

MEETING LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES
Tuesday, October 15, 2024, 7:30 PM
Virtual Meeting

Adjourn to Executive Session

Adjourn to Executive Session under the following exemptions, not to return to Open Session.

Item 1: To discuss strategy with respect to threatened potential litigation if the Chair so declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Select Board and Town, and the Chair does so declare, to discuss the Town Library pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Sections 21(a)(3) and (7) and Suffolk Construction v. DCAM, 449 Mass. 444 (2007)

Roll Call Vote to Adjourn to Executive Session 7:30pm. Unanimous yes.

Trustees Participating

Brian Connolly (Chair)

Mary McKenna

Frank Orlando

Tom VanLangen

Seth Molloy

Sue Lepard

Chris Kenney

Other Participating

Liz Anderson (Library Director)

Jennifer Carlson (Library Assistant Director)

Sandra Burke (Friends)

Margo Powicki (Sherborn History Center & Museum)

Sean Killeen (DPW)

Return to Public Session 7:42PM. Vote to approve the September minutes. Erin moved, Sue second. Unanimous approval.

Chair's Report (Brian Connolly)

Meeting with Advisory upcoming, FY 26 budget will come more in the forefront.

Library action plan should be brought to the board. Liz mentioned that we intended to look at it last meeting, and will give an overview toward the end.

Friends of the Sherborn Library (Sandra)

Voted on their finalized budget. Pushed Friendsgiving back to give some more time. Hoping it will be a mini golf event. Increased the Library's programming budget by about 30% from last year. Setup the director's fund with the amount planned. The Library Director can use this at 10% a year.

Held a Welcome Committee event, well intended. Currently working on the Trunk or Treat event.

Question brought up regarding the annual appeal campaign. Other groups are getting things out earlier, the plan is to get it out by the end of November.

LBC/House (Chris Kenney)

No Building Committee this month, it was postponed as there were no action items. Group is not yet disbanded.

Punch list work: Working with the town to clean up the list and prioritize it. Teen room skylight is a priority due to the acoustic issue. Received one quote, asked for more details. Looking at appropriate vendors to undertake the work.

IT is having security cameras installed on town campuses including the Library, this is underway.

We received LEED certification and payment. Ordered a medallion to go on the glass on the front and children's entrances. Required to track water and energy usage. This has begun by pulling together bills. Noticed a significant increase this summer, reached out to the HVAC company to see if everything is operating properly.

Shared recommendations regarding the Beech tree with the House Committee. No changes to the current plan. Liz mentioned that part of the Hartney contract is to report on the health and status of the tree. The report will be reviewed soon and will be reported to the House subcommittee soon.

Requests for a couple items in the children's area.

1. Magazine racks in the Children's wing to be mounted to columns. (2)
2. Book carts for the board books. Board books don't sit on the shelves well. (4)

Cost around \$3,000 for these items.

Sherborn History Center. Two firms interviewed and a selection made. Agreement for proposals is being worked on. Sean helped get the relevant information to the firm. Expect to have a schedule and milestones to share with the Board.

Planning & Policies (Mary McKenna, Sue Lepard)

Met a few times. Outdoor programming, added language to meeting room policy; this is with town counsel now. Ensuring that the Library is protected against any damaged equipment.

Asked the Art Gallery Committee to draft a selection policy. This policy is with town counsel for review as well.

DEI policy has been moved to next year as we don't have the staff available right now to give it the attention it deserves. Minuteman has a program that can help analyze collections for example, which should help.

Regarding the [Joint Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Censorship](#): Sherborn is being asked if they will adopt the statement. Board reviewed statement during meeting. It was asked whether or not Sherborn would be willing to join. Suggested that we have it reviewed by the town given it includes some personnel issues. Mary Moore might be a good person to review it on the Planning Board. When was the statement released? Within the past year. Seth mentioned that an MBLC mentioned it in a March email. Given that many towns around us, and small towns have signed it, it's likely that it has been vetted. Sue suggested that the Town Counsel should review it to ensure it doesn't conflict. Decided that this should be brought to Legal and either Diane or Mary Moore before we sign onto this.

Discussed viability of a Mini Golf fundraiser within the Library run by the Friends. Recommended that we do not do this event this fall given that the Library is short staffed and the event would need to close the Library for it. In the past (Friendsgiving), the Library closed early, and one staff was hired by the FOTSL to stay on. Suggested that they move it from a Friday->Sat, to a Sat->Sun when the library is typically closed, and have the FOTSL handle the staffing. There is always concern if there is an event, particularly if alcohol is being consumed. Sandra clarified the event would be a two part event. The evening portion is the adult event with alcohol, and the second event the following morning would be a family-focused event. Sandra will put a more concrete plan including floor plan and any impact on staff. Will the staff be needed to stay late, move furniture, etc.

