Bedford Free Public Library
Library Trustees Minutes
Tuesday May 14, 2024, 7:00 PM
Hybrid meeting: Meeting Room & Online

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

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

Call to Order:
Chair Rachel Field called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

Public Comments: None

Secretary's Report

- Elizabeth moved to accept the minutes and Renae seconded. Vote to approve: Ayes: Rachel, Renae, Elizabeth, Abby. Emily and Gyasi abstained. Vote: 4-0-2

Director's Report

Richard is meeting with the Friends tomorrow to give them an update on the HVAC project. The Friends will be organizing a book sale on June 15th. The Friends will also host a book donation day on May 30th in the meeting room.

Last week the library staff went to the Massachusetts Library Association Conference in Framingham. It turned out to be a good experience for everyone. Noreen noted that Nicole and Pam went both days because the second day focused on youth services. They got a lot of good ideas on different programs they can offer to the community. Julie went to the sustainable library program so that we can be more sustainable in every aspect of our library services. The conference had a lot of AI discussion.

Under the operating budget, expenditures as of today are a little over 82% throughout the year. Some of the accounts are getting low. Computer and software expenses are a little over, but it can be made up by other accounts. The travel accounts will go down to zero, due to the staff that went to the library conference.

Richard got the merit number to add into the salaries budget. What was approved at last year's town meeting was $1,135,446.00 and the merit was given out to staff last summer. The FY24 budget was added to the merit to give us the total salaries for the year, which is not always reflected immediately in the budget.

Statistical Report - April's circulation was a little slower than it has been in the last few months, 2% from last year though patron foot traffic continues to be heavy.

Renae moved to accept the Director's Report and Emily seconded. Vote to approve: Ayes: Emily, Gyasi, Rachel, Renae, Elizabeth, Abby.

Unfinished Business

- HVAC Project update

Ron Scaltreto, Director of Facilities, joined the Trustees meeting to discuss the HVAC project. Work won't begin until all permits are approved. The permitting process is underway and is going smoothly. The Bedford Fire Department must approve an evacuation plan before work can start and that is the one permit that may take a bit of time to complete. Submittals are going to the architects. Supply chain issues are declining so it may not be as big of an issue for this project. Work may begin early next month (permits permitting). The typical workday will be 6 am to about 2 pm, but work may continue until about 6pm if deemed necessary. We will be providing information about the HVAC project once a month in our newsletter.

The funds for the front steps were approved at the FY25 Annual Town Meeting though the work to replace them will not start until after July1st. The Facilities Department will get quotes to repair the stairs.

Parking update: There have been complaints about parking at the library during the school day. Richard forwarded the complaints to Heather Galante, High School Principal, Cliff Chuang, Superintendent, and Matt Hanson, Town Manager. The parking this week was a little better than it has been. Sometime in June Richard will be meeting with everyone to discuss how the parking situation can be worked out before September.

The Strategic Plan

The strategic plan schedule is still being worked on. Richard has a few quotes, and he thought they were high. Richard will work with one of the vendors to go through the quotes on what they want to do. The consultants would prefer to do the whole plan, but we can do some of it ourselves to reduce costs.

New Business

Performance review of the Director: Richard received all the forms from Town Hall. This week or the following week, Richard will send the forms and a copy of last year's review out to the board so it can be completed for the next board meeting. The review process was explained to the newer board members. Emily and Gyasi as the newest board members will not participate in the review as they were not present for the entire year. Richard will send them the same forms and information so they can get a sense of the process for next year. After the forms are completed, they get submitted to Rachel, then to Richard, and then to town hall.

Other Business

Holiday closing 2025: Richard and Noreen noted some libraries close on the Saturday of Labor Day and Memorial Day so that was included in Holiday Closing Schedule. We can go back and look at this next May to see the impact of closing on these two Saturdays.

Emily motions to approve and Elizabeth seconds the motion. Vote to approve: Ayes: Rachel, Renae, Elizabeth, Abby, Emily, Gyasi. Vote: 6-0-0

-Appointments: None.

Next meeting is Tuesday June 11, 2024, a hybrid meeting at 4:30 pm due to the special town meeting at 6:30 pm the same day.

Renea moved to adjourn, and Gyasi seconded. Vote to approve: Ayes: Rachel, Renae, Elizabeth, Abby, Emily, Gyasi. Vote: 6-0-0.