

## Trustee Meeting Minutes

September 14, 2020

The regular monthly meeting of the Leominster Public Library Board of Trustees was held on Monday, September 14, 2020 in the Leominster Public Library community room. The meeting was called to order at 5:04 PM.

In attendance were: Chairperson Mark Bodanza, Vice Chairperson Susan Chalifoux Zephir, Secretary Lawrence Nfor, Susan Shelton, and Joanne D'Onfro. James Despo attended virtually. Others present included Acting Interim Director Nicole Piermarini and Mayor Dean Mazzarella.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the July 13, 2020 meeting were approved as corrected. The minutes of the August 10, 2020 meeting and August 27, 2020 special meeting were approved (SCZ/SS) Vote: 6-0.

### **Director's Report**

The trustees complimented the Acting Interim Director on the level of detail in the report. Clarification was made that the total patron visit statistics were the combined total from curbside pick-up and appointments.

### **Old Business**

#### *Library Reopening and Hours*

The Acting Interim Director announced the Teen Librarian submitted her letter of resignation. Because of this, the library is unable to staff the Friday appointments without further increasing the number of hours worked by part-time staff who are already working above and beyond their regularly scheduled hours to cover for vacations and vacancies. In light of this, the Acting Interim Director suggested expanding Saturday hours, staffing the building from 9-5 while curbside service runs 9:30-4:00 to allow proper time for cleaning and sanitizing.

Trustee Shelton asked about the plans to open the children's room or expand to computer use. The Acting Interim Director relayed that the Head of Children's Services wanted to wait until after school began to see how that affected COVID numbers and to assess what the children's needs are. Regarding computer use, the library is trying to source PPE and devise a schedule that does not impact the current appointments. The Acting Interim Director relayed that the Technology and Reference Librarian has contacted other libraries to research best practices for reopening the computer area.

Trustee Despo inquired about the possibility of using volunteers to staff desks or shelves. The Acting Interim Director relayed having volunteers man desks would be a violation of patron

privacy. In addition, having volunteers would impact the number of appointments the library could offer as they are included in the totals.

Trustee Shelton asked about the lack of changes to the state aid program hours requirement. The Acting Interim Director relayed that the MBLC does plan to change the hours requirement but will be waiting until after the current state aid period and after their location move.

Trustee Shelton inquired what was being done to promote curbside and if there were better ways to promote current library services. The Acting Interim Director relayed that the elementary school librarians want to film a video virtual tour of the library that would go to all the elementary school children and their parents. In addition, the Friends will be restarting their newsletter and the Special Services Coordinator and Technology and Reference Librarian have been developing another round of publicity for appointments and curbside.

Trustee Shelton voiced concern over the hours widget on the website, citing that when people look quickly it shows that the library is closed. The Acting Interim Director relayed she was working with Clearpeak to enact changes to the widget and hours page.

Vice Chairperson Chalifoux Zephir moved to “expand the curbside hours on Saturday” (SS).  
Vote: 6-0.

The trustees requested the Acting Interim director ascertain the building’s square footage and verify the total number of patrons that can be in the library and report at the next meeting.

#### *Building Management System Upgrade*

Hardware for the BMS upgrade has been installed and software was developed remotely. Minor tweaks were done to the Energy Recovery Ventilator to allow for better air exchange which has become increasingly important due to COVID 19. A representative from ImPower will train the Acting Interim Director, Building Maintenance Craftsman, and Technology and Reference Librarian on how to use the software on September 18, 2020.

#### *Curbside and Return Statistics*

The Acting Interim Director noted that CWMARS reenabled due date notifications on September 2, 2020, and the library has seen an increase in returns. Only 825 of the 16,813 items due while the book drop was closed are outstanding. As of September 30, 2020, CWMARS will be enabling the remainder of their notices as well as bills for anything that is over three weeks late.

Fine Amnesty stopped September 2, 2020. All items returned after that date are backdated after quarantine to reflect the day they were returned. Items returned late will accrue late fees.

### *Part-time Staff Increases*

The Acting Interim Director explained changes made to the projections provided by the previous Director. She noted that staff had been notified of the raises and letters were placed in their personnel files. She relayed that in order to enact the raises, the Comptroller has requested signed copies of the approved meeting minutes for the regular August 10, 2020 meeting and the August 27, 2020 special meeting. The Board Chair asked that the trustees remain after the meeting adjourned to sign the approved minutes.

