



Fletcher Free Library
LIBRARY BOARD of COMMISSIONERS
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 18, 2020

Present: Gale Batsimm, Emilia Bloch, Megan Butterfield, Jonathan Chapple-Sokol, Mary Danko, Ariel Felcan, Hemant Ghising, Molly Loomis, Cate MacLachlan, Amy Mellencamp.

Approval of Minutes: From September 16, 2020: Megan Butterfield/Cate MacLachlan

Public Forum: Justin Joyle and Sebastian Hale Krull attended to observe as part of their UVM class.

Friends' Report: Jonathan Chapple-Sokol reported that the Friends have continued to work to raise funds for the library during this challenging time. Their eBay sales of special books have brought in about \$1200 per month and 7 pop-up lawn sales raised around \$600 each. The Friends will begin online local sales through a new website in upcoming months. The Friends will participate in the BCA Holiday Sale in City Hall Park on December 5 & 6. The Friends are looking for volunteers to post in specific Front Porch Forum neighborhoods. Jonathan will send out a list to the Commission.

Director's Report: Mary Danko reported that staff has been working hard over the past months in difficult circumstances, but that the library has been pivoting well. She noted that the Tech Center will be reducing reservations to one sitting per day given the uptick in COVID in the state. The library added air purifiers in low ceilinged basement areas. There is no plan to close the library at this time, but she noted that if restaurants go to take out only that will likely be when the library would also need to revert back to curbside pickup only. Amy asked how the Commission could support staff. Mary said that the Friends provided two lovely lunches for staff and that she might coordinate with the Friends.

Mary updated the Commission on examining policies through an equity lens. She, Gale and Megan met with the interim director of Hillsboro Public Library in Oregon to discuss their review of policies for racial equity. Hillsboro had a fellow program and sent their new policies to FFL. Mary, Gale and Megan also met with Glenn McRae, a former Library Commissioner who teaches with the MPA program at UVM, to discuss a student internship that would review library policies for equity. She said there will be a further update next meeting.

The library is celebrating the 30th year of the Books for Children Gift Campaign and received coverage from Local 22/44 and WCAX. Cate inquired about gifts for adult patrons, such as mittens. Mary said she would follow up with Abby and Spectrum, as last year the library provided hand warmers and Spectrum had a take and go display in the teen area of gloves and other items. The library will not be open as a warming shelter this year, but the Champlain Inn will open as a low-barrier 50-bed shelter on December 1.

The library began contact tracing, requesting computer users leave a phone number, but it had a chilling effect even though it was optional. The library may move to an optional form that everyone receives and patrons may accept or decline. Mary has sent the form to the City for approval.

The Annual Appeal, the Friends largest annual fundraiser, is underway. Gale noted that 100% participation—at any level—from the Commission and Friends' board builds a strong campaign and encourages other donations. The library has many new offerings this year including Take and Make Kits, STEAM kits, and the Burlington StoryWalk.

Recruitment Subcommittee: The Commission has 4 applications for the vacant trustee position. Molly, Patrick, Amy, Gale and Mary will review the applications. Amy will set up a meeting with recruitment after Thanksgiving for screening the applications and then send to Chol, Mona and Cate, as trustees, to interview and select. Molly and Cate offered strategies. It was decided that the committee will send along qualified applicants for the final decision. Amy offered to sit in with trustees. Molly noted that she was interested in making the recruitment process transparent and closer to the commissioner process, so aligned the application with the commissioner application. The committee looked at what areas needed bolstering. She noted that one question that did not appear in the application but is an area of focus for the Commission is involvement in anti-racism work. That can be a question in the interview. Mary thanked the committee for their thoughtfulness.

New Business: Mary thanked Amy, Ariel and Emilia for participating by reading in the Banned Book event. The Commission discussed the annual winter breakfast with the Friends and City Councilors. This year it would need to be a Zoom breakfast, but we could have goodie bags that participants pick up before the January 20 online gathering. Traditionally this winter breakfast has a guest speaker and the business meeting of the Commissioners follows the breakfast.

Next meeting: January 20 Winter Breakfast