

**Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Conant Public Library
Sterling, MA
Minutes of March 8, 2021**

Open Meeting:

Call to order: 7:03 pm

Roll Call:

Present: (remotely via Zoom) Trustees Akerson, Carlin, Glavin, Martin, Petullo, Scannell. Also present remotely Library Director, Pat Campbell.

Absent: None

Members of the public present remotely: Arden Sonnenberg, Sterling Select Board Member

Review/Approve February 8, 2021, Meeting Minutes

Motion to accept as amended: Martin. Second: Carlin

Unanimous

Director's Report

Circulation:

- Overall circulation in February slightly higher than January
- The four strongest categories continue to be adult fiction and non-fiction, children's materials, and downloadable materials
- Ancestry.com announced that they have been mistakenly under-reporting database use and that this problem is being addressed
- Online program attendance rose in February

Facilities Report:

- The library has received the state elevator inspection certificate
- The carpet in the lower level hall has been replaced
- The ice guard placed over the outdoor HVAC units worked well
- The Building Committee met to identify goals and a timeline for the elevator project
- Members conducted a walkthrough of the building in anticipation of first meeting with LLB architects
- Town Administrator is working with Town Counsel on the contract with LLB Architects

Finance:

- The overall budget is on track
- Unused operating funds due to the pandemic will be returned to the town
- The Finance and Capital Committees will be meeting with department heads on March 13 via Zoom

Services:

- The library delivered 4,572 items through curbside, home, and online delivery to patrons
- The library sent 569 items to other libraries
- Six additional families signed up for the 1000 Books Before Kindergarten
- 196 Craft Kits To-Go were requested and given out in February
- 154 views across 4 storytime videos in the Stay-at-Home Storytime Facebook group.
- 18 kindness bookmarks given out on Random Acts of Kindness Day, 2/17/2021
- 30 Winter Scavenger Hunt requestable activities were given out
- 6 adults attended the monthly Parents Night Out Book Group meeting on Zoom
- Trustee Scannell raised the issue of the action taken by Dr. Seuss Enterprises
- Director Campbell observed that if a book is legal then the library supports the people's rights to access information, however, the library would be sensitive to how these books would be made available

Review Elevator Project Progress

- The goal of the project is an ADA compliant entrance and accessibility to every floor
- The town has provisionally accepted the LLB Architect's proposal and the Town Counsel is refining it
- All parties are looking ahead 20 years in light of the Master Plan
- LLB Architects is aiming for a preliminary design and estimate of cost prior to June for scrutiny by Town Finance Committees

Phased Services Plan

- The library is initiating all the interventions that need to be in place prior to a soft opening such as reinstalling sneeze guards, removing seating, etc.
- Trustees were informed that this opening would entail limited browsing via appointments made over the phone

- Items handled by patrons while in the library would need to be quarantined for 24 hours
- The public continues to express support for curbside and home delivery
- Trustee Carlin expressed concern about exposing the staff to hazards
- Trustee Akerson reported that Sterling was no longer in the “red” regarding COVID cases as of February 28, 2021 data on the Town website
- Director Campbell referenced a March 5 update from the Commonwealth’s website that Sterling had become one of 19 towns in the red. She also referred to a recent Mass Municipal Association meeting on COVID 19 and Workplace Law. A doctor from UMass Medical answered a question specific to library openings and stated, in his opinion, it was too early and recommended waiting until after St. Patrick’s Day and school vacation
- Trustee Martin was curious if limited browsing with its staff-intensive requirements would impact curbside and home delivery
- Director Campbell confirmed that limited browsing might minimally encroach on curbside and home delivery which is why the phased plan would be a soft opening of only two hours of appointment availability on two days of the week to begin so that any kinks could be addressed before wider access. This would, at 4 persons per half-hour, provide 32 patrons a week with access to browsing.
- Trustee Akerson expressed strong approval of the curbside service
- Trustee Petullo was concerned for staff safety and Director Campbell described that the staff would provide friendly, helpful, and professional service at all times during in person browsing and would make clear that patrons follow all rules regarding masks, social distancing, and sanitation
- Trustee Glavin observed that the library is preparing well for a soft-opening but that with the requirement, at this time, that any book, DVD, etc. touched by a patron would need to be quarantined for 24 hours that it would be prudent to delay the phased services plan until after the next Trustee’s meeting on April 12, 2021

Next posted meeting date: April 12, 2021

Adjournment: 8:13 pm

Motion to accept: Carlin. Second: Scannell

Unanimous

Sara Petullo, Secretary