Liz mentioned that she was more concerned about having the event during the Library operating hours. Moving it to a time when the Library is closed would alleviate this concern. The critical issue is if any staff was willing/interested to put in these additional hours.

Sandra will also put Juliette in touch with Liz to get clarification on what parts of the program require staffing. Mary mentioned she started Mini Golf at the Natick Library when she was President of the Friends.

Finance (Frank Orlando)

Endowment activity

Change in the value of your account

	September 2024 (\$)	Year to date (\$)
Opening account value	\$2,945,518.05	\$2,660,378.28
Withdrawals and fees, including investments transferred out	0.00	-86,071.74
Dividend and interest income	9,861.18	48,734.47
Change in value of accrued interest	-2,989.18	-2,151.64
Change in market value	51,018.69	382,519.37
Closing account value	\$3,003,408.74	\$3,003,408.74

Change in the value of your account

	September 2024 (\$)	Year to date (\$)
Opening account value	\$175,553.38	\$181,632.46
Deposits, including investments transferred in	0.00	500.00
Withdrawals and fees, including investments transferred out	0.00	-11,969.09
Dividend and interest income	639.54	6,029.55
Closing account value	\$176,192.92	\$176,192.92

Barthomomew - Town Funds Sept 2024

beginning mkt val	\$115,308.83
Ending Mkt value	\$116,146.84
mkt gain	\$838.01

Over 10% gain year over year

Annual Richard Saltonstall Charitable Foundation Report

- Liz submitted report **I**
- Foundation sent a note to Liz thanking her for the report

Liz mentioned that she received a note back indicating that the new format was exactly what they were looking for. Helpful to get this feedback.

- Leads

- We are now certified! **I**
- Received check for \$100,000 (we were expecting ~\$72,000)
- Town will reduce loan amount

Assumption is that the higher amount is likely due to adjustment perhaps because of inflation.

The Finance Committee will meet next this Thursday. Liz mentioned that the budget process is beginning. Advisory will be meeting tonight, we'll soon have a better idea of when our date and liaison will be for Advisory. We may have a different liaison, this is not guaranteed to be the same. In the past we have invited these folks to our Trustees meetings.

Mary has done great work comparing Sherborn to other similar towns to ensure we are staffing properly.

Jen and Liz worked on the financial report for the state, this was due in October and has been submitted. 16.8% was spent on material, meeting the minimum of 16%. This year we qualify for 15% as we are open more hours.

Typically they will ask in December for our FY26 budget, we'd like to get this in shape over the next couple months. Advisory will come out with a letter recommending what the YoY increases should be, typically this will be 1 or 2%. If we are going to add staff we need a very strong argument for this. Use the circulation, usage, and other metrics. It was noted that there is a strong bias to have part-time employees to avoid benefits.

Liz spoke with Jeremy and Sean about capital expenditures. Suggest we should wait and focus on the punch list for this year. Question: why is being open more hours reducing the percentage required on materials. Likely because a larger library has a larger budget. For our size we are supposed to spend 20% but because our hours are longer it puts us into a different category. Also our location informs this as well.

Personnel (Erin Carroll)

Liz's Performance Evaluation:

Note: Evaluation included at the end of this document for reference. Summary of presentation as follows:

Outstanding review for Liz, feedback was very comprehensive. The highlights were reviewed from the document. In brief Liz received a glowing review, outstanding in nearly all categories.

July 2023-June 2024, first full year as Director.

Rated Outstanding across each individual area, this was an improvement from the last period which was mixed with outstanding. Averaged 13.9/15 across the board.

Letter attached to the end of the review from Brian. The form doesn't capture everything. Letter was read.

Liz expressed her appreciation for the helpful feedback from the Trustees as well as their continued support. Staffing will be a big challenge going forward.

Vote: Erin motioned to approve the review for Liz, 2024, as written. Seconded by Mary. Unanimously approved.

The Personnel Committee has met a few times. Liz gathered various resources that other towns use for staff development. Noted that we spend more on water than staff development. Funding sources, endowments, gifts, town. Liz will talk to the town to see if there is anything available. Sandra will talk to the Friends Board to see if there is any money available there as well.

