

**Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Conant Public Library
Sterling, MA
Minutes of June 28, 2021**

Open Meeting:

Call to order 7:15 pm

Roll Call:

Present remotely via Zoom: Trustee Akerson

Present in person: Trustees Carlin, Petullo, Martin, Sayut, and Scannell; Library Director Pat Campbell

Absent: None

Members of the public present remotely or in person: None

Review/Approve May 10, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion to accept: Carlin. Second: Scannell

Unanimous

Reconfiguration of Board

Motion to elect Petullo new Board chair: Carlin. Second: Akerson

Unanimous

Motion to elect Sayut new Board Secretary: Petullo. Second: Carlin

Unanimous

As it was the first meeting after the town election, Trustees introduced themselves briefly to the group.

Review of By-laws/Board Responsibilities

Director Campbell noted that by-laws were updated in 2020 and reviewed a few highlights.

- Meetings are generally held the second Monday of each month and must be posted at least 48 business hours prior.
- A quorum of four Trustees is required.
- Current by-laws state that the Chair cannot make a motion, but the fairness of this has been questioned and is under review.
- As a collective, Trustees have authority over the building and grounds, and are tasked with upholding the First Amendment.

Trustee Carlin suggested devoting a few minutes at each meeting to policy review. (Corrected 7/20/21)

Director Search Report

- The subcommittee comprising Trustees Akerson, Carlin and Petullo reported that a job posting for a new Library Director has been submitted to Town of Sterling Human Resources. Once approved, the posting will be distributed to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners listserv and local newspapers.
- The committee solicited input from a variety of stakeholders (e.g. staff, Trustees, Friends of the Library, the Senior Center, local teachers, the Historical Society) on desired qualifications for the new Director. They report a great deal of consistency in responses – local stakeholders are hoping for a proven leader who will create an atmosphere of service, friendliness and communication.
- The committee has identified a salary range of \$80,000-\$90,000, based on the library's size and location, and the candidate's experience and education.
- Director Campbell advised the Board that the new Director should be prepared to carry out long-range planning process within a year or two of being hired, in order to make the library fully eligible for certain grants.

Circulation Report

- The effect of the pandemic on library services makes it difficult to assess any meaningful change in circulation data compared to FY2020 – that said, it is very encouraging to see an increase of 3% in adult fiction and non-fiction.
- Most checkouts still delivered at curbside, but opening the building on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays as of June 1 increased adult circulation of books.
- Since the entire building is now open for browsing 3 days per week, curbside pickup is declining. Director Campbell recommended discontinuing curbside pickup and fully opening the library. She recommended slightly reduced hours of 10-6 Monday through Thursday and 10-1 on Saturdays, since the library is currently down one 32 hour/week staff person. She would anticipate returning to normal fall hours around Labor Day. The proposed hours would still be well in excess of the hours the library needs to be open to qualify for state funding. She also noted that there will still be delivery options available for those who need them.

Motion to accept Director Campbell's recommendation: Carlin. Second: Scannell

Unanimous

Youth Services Report

- The search for a new Director of Youth Services is ongoing; staff is pitching in to implement the summer reading program and 100 Books of Summer.
- The summer reading kick-off program (a traveling petting zoo in Memorial Park) was attended by 149 children and 80 adults on June 24. Many families dropped by the newly opened children's room afterward.

- In-person and online story hours, craft kits and other youth programming have been very popular. Going forward, most programming will be held inside the building, with larger programs outdoors or offsite.

Trustee Scannell suggested setting aside time at the next meeting to formalize a policy on handling books that are recalled by their publishers due to insensitive depictions of different races or cultures, such as the six books recently withdrawn by the Dr. Seuss Foundation. Director Campbell reported that these books have been pulled from shelves, but are still available for circulation if specifically requested at the desk.

Finance Report

- The library will have a surplus in wages, due to staff members reducing hours during the first months of the pandemic.
- It also appears that the amount over budget in repairs and maintenance could be offset by other lines, which were lower than expected due to the library being closed to the public. If not, the library can request to transfer from the wages line and still return funds to the Town.
- The library is assured of meeting all state aid requirements, some of which have been adjusted due to COVID-19.
- The Friends of the Library plan to hold their craft fair this November, which, after annual memberships, is their major source of funding.

Facilities Report

- A representative from Garaventa Lift has evaluated the current lift system into the library and proposed two options: to update the existing set-up with a hydraulic system, or to enlarge the lift to accommodate a scooter-type cart and enter straight onto the second floor. He is working on cost estimates.
- A representative from Eagle Elevator will also be evaluating the elevator with an eye toward modernization.
- These are very preliminary steps, since finance committee support and voter support at Town Meeting would be necessary to move forward. Both the lift and the elevator are performing well and there is minimal urgency to the process at this time.
- The DPW mulched the landscape for Memorial Day and Bartlett Tree Company treated the crabapple trees with an environmentally safe product.

Next posted meeting date: July 19, 2021

Motion to adjourn: Carlin. Second: Akerson

Unanimous

Adjournment: 8:20 pm

Amanda Sayut, Secretary