

Waltham Public Library
Waltham, Massachusetts
Trustees' Meeting
Thursday, September 14, 2023

Present

Mr. Alan Humbert (via Zoom), Ms. Marie McKenzie, Ms. Maureen Taddeo, Ms. Marina Bartley, Ms. Martha Creedon, Mr. Steven Mann (left at 2:15), Ms. Kelly Linehan, Director, Ms. Deborah Fasulo, Assistant Director, Mayor Jeannette McCarthy (left at 1:07)

Mr. Humbert welcomed the Trustees to the September Trustees' Meeting of the Waltham Public Library and noted that this meeting also honored long-time, now-former Trustee Maureen Taddeo, who has been a Trustee since 2001. Mayor McCarthy offered a proclamation in her honor. A moment of silence was also held for Ms. Taddeo's mother, Pauline Gallagher, who had passed away earlier this month. Mrs. Gallagher had been a lifelong Waltham resident and a Waltham school teacher. After some refreshments, Mr. Humbert called the meeting to order in the Trustees' Room of the Library at 1:08 p.m.

Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the regular Trustees' Meeting, held June 8, 2023, were reviewed. Ms. Bartley moved to approve the Minutes. Ms. Creedon seconded the motion, and the Trustees voted to approve.

Expenditure Report

Ms. Linehan reviewed the closed-out Expenditure Report for the period 7/01/2022 to 06/3/23. She noted that the Expenditures for FY 24 were on target at 18% expended. Ms. Bartley moved to place the Expenditure Report on file. Ms. Creedon seconded the motion, and the Trustees voted to place the report on file.

Report on Library Operations

Circulations Statistics Report

Circulation statistics were received for FY 23 July and August 2023. Ms. Linehan was quite pleased with the summer numbers. The June and August numbers were higher than in 2022. (July numbers were down, most likely attributable to shortened hours due to lack of air conditioning).

For the first half of 2023, Waltham had ranked in the top ten within the Minuteman Network. Such top ten placements are the personal goals of Ms. Linehan. Waltham ranked 7 in e-circulation. There was some discussion about circulation rates and population.

Operational Statistics Report

According to the Statistical Reports, summertime hourly visits were up, averaging 74 this year and 65 last year. Despite being short-staffed, programming was also up and well-received. A total of 4,694 people attended Children's events. 45% of all books checked out were from Children's. The push for summer reading had been enhanced by the librarians visiting all elementary schools in June.

Personnel

Ms. Fasulo stated that the hiring of the last budgeted position was imminent. The filling of this position will mean that the library will be fully staffed with budgeted personnel for the first time since December 2019. Approximately 350 interviews have taken place in recent years!

MLN

The network will move toward a new catalog system, and bids for new circulation software are being solicited.

Friends Report

Ms. Linehan has had several exchanges of emails/conversations with the Friends but no in-person contact. The next meeting is in early October.

New Business

- Ms. Linehan presented the 2024 Holiday Schedule. Ms. Creedon moved to accept the proposal, and Ms. Bartley seconded it, and the Trustees voted to approve.
- Ms. Linehan shared a letter she was preparing to send to a patron who had challenged a children's picture book. Ms. Linehan included in the letter reviews of the book from highly credible sources, e.g., *Kirkus Reviews*, and *Booklist*.
- Ms. Linehan shared a document outlining highlights that will be included in the FY 2023 annual report.
- A grant for digitizing *The Waltham News Tribune* archives is being written.

Unfinished Business

- Ms. Linehan had forwarded information about the Bookmobile to the Trustees earlier this year. The RFP has been submitted.
- The Trustees had received the first schedule for the rotation of policy review. The first group will be Filming, **Behavior, Donations, Food and Drink**, and Service Animals. (The ones in bold type were to be reviewed in September, but this review was postponed.)

Long Range/Strategic Planning

A strategic plan must be on file by October 1 to be considered for a building grant. Ms. Linehan's goal is to make the Waltham Public Library "the best in the world."

Trustees had received a copy via email earlier and had a few clarifying questions. The feedback from the Trustees on this ambitious and comprehensive plan was extremely positive.

Key goals outlined were:

- Center the people, our vision and mission, our values, and our Broad Focus Areas in all we do.
- Grow staffing.
- Focus on adaptive, flexible staffing protocols and a meaningful work culture experience that addresses the changing needs of employees.
- Complete a Building Plan, Feasibility Study, and Capital Funding Proposal.
- Create a transparent and effective Building Plan, Communication and Marketing Strategy.
- Invest in "24/7" and Mobile Library Concepts.
- Create an Updated and Inclusive Library Space.

Ms. Linehan shared an extensive document outlining the survey and focus group feedback.

Ms. Creedon made the motion to support the Strategic Plan. Mr. Mann seconded the motion, and the Trustees approved unanimously.

Announcements

An interesting article appeared on Brandeishoot.com by Jamie Trope entitled, *Waltham Public Library: the coolest place on Main Street*.

Adjournment

Ms. McKenzie motioned to adjourn the September meeting at 2:15 p.m. Ms. Bartley seconded the motion and the Trustees approved the action unanimously.

The next scheduled Trustees' Meeting will be held on Thursday, October 12 at 1:00.

Submitted by Marie J. McKenzie, Secretary/Clerk