

**ILSLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 7, 2020
ELECTRONIC MEETING VIA ZOOM PLATFORM**

MINUTES

Board decisions are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

Present

Board members: Joe McVeigh, President; Amy Mincher, Secretary; Andy Hooper, Treasurer; John Freidin; Catherine Nichols

Library Staff: Director, Dana Hart; Adult Services Librarian Chris Kirby; Children’s Services Librarian Tricia Allen.

Public: Peggy Rush, Meg Baker

Minutes taken by Saskia Gori-Montanelli.

CALL TO ORDER

President Joe McVeigh called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. See Board Packet for agenda and accompanying documents.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the regular meeting of November 9, 2020 were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The board welcomed Tricia Allen and Chris Kirby who will be serving as acting co-directors of the library during the maternity leave of director Dana Hart. Also welcomed was Meg Baker, who was considering running for a position on the library board in the March town election.

PLANS FOR MATERNITY COVERAGE

Library Director Dana Hart shared a summary of plans for her maternity coverage. Starting in February, Youth Services Librarian Tricia Allen and Adult Services Librarian Chris Kirby will serve as acting co-directors while Dana is on leave. Tricia will be responsible for fiscal and personnel management, while Chris will be responsible for property management and planning and policy making. They will be jointly responsible for library management and public relations.

Tricia stated that she was feeling good about the planning process, and Chris agreed that the process had been very helpful in thinking through everything that will be involved.

Joe asked if Chris and Tricia had any decision points to guide them in the decision-making process regarding library services during the pandemic if the current situation worsens or improves. Dana said

that they started coming up with a plan for this, but it got derailed when the library closed for browsing. She said that they have a general idea of what the plan will look like, and it will be finished before she leaves.

Peggy Rush asked if Chris and Tricia will be in contact with Dana while she's away. Dana highlighted some key areas that would be important for her to know about. She would like to stay in the loop, and she will be accessible for questions.

VOTE ON ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION FOR THOSE TAKING ON ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES DURING DIRECTOR'S MATERNITY LEAVE

The board briefly went into a breakout room for an executive session to discuss a matter related to personnel and funding. While they were gone, Dana discussed the role of the board to the public, explaining that it focusses on big picture mission-driven decision making.

The board voted to approve additional compensation for those taking on additional responsibilities during Dana's maternity leave, at a rate discussed earlier.

DISCUSSION OF ENGRAVING ON LIBRARY SIDEWALK

Dana spoke about the Word On the Street Initiative, explaining that David Hohenschau applied for a grant from the Council to the Arts to engrave original poems on the sidewalks around Middlebury. He got the funding and began the engraving process in front of the Ilsley Library steps. Dana has not heard much feedback but mentioned that former Library Director David Clark stated that he didn't like the aesthetic of the engraving, and that the craftsmanship did a disservice to the poem. He was hopeful that something could be done to make it crisper.

Dana went over the options, which were either to leave the engraving as is, or use David H's additional funding to tear out the concrete, re-pour it, and stamp the poem in. This would make it look crisper, but it would cost \$3,000 to \$4,000. Dana asked the board for feedback.

Joe pointed out that the sidewalk would get torn out eventually, and it might be a good idea to look into putting the poem on a plaque, or something else more permanent. Dana said the grant application was specific to the sidewalk engraving, but that she would talk to David H about it. Amy Mincher and Catherine Nichols weren't completely satisfied with the current aesthetic of the engraving, but both of them agreed that it didn't seem worth the money to re-do the engraving. It was the general sense of the board to leave the engraving as it is.

VOTE ON REVISED MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY AND CHILDREN IN THE LIBRARY POLICY

Andy moved the adoption of the Materials Selection Policy, and Catherine seconded the motion. With The amended policy was passed unanimously.

Andy moved the adoption of the Children in the Library Policy, and Catherine seconded the motion. The amended policy was passed unanimously.

REVIEW OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION; AND LIBRARY PROGRAMS AND SPACES POLICIES

John Freidin summarized the Professional Development and Education and Library Programs and Spaces Policies. He went over the vocabulary changes that were made, such as replacing “parent” with “guardian”, and deletion of words that weren’t necessary.

The board will vote on these policies at the January 2021 meeting.

John went over key policy differences in the revised policies. Andy stated that this document was a big improvement.

Regarding the Library Programs and Spaces Policy, Amy asked if it was allowed to charge people to attend a non-library meeting in the meeting room. Chris said that when people held meetings that were open to the public, they were not charged, such as public Republican or Democratic party meetings. However, if a family wanted to use the space for a private party, they would be asked to pay because it would be a closed event that isn’t open to the public. He added that the meeting room has been closed for so long that it’s unclear how much will be the same when it opens again.

John added that he thought it would be OK for staff members to suggest other locations or venues instead of the Ilsley meeting rooms, such as the rooms in the EMS building, the Congregational Church, or the Havurah house. Andy Hooper felt that this suggestion would be in opposition to the desire to promote the greatest possible diversity in library use.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Dana asked the board if they had any questions regarding the Director’s Report.

John suggested sending a note or gift to gardener Anna Benson for her many years of work. The board discussed possible ideas for celebrating her work, such as a small gathering in the garden, but it was decided that this wouldn’t be appropriate because of Covid-19. Catherine suggested having something written in the newspaper, and John suggested planting a tree in the garden in her honor when the pandemic permits.

Joe asked about progress on the Ilsley website and about the Aspen Discovery Layer.

Dana said that the website vendor Terrier Tenacity had sent the first draft of the outline for a new homepage. The website team will meet on Thursday, December 10th to discuss it.

She then spoke about the Aspen Discovery Layer, which was introduced to her by Chris. The goal is to use Aspen Discovery as a replacement for the current public interface for the catalog system, even though it (Koha) will still be used for cataloging. Aspen would bring together Overdrive, Koha, Listen up Vermont, Libby, and Kanopy together so that they behave as one for the user. Dana said that the vendor gave a demonstration to the Vermont library consortium, which had universally positive feedback. Chris

explained that the consortium is a group of libraries that share the same catalog system, Koha. He said that the individuals who worked to develop Aspen Discovery were hired by the main vendor for Koha. Dana said that this would be a big change to adjust to, but it would definitely be worthwhile.

Peggy asked how expensive it would be to implement Aspen. Dana replied that there was an annual fee of \$7,500, and an initial setup cost of \$7,500. It would cost about \$15,000 for the first year, and half of that going forward.

The select board will be shortly deciding on an individual to fulfill the remainder of the term of Victor Nuovo who has stepped down until Town Meeting. Ilesley Trustee Andy Hooper has put in his name to be considered for this role. Joe indicated that should Andy be appointed to the select board to fulfill the remainder of Victor Nuovo's term, Andy would be able and willing to remain on the Ilesley board. Vermont law permits individuals to serve simultaneously on a town Select Board and on a municipal library board.

BOARD COMMENTS AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS (NEW OR OTHER BUSINESS)

Joe and Dana thanked Chris and Tricia for taking on the extra responsibilities during Dana's maternity leave, and Joe added that he was excited for Dana.

Andy was glad 2020 was coming to an end.

ADJOURNMENT

President Joe McVeigh adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will take place on Monday, January 11 at 5:00 p.m. via electronic meeting.