

Waltham Public Library
Waltham, Massachusetts
Trustees' Meeting
Thursday, November 19, 2020

Present

Mr. Alan Humbert, Mr. Steven Mann, Ms. Martha Creedon, Ms. Maureen Taddeo,
Ms. Marie McKenzie, Ms. Kelly Linehan, Director (via Zoom),

Mr. Humbert welcomed the Trustees and the November Trustees' Meeting of the Waltham Public Library was called to order by him at 1:05 p.m. (Meeting streamed live on YouTube.)

Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the regular Trustees' Meeting, held on October 8, 2020 were reviewed. One typo was noted and would be corrected.

Ms. Creedon moved to approve the October Minutes, as amended. Ms. Taddeo seconded the motion and the Trustees voted to approve.

Expenditure Report

Ms. Linehan reviewed the Expenditure Report. The bottom line of this report is on target at 30%, which would be expected at this point in the fiscal year. It was noted that all individual line items may or may not be at that percentage, which is to be expected. Therefore, Ms. Linehan reported that she had no concerns about the budget at this point.

A question was asked about whether the library (through available funds) was able to provide adequate PPE, such as face shields, gloves, and masks. Ms. Linehan noted that staff members, through personal preference, usually provide their own masks. Spare masks are always available. Scarves are not acceptable face coverings. However, Ms. Linehan noted that it is rare for a patron not to have a mask. Furthermore, she is confident in the supply of PPE.

There has been a great deal of focus during the pandemic toward reviewing materials, both print and ematerials, and allocating funds for music and audiobooks. Some changes have been made internally to meet the needs of patrons who are in need of more ematerials and audiobooks. Ms. Linehan noted that there is a backup plan to spend additional funds on audiobooks should the library need to close due to high positive COVID levels in the city.

Ms. Creedon moved to place the Expenditure Report on file. Ms. Taddeo seconded the motion and the Trustees voted to place the report on file.

Report on Library Operations

Circulations Statistics Report

Circulation statistics for October indicated a circulation of 27,977 which is down 36% from October 2019. Ms. Linehan reported on the success of the Children's book bundles, approximately 40 per day. At the current time,

the library is averaging about 550 visits a week. The complete report will be forwarded to the Trustees within the next few days.

In response to a question asked at the October meeting that Ms. Linehan had researched - it is likely that non-resident usage of the resources at the library is about 7% of the total.

Personnel

At this time, there is a freeze on any new hires. It is allowable to hire replacement personnel, as long as the funds are in the budget.

There are no personnel changes at this time. Ms. Linehan did share that all staff are healthy!

Working in a pandemic

There will be no night or weekend hours at this time due to the pandemic status. (These expanded hours had been the hope of Ms. Linehan and staff as noted in the October meeting.) The library will maintain the same hours as all other city departments, M-F, 8:30-4:30. Any future changes would have to be approved by the Department of Public Health and the Mayor.

Staff have reported that health/safety standards and occupancy levels are being maintained. It is sometimes difficult to remember to maintain 6' distance.

MLN

Ms. Linehan had attended a Board Meeting the previous day. Member libraries discussed how each was managing under COVID restrictions, ordering procedures, Overdrive, and wait times.

Ms. Linehan and Tech Services are accumulating data related to the most cost-effective process related to licensing vs. cost per use fee for Overdrive in Waltham. Additionally, data will be collected related to hold times and the number of copies requested by Waltham patrons under the current and projected system.

Waltham ranks #7 in the network for ematerials circulated, #14 in overall circulation. Ms. Linehan was pleased with that ranking in view of Waltham's designation as a "red" COVID community.

Friends Report

The Friends will fund a pilot program organized by Ms. Kim Hewitt, (Circulation), that will offer bus passes to patrons who need to conduct research and need to use a neighboring library with fewer restrictions than have been put in place in the Waltham library.

Old Business

The Trustees briefly discussed the Holiday Schedule for 2021. A draft had been shared at the October meeting. Ms. Creedon moved to approve the Holiday Schedule. Mr. Mann seconded the motion and the Trustees voted to approve.

New Business

Mr. Humbert had attended a Trustees Training Session presented by MBLC. Based on what he learned there about what might be happening (or not) in other communities, he was positive about the good working relations

among the Waltham Board of Trustees, the professionalism of the library staff, and the support from the Mayor, city officials, and community-at-large. He also suggested that it might be time to review the Bylaws and update the Trustees' Handbook, making sure all are aligned with city ordinances and with general regulations for operation. Additionally, it might also be time to review a disaster plan, not only in light of the pandemic but also in light of natural disasters. All this work will begin in January 2021 and will be coordinated by him and Ms. Linehan.

Mr. Humbert and Ms. Linehan will also be working together in a search for a new trustee to complete the board of six members.

Ms. Linehan reported that the new wireless printing system was a big improvement over the previous one.

The new lights in the library have also been a noticeable improvement

Book drops are now open. This does expand drop-offs access beyond current library hours.

Ms. Linehan reported on positive feedback regarding several Children's initiative, e.g. pumpkin decorating and science packets.

There was also positive feedback from social media of the video of the chipmunk that invaded the Waltham Room!

Ms. Linehan encouraged the Trustees to be aware of the positive article about Luke Kirkland's (Teen Room) Real Talk program and Aaron Devine's (Literacy Coordinator) ELL stories.

Ms. Linehan is continuing compiling data from the community survey. Most responses have been highly positive.

Announcements

Mr. Mann noted that passing of former Trustee, Jacquelyn Mawhinney, who was also the wife of the long-standing trustee, the late Reverend William Mawhinney

Adjournment

Mr. Mann made the motion to adjourn the October meeting at 1:47 p.m. Ms. Creedon seconded the motion and the Trustees approved the action unanimously.

The next Trustees' Meeting will be held on Thursday, December 10, 2020 at 1:00.

Submitted by Marie J. McKenzie, Secretary/Clerk