

Trustee Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2008

The July meeting of the Leominster Public Library Board of Trustees was called to order at 5:05 p.m. on Monday, July 14, 2008

In attendance were: Gilbert Tremblay, Chairman; Kathleen Reynolds Daigneault; Nancy Hicks; Carol Millette; Robert Salvatore; Jeanne Zephir; Assistant Director Meredith Foley; and Director Susan Theriault Shelton. Matthew Bruun of the *Worcester Telegram* attended a portion of the meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as corrected. (NH/CM)

OLD BUSINESS:

Chairman Tremblay asked that the Library Closing/Decertification Policy be discussed first on the agenda. The Board agreed.

Mr. Tremblay indicated that he would like to hear from all of the Trustees regarding the proposed policy. He began by stating that the residents of Leominster have shown great support of our library, and he feels it is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to see that the interests of the citizens of Leominster are foremost in any decision that is made. He indicated that he feels sorry for other communities who do not show support of their libraries.

Mrs. Hicks reflected on last month's meeting, in which Fitchburg Mayor Wong's Chief of Staff Kenneth Jones attended. Mr. Jones indicated that there were plans to put an override vote for the library (and other municipal services) on the September 16th ballot. He asked that the Trustees hold off on a decision at that time. The following day the *Sentinel & Enterprise* reported to the contrary. She indicated that a decision is needed. Mrs. Hicks noted that since moving back into the newly expanded facility, the Leominster Public Library has seen no increase in staff. Due to the additional demands for library service, the library staff is working harder to keep up with the increased volume, and the budget is very tight.

Mrs. Millette indicated that she has been on the Board of Trustees for 30 years, and is a retired educator. She said this is one of the hardest decisions she has had to make. She noted that Leominster was in a similar situation in the 1980's, and commented on how long it takes to recover from serious cutbacks. She emphasized how supportive the residents of Leominster have been throughout the recent building project, and that any decision must be made in the best interest of the residents of Leominster who shoulder the tax burden.

Mr. Salvatore expressed his hope that Fitchburg could use the Board's watching and waiting to effect a change, however that has not come. He feels badly for the Fitchburg Library staff and residents, but Fitchburg must stand-up for their library.

Mrs. Zephir was regretful that this situation has arisen, but does not feel that the Trustees can ask the Leominster Library staff and residents to take on the added burden of the Fitchburg residents.

Mrs. Daigneault indicated that the Trustees first obligation is to the citizens of Leominster. She was hopeful that Fitchburg would come up with some creative solutions to their problems; however Leominster can't bear the burden without harming ourselves.

Mrs. Shelton said that she understand this will be a very difficult decision for the Board to make. She also felt it would be difficult for the library staff to turn away Fitchburg residents when they want to borrow materials, since the nature of the library business is to welcome all.

Mr. Tremblay thanked all for their comments and reminded them that this is not intended as a vote against Fitchburg, as there are other libraries in the area that are also in jeopardy of losing state certification.

Mrs. Shelton indicated that this might be a good time to give an overview of the library's usage report for the past year, noting that the numbers have "gone through the roof" since moving back.

Circulation up 45%
Reference up 75%
Programs up 18% and attendance up 36%
Network transfers up 50%
Library cards up 70%

Mr. Tremblay reminded the Trustees that with network transfers, each item is handled 3 times: check out, check in, and shelving. Mrs. Daigneault also reminded the Board that almost 90% of the library's budget comes from the city.

Mrs. Shelton distributed copies of a proposed draft policy for Library Closing/Decertification. She noted that nothing would change until January 1, 2009. She also noted that the libraries in Lunenburg, Gardner, and Groton have already made the decision not to loan material to residents of communities with decertified libraries. Nearly 20 years ago, Lunenburg temporarily closed its library, and all the area libraries voted not to loan to residents of Lunenburg.

After a brief discussion and a minor change in the draft policy. **A motion was made and unanimously approved to adopt the Library Closing/Decertification Policy as amended.**
(CM/RS)

Mrs. Shelton updated the Trustees on issues pertaining to the Library Expansion Project.

- The Building Committee met on June 20, 2008
- Mrs. Shelton attended a memorial service for Frank Adams (one of our project architects) on June 11th. She attended with Owen Shuman, Director of the Groton Public Library, and Gail Landy, Director of the Levi Heywood Library in Gardner. Leominster, Groton, and Gardner are the three Adams and Smith libraries in Central Massachusetts.
- George Carr from SAR, the firm hired by Beacon Architectural Associates to design the HV/AC, electrical, plumbing, and technology infrastructure, was at the library for the day on June 26th to review outstanding HV/AC issues. Project Manager Mike Mullaney and Alby Donaldson spent the day with Mr. Carr as he reviewed the HV/AC punch list. He will be reviewing his findings with the owner of SAR, and issuing a report. Once this has been received and reviewed, a meeting will be scheduled.
- Fontaine has provided Beacon Architectural Associates with the cost breakdown for the necessary modifications to the walkways and ramps. Beacon is currently reviewing this information internally and with the civil engineering firm hired for the project. A meeting with Beacon, Fontaine, and the library will hopefully be scheduled in the near future.

- Guardian Information Technologies has finally resolved the problem with the library's PA system, which is now being used to announce library closings and can be used in case of an emergency.
- Annual testing of the library's back flow preventers, fire extinguishers, wet and dry sprinkler system, fire alarm panel, and elevator have either been completed or are in the process of being scheduled.
- Window treatments for the large bay windows located in the Children's Room, Adult Department and Young Adult Room were installed on July 9th. The window treatments for the community room, historical room, historical conference room, and administrative offices are slated for next week or the week after. These window treatments are being paid for with private money.
- The library has hired Paul McCracken to fertilize the library's trees, since many of them were showing evidence of diminishing crowns. This fertilization is intended to promote root growth to enable the trees to establish themselves more quickly. Alby Donaldson is working on pruning dead branches, and watering those trees not covered by the library's irrigation system.

Mrs. Shelton thanked Nancy Hicks and Carol Millette, and noted that they continue to work on the signage for the donor plaques. Hopefully, the designated donor signs will be ready in the early fall. They are also verifying correct naming for the general donor plaques.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The Beacon of Hope will be holding a small reception at the library at which time they will unveil a banner made by the clients under the guidance of an artist. This project was funded through the Leominster Arts Council. The banner will be on display from the railing of the balcony on the third level for approximately two weeks.

The Friends of the Library have adopted their 2009 budget, and will submit a proposal to the Montachusett Chorale to sponsor a concert to benefit the Friends efforts to provide technology for programming for all ages of the community.

The Johnny Appleseed Festival will be held on September 13th. The library will be sponsoring a performance of the Toe Jam Puppet Band that day as part of the Festival. Should the Festival be moved to the rain date of September 27th, the performance will still be held on Sept. 13th.

The 1st anniversary celebration of the Dr. Martin T. Feldman Children's Room at the Leominster Public Library will be held on Sunday, September 21st from 2-5 p.m. There will be a variety of performers throughout the afternoon, as well as refreshments. This celebration is sponsored by the Feldman Family.

The meeting adjourned at 7 p.m.

It was unanimously decided to forego the August meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 8, 2008 at 5:00 p.m. in the library's conference room.

Respectfully submitted,

Meredith A. Foley
Recording Secretary

