

**Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Conant Public Library
Sterling, MA
Minutes of September 13, 2021**

Open Meeting:

Call to order 7:00 pm

Roll Call:

Present: Trustees Akerson, Carlin, Petullo and Scannell, in person; Interim Library Director Grebinar, in person; Trustee Sayut, remote

Absent: Trustee Martin

Members of the public present: Dick Maki and Incoming Library Director Betsy Perry, in person

Review/Approve August 23, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion to accept: Carlin. Second: Scannell.

Unanimous

Director's Report

Interim Director Grebinar reported that State Aid Part 1 ARIS and part 2 Financials have been filed. Next month, budget preparation will begin for FY2023.

A new staff member began in mid-August, replacing a staffer who had given notice over the summer.

The youth summer reading program ended in August with a total of 168 registered readers. Of these registrants, 128 logged a total of 183,565 minutes read. Each received a brand new book donated by the Friends of the Library, and many received raffle prizes as well. Youth summer reading numbers were similar to the summer of 2020, which was also fully virtual, but did lag behind previous years that had an in-person component. Twenty-seven children completed the 100 Books of Summer challenge; each received a gift certificate to Rota Spring Farm donated by the Friends of the Library. The adult summer reading program, coordinated by Deborah Orr, was popular as well.

Elevator/Lift Project

Trustee Scannell, a member of the Building Subcommittee, reported on efforts to modernize and upgrade the library's elevator and lift. He clarified that the building is fully ADA compliant, but that the Building Subcommittee wanted to research some options for going above and beyond requirements.

For example, Trustee Scannell noted that the committee had initially hoped to find a way to enlarge the current elevator. The current building and lot present many challenges to this effort – the existing elevator shaft cannot be enlarged, and irregular grade on the south side of the library would not allow

the shaft to be relocated there. The committee did consider a proposal for creating a 4-stop elevator at the front of the building. This would have allowed for many upgrades but would have cost around \$1.9-2.5 million (corrected 10-19-21), so the committee decided that it was not a viable solution at this time.

Accordingly, the committee decided to focus on modernization of the existing elevator. Working with 3Phase Elevator Corporation, they developed a plan to replace the existing elevator's microprocessor, power unit, closed-loop door operator, car door panels and operating panel. The existing cab interior, cab enclosure, stops and jack unit are in good condition and would be retained. The current quote from 3Phase is \$123,700, and Trustee Scannell noted that additional work to update the ventilation system would need to be contracted separately.

With regards to the lift, Trustee Scannell noted that it currently requires users to execute a 90 degree turn to exit, which is difficult for many mobility scooters. The Building Subcommittee is exploring two designs to address this. One would require creating a new wall opening in the library, in the current location of the audiobooks display. A second design still needs to be fleshed out in the subcommittee and with the town ADA coordinator, but would entail shifting the lift forward (towards the library façade) – a 90 degree turn would still be necessary to enter the library, but it would be executed as the user exited the lift, rather than within the confines of the lift itself. The second idea was appealing to the Trustees since it would allow library wall space to be preserved.

Trustee Carlin inquired about the lifespan of the lift upgrades. Trustee Scannell replied that the expected lifespan of the current lift is about 20 years – the existing setup is approaching the end of its 20-year lifespan, as it was installed in 2004.

Chairperson Petullo asked whether the lift quote is ready to be presented to the Capital Committee. Trustee Scannell responded there is no lift quote yet, as it still requires further discussion, but that the elevator quote is ready to present. Chairperson Petullo proposed that the trustees vote solely on bringing the request for elevator funding to the Capital Committee, rather than waiting to vote on both the elevator and the lift together.

Motion to bring the Capital Committee a request for funding for the elevator modernization project in the quoted amount of \$123,700: Scannell. Second: Sayut.

Unanimous

Trustee Scannell reported that subcommittee member Mike Glavin has asked to step down. Trustee Scannell said that it would not be necessary to recruit a replacement member or make any other changes to the composition of the subcommittee (corrected 10-19-21).

Library Hours

Due to staffing shortages over the summer, the library's hours were abbreviated, closing at 6PM instead of 8PM Monday through Thursday. Now with children returning to school and many adults returning to work, Interim Director Grebinar asked that the trustees vote to extend the library's evening hours back to 8PM.

Motion to restore library hours to 10AM-8PM, Monday through Thursday, starting Monday, September 20, 2021: Akerson. Second: Carlin.

Unanimous

Photocopier/Fax Policy

As part of the trustees' ongoing review of existing library policies, Interim Director Grebinar outlined the current photocopier and fax policy, which requests a donation of 10 cents per page photocopied and \$1 per page faxed. She noted that the library has upgraded its printers, resulting in increased ink costs, and requested that the trustees consider formalizing a printer policy to recoup some of this outlay.

In the past, the library has requested a donation of 10 cents per page printed, but Interim Director Grebinar asked to institute a policy of 25 cents per page, whether printing in black and white or in color. She reported that, based on her research, this is a very competitive rate when compared to other area libraries.

Trustee Scannell inquired whether the patrons who use the printing services are likely to be young people/students, who may not be able to afford a charge, but Interim Director Grebinar reported that most users of the service are adults.

Motion to update photocopier/fax policy to include a printer policy to read as follows: *Printing is available from public computers for a charge of 25 cents per page to help defray costs. Both color and black-and-white printing are available*: Scannell. Second: Akerson.

Unanimous

Director Search

Chairperson Petullo, a member of the Director Search Subcommittee, reported that, after a five-month process, the trustees have negotiated a contract with Betsy Perry to accept the Director position, and that the parties are ready to sign. Ms. Perry will begin as Director on October 1, 2021. Chairperson Petullo thanked all of the candidates, and remarked that the applicant pool was full of wonderful and well-qualified people with a clear love for libraries.

The four trustees present in-person at the meeting signed the contract, followed by Ms. Perry. Plans were made for Trustee Sayut, a remote attendee, to sign the contract in the upcoming days.

Next posted meeting date: October 18, 2021

Motion to adjourn: Carlin. Second: Akerson

Unanimous

Adjournment: 7:42 pm

Amanda Sayut, Secretary