

FITCHBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
May 11, 2022

Fitchburg Public Library
610 Main St. Fitchburg MA, 01420

Trustees present were: Chair Matthew Bruun, Rob Favini, Joanne Huse, Jacalyn Kremer, Eric Mbunwe and Jim Walsh. Director Sharon Bernard, New Director Deb Hinkle and Assistant Director Jean Tenander were also present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jacquelyn Wehtje addressed the Trustees.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES of April 13, 2022.

The minutes of April 13, 2022, were accepted after being amended.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Bruun read Rob Favini's letter of resignation from the Board of Trustees and said it had been sent to the Mayor. He also thanked Mr. Favini for all his strong work for the Library as a Trustee.

Chair Bruun welcomed Deb Hinkle, the new Director.

He then made a few remarks about the need for the Director and the Trustees to understand and agree on what each will expect of the other. Director Hinkle mentioned that she would appreciate being able to work on the agendas for the Trustees meeting with the Chair of the Board and that she would be looking to the Trustees for creating and maintaining community support.

Chair Bruun said there would be a Building Committee meeting sometime in June to bring everyone up to speed.

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Director Bernard reported that she had completed and uploaded all the missing annual reports to the City database.

She said the library had received a check for \$12,937.48 from the Sherry Tuck estate. It will be deposited in the revolving fund. She and Ms. Hinkle met with Jim Hohman and Marianne Alford from First Financial Trust to make introduction.

She said in-person programs were starting up. Applewild School came to visit the Youth Library recently. The summer Youth Library programs are beginning as are craft sessions. There will be visits from animals to the Library and a survival skills program for ages 9 and up. For adults there will be a meeting on the history of railtrails.

She said the ARIS report is due in September and that the MBLC is offering trainings on how to complete it. The financial report is due in October and trainings for that will be scheduled at a later date.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee—Joanne Huse said Jim Hohman had said we will just stay the course. Director Bernard said she had talked to Barbara Friedman about the new library in Erving. Barbara had said she preferred using local vendors. They are usually less expensive and it builds goodwill.

Director Bernard said the City Finance Committee had moved their meetings to Wednesday nights which will be a conflict with our Board meeting if Trustees need to go to a Finance Committee meeting. There may be quite a few meetings the Trustees will have to attend since the new building will be under consideration for several years.

Jim Walsh made a motion to accept the modified Trust Fund budget FY2022. The motion was passed unanimously.

Legislative Committee—Rob Favini said the Senate budget has been released. It now goes to the House. He said there was a significant amount of money.

Rob Favini is resigning from the Board so a new Chair of the Legislative Committee will have to be nominated. Favini suggested 2 or 3 people should be on the committee as a whole.

An important aspect of the post is meeting with City people to keep them up to date with the building process.

Director Bernard said the annual spending cap for the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners public library construction program has been raised to 24 million by the state legislature. Fitchburg's grant will probably be awarded in July 2023. We will know this year who will be offered the money and who will accept it. If one or more of the libraries it is offered to is unable to accept, then Fitchburg could move up on the list and could receive the money sooner.

Building Committee—Director Bernard and Ms. Hinkle met with the Mayor and two OPMs from Collier International. She said she was very impressed with the OPMs understanding of our building project. Tappe Architects has provided a new cost estimate. Costs continue to rise, so it is important to get started sooner since it will cost less today than it will tomorrow. Value engineering will be utilized to determine where elements can be changed to less expensive alternatives without sacrificing functionality. An RFP for a move to temporary quarters will be released once we have received a positive vote for the building project from City Council.

Director Bernard suggested the move to temporary quarters would take place in the spring of 2023 or sooner. The move back into our newly refurbished building would then be in 2025. This September the library will go before City Council and request a vote to approve the entire Library project. The request goes to the Finance Committee and then back to the City Council. It is at the Finance Committee meeting and the second City Council meeting that the presence of the Trustees is vital.

Nominating Committee—Elections for board president, treasurer, and secretary will take place at the September meeting. Joanne Huse and Jim Walsh are the nominating committee. Once the positions are elected the chair will appoint member to the various committees.

NEW BUSINESS

Library policy is that our space is free for anyone to book. Other libraries limit their spaces to non-profits or charge a fee. That is something that should be considered when the new library is complete.

Director Bernard said she thinks we should consider getting quotes for a new fund raiser. The person we had previously hired has been unable to pay us the attention we need. The professional fund raiser aids in assessing a realistic goal for the amount that can be raised and provides the best route to achieve that goal.

OLD BUSINESS

The Trustees have been looking at the Collection Development Policy. A vote to amend our existing policy to state that only Fitchburg residents can request reconsideration of an item was passed unanimously. As books are being more and more frequently nationwide it is important to have a workable precise policy.

Chair Bruun thanked Director Bernard for her many years of tireless and excellent work for the Fitchburg Public Library.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Jean Tenander for
Cynthia Jones