closets are cleaned out so that the contractors can do the work. The contractors will be doing some work up in the book stacks in the new building and in the administration offices. This work could also affect Marie and Noreen office space, so all three of us will probably need to move to another location. We will have a schedule of which space in the building the contractors will be working. Tech Services will be moving to the first-floor meeting room in early July. Bob will set up the needed computers for Tech Services in the meeting room and Dan Leahy from Town Hall will help connect the phones.

We are also moving and getting rid of a lot of old metal shelves. The Facilities Department will come and pick up the metal to bring to recycling the shelving. We had tried getting the shelving to be reused but, in the end, we had no takers.

The Fire Department approved the evacuation plan and there were no changes.

Padma asked if the Trustees could get a copy of the tentative schedule. Richard will email everyone the schedule before next week.

The Strategic Plan

Richard has a consultant he wants to work with at a price point he wants to spend. It is the same consultant we used nine years ago. The consultant is Deb Hoadley. Her proposal is more reasonable than the previous proposals. The other proposals were quite expensive and provided more information than we thought we would need. Richard and Noreen would prefer to do the plan in the fall. It is simply too busy to do a strategic plan now with the HVAC project going on. We can start in the fall after the HVAC project has finished for the year.

Padma asked if there was any value in working with someone else to get a different opinion and a different kind of perspective. Richard stated that most consultants carry out the same kind of plan. The plan might be a little different in the way they do the plan. Noreen stated that the MBLC has a criteria for the plan. We currently have three proposals. The three consultants are very busy this time of year. The other consultant we liked was Maura Deedy. Maura offered a more comprehensive package of services but was more expensive. Richard can speak to Maura to find out if she can cut things down and will check her schedule. We will revisit this during the July meeting.

Director's Performance Review

The Board voted unanimously to submit the merit review of the Director to the town. The Board began discussing the Director's review, minor edits to the document were made.

- Renae motions to accept the report with one additional amendment to be finalized in the section of supervisors of overall comment, Abby seconds the motion. Vote to approve: Ayes: Rachel, Renae, Elizabeth, Padma, Emily, Abby and Gyasi. Vote: 7-0-0.

Unfinished Business

There aren't any new updates on the front steps. As this is a FY25 project it can only start after July 1st. Richard will speak to Ron next week to get more information and will update the Board.

Regarding the parking issue, there has not been a date scheduled for a meeting. It should be sometime at the end of June.

Other Business

Friends of the Library will have a book sale on Saturday, June 15th and it will be outside. The book sale will be part of the cultural district celebration that day.

Appointments: Sydney Pare, Library Assistant

Next meeting is Tuesday July 9, 2024, a hybrid meeting at 7:00 pm.

- Renae motions to adjourn the meeting, Gyasi seconds the motion. Vote to approve: Ayes: Rachel, Renae, Elizabeth, Emily, Padma, Abby and Gyasi. Vote: 7-0-0.