### *Server Project Update*

The Acting Interim Director relayed that HiQ has taken over the server project and it is underway. HiQ cannot provide a specific ETA on installation as other city departments are getting their server upgrades completed before the library.

### *Art Audit*

The appraisal book for the appraisal done on October 6, 2014 was located and made available to the trustees at the meeting as it could not be included as part of the packet due to a clause stating that it cannot be reproduced. The Acting Interim Director relayed there was a note in the appraisal folder to consider adding the maps on the third floor next time an appraisal is done.

The Board Chair requested the Acting Interim Director contact Skinner to see how often they recommend artwork be appraised and ascertain a cost.

The Acting Interim Director relayed the fine arts insurance invoice arrived and requested a transfer of funds from the unrestricted Herman Nelson Curtis trust fund to pay the bill.

Trustee Chalifoux Zephir moved “to pay \$568 from the Herman Nelson Curtis trust fund.” (LN)  
Vote:6-0

## **New Business**

### *Social Media Policy Review*

The Acting Interim Director spoke about the importance of social media to libraries, highlighting the benefits, barriers to use, and the necessity of using social media to reach younger generations. She provided a look at Tik Tok in general and detailed the libraries use of this platform. She spoke about brand engagement during quarantine, the inability of younger generations to distinguish between online and offline presences, and the importance of having a policy to govern what is put out for content and to establish the library’s brand message.

The Chairperson argued in favor of someone being responsible for all content put out on social media, be it a committee or the Director. Trustee Despo agreed. Vice Chairperson Chalifoux

Zephir voiced concerns that it is difficult to reach younger generations and social media takes staff time which is money.

The Chairperson inquired if using social media would lead to a difference in community outreach, an increase in the usage of electronic holdings, or increase the number of patrons coming in the door. Secretary Nfor noted that social media is important to have, but the benefits might not be seen right away. He voiced concerns over the implications of social media contributing to shortened attention spans in users. He argued for using social media in a long-term sustainable way that works not only for patrons but benefits the library as well.

The trustees noted they had no objections to the school filming a virtual tour of the library.

#### *NECS Invoice*

The library received an invoice from NECS regarding an overdue balance from color copy overages. Upon investigation, the Acting Interim Director determined NECS entered the wrong beginning meter recording. When it was adjusted it removed the balance owed for the current fiscal year but created an overage in the previous fiscal year that the library now owed.

The Acting Interim Director relayed that the Comptroller stated the bill could either be paid from a revolving fund or the gifts and donations account. She suggested the bill could be paid using the discretionary, unclassified, technology, movie night, young adult programming, adult programming, and Leominster Veterans Memorial Center line items. The Chairperson relayed he spoke with the Comptroller and Mayor and was told the library could potentially ask for funds to be appropriated from expenses to expenses. It would have to go before the City Council and it would take longer. Trustee Shelton suggested going forward, tracking the copies to carry over money at the end of the fiscal year to pay for overages as had been done in years past.

Trustee D'Onfro moved to "pay \$814.43 from the accounts that Nicole enumerated" (LN)  
Vote:6-0

#### *Staff Vacancies*

The Acting Interim Director voiced concerns that the library could not address the current staff vacancies by just hiring more part-time staff as the position responsible for hiring the staff is also vacant. She relayed a qualified, internal candidate has expressed interest but there is a city-wide hiring freeze right now.

The Mayor expressed the need for more, in-depth communication. He asked if there is a reason the building is not open and if there is a reopening plan. He proposed adjusting hours and cutting down on curbside services while increasing more self-serve options. In addition, he proposed potentially hiring a part-time cleaner, greeter, and outreach coordinator. He relayed

that right now his number one priority is getting the library open in a way that is safe for the staff and patrons.

The Acting Interim Director relayed that the library is open by appointment and for walk-ins during select hours and there is a reopening plan in place. The library is having difficulties acquiring the necessary PPE to advance to the next reopening phase. The current vacancies make it difficult to staff all the necessary desks, one of which is a greeter, while still ensuring all the work that requires off desk time is done. She clarified that just because the building may be closed during some hours there is still work that gets done, all of which would need to be done regardless of the building closure. She relayed the library already has an underutilized self-checkout machine.

To ensure better communication, the Mayor asked for goals and objectives for the future of the library. The Acting Interim Director relayed that these were covered in the yearly action plan and strategic plan and she would provide the Mayor with copies. The Chairperson suggested the library staff put together a more detailed plan and that he, the Acting Interim Director, and the Mayor discuss things further.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30pm.

Nicole Piermarini, Acting Interim Director