There are many events that go on, some targeted to Library Director's that are well attended. There are also local conferences. These are part of the plan. But also there is smaller directed staff training between the staff as well.

Sandra mentioned regarding the FOTSL funding staff development, they need more specifics as to what the money's for, and how much is covered by other sources. It's not something that has been in the FOTSL budget in the past. It's not something that was supported before, but the FOTSL see the need given the increase in programming and other things.

Erin replied that we agree we need a plan that we can present in order to ask for funds.

Tom mentioned that this ultimately be funded through multiple sources.

Another Library ran a rough survey among various Libraries that indicates that many Libraries, even towns like Dover, have budgeted 10k+ for staff development. Sherborn is only at around \$700. We do need to start really having something itemized for this on the budget.

Question about the comparison to Dover. We haven't done that particular comparison, Dover does have a slightly larger population. The omnibus budget only states "salary and expenses", it would be useful to get more details on this to see what is the staffing budget for other town departments. There is some description around police and fire who have to have certified hours of continued development.

Regarding staffing: Another part-time employee is moving out of state. We have two part-time Library assistants open now. In the past there have been people that could sub to fill in. Unfortunately, lately folks are either retired or moved out of state and this hasn't been possible.

Discussion with Jeremy if we could establish a sub position approved so that we have something to fall back on when we do have gaps. It's been very difficult to have to constantly hire new staff. Attempts to limit what the Library is doing. We need to be protective of the staff that we have and ensure they are not overworked.

Are there other Libraries that have part time staff that might want more hours? Jen has been working on this. Many people that apply do not have a lot of Library experience, which will require a lot of training.

Erin noted that we are not in a great position staff-wise, this could have a significant impact on the Library. The need to have substitutes is significant, as well as being able to hire experienced staff in our current situation. We should ask the retired Pine Hill librarian if she is interested.

The town has been very supportive in helping to get the sub position approved.

Questions around whether we can use students to help with staffing. Liz mentioned that the preference is to have two adults and the students doing shelving. It feels like a safety issue to only have a single adult on staff. We are open three nights a week until 8pm. Friday and Sat 10-5, Monday until 6pm. We have been able to keep it open until 8pm on Monday in the past when we were in the Community Center because only two staff were needed at night.

Shelving is currently a significant issue. Sue mentioned that another organization she was affiliated with did volunteer to help with shelving. Suggested that shelving could be pretty easily trained. It was mentioned that most of the shelving is done by the students, so relieving the shelving would really only relieve the students. The other staff would not be greatly impacted. We should create a more consistent volunteer pool that could help out.

Sue offered to reach out to the COA and have a conversation. Liz wants to first hire staff.

It's noted that this is a short-term problem, but we need to work hard over the next year, otherwise we will have to start to reduce hours and/or programming.

Sherborn History Center & Museum (Brian Connolly)

Brian worked with the design firm, discussing building models and having them available on display in the library lobby. The design firm really wants these spaces to work together.

Chris went through the design proposal and gave great feedback to protect the town/Library's interests. It's important that the town and the Library's interest are represented in the design.

Doug Brown gave a lecture on the indigenous people in Sherborn. He will be succeeding George Fiske as lead for the History Center. He has a passion for history and will bring in a new perspective.

Technology (Frank Orlando, Liz Anderson)

No update.

Director and Assistant Director Report (Liz Anderson, Jen Carlson)

Annual Action Plan discussed. We wanted to include more people in the process this year, including the staff and Trustees. The plan has been broken down into various sections. The staff is taking ownership of the different areas of expertise. Similarly with the Trustees, Liz has discussed various topics with the various subcommittees.

Jen and Liz will continue to review to tighten up goals. They may need a bit longer to get everything done given the staff shortages.

Brian suggested that we put the action plan review at the beginning of the agenda for next month.

Tom suggested using MUST DO, SHOULD DO, NICE TO HAVE to help address the staffing issue.

New staff, Jenn, started from Sharon Library for Tech Services. Cindy did a great job putting together a manual and training her. Still looking for a Circulation Supervisor.

Jen mentioned some items of programming:

- This weekend is the New England Stone Walls talk.
- Jack-o-lantern competition has already started. Prizes will be given out for the top three.
- Still looking for donations for costumes, and also costumes available for anyone that needs them.
- Trick or treat parade getting set up to go to the police station and town hall.
- Authors of Sherborn Book fair in November with Aesop's fable and 350th. This will include crafts, author panels and other activities. Holiday gifts will also be available.
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Closing

Motion to adjourn Mary motioned , Sue seconded. Unanimous vote Yes.