**Stoneham Public Library**

**Board of Trustees (Virtual) Meeting**

**November 9, 2020**

**Attending:** Ciccarello, DiPietro, FitzGerald, Francis, Killilea, Director Langley. Staff: Maureen Saltzman, Katie Witham, Debbie Cunningham.

**Absent**: Fixman

Call to Order: **7:05**

**Approval of Minutes and Statistics:**

Minutes: No discussion.

*Motion to approve: Francis, 2nd DiPietro. Vote: Unanimous.*

Statistics: Traditional circulation is slightly down; ebook circulation is up. The Director would like to increase database usage.

*Motion to approve statistics: Francis, 2nd DiPietro. Vote: Unanimous.*

**Reopening Updates**: The Director reported that the library is still waiting for large capacity air filters, which were ordered 6 weeks ago. The Junior Room circulation desk is being relocated; the town has added a phone line to the new desk location and work is almost complete. The library is getting Plexiglass to divide tables. Staff are cleaning and moving chairs. The Director noted that some other NOBLE libraries are not yet open. The library has received supplies from the town, including face shields and child- and adult-sized masks. Rocco reiterated that the staff have the Trustees’ support and that the Board wants to ensure staff safety and comfort around reopening.

**Overdue Fees, Printing and Copying Fees:**

Late Fees: The Director and the Town Administrator have discussed ways the library can show support to patrons. The Director proposed permanently eliminating late fees. With the introduction of automatic renewals, late fees have fallen from $1,400 in fiscal year 2017 and 2018 to $800 in FY19 and $380 in FY20 (prior to the pandemic). NOBLE libraries are currently waiving late fees due to COVID-19; the Director would like to make this permanent. Kathryn asked whether patrons would accrue late fees if someone else has requested the item; the Director responded that they would receive reminders only. Rocco asked whether patrons are blocked from borrowing additional materials if they are late returning items. Debbie said these accounts are currently flagged and if patrons have more than $2 in fines they cannot place holds or use services like Hoopla. Tricia asked how many autorenewals patrons get. The Director said patrons can have up to two autorenewals for Stoneham items only. Tricia pointed out eliminating late fees would be good publicity for the library and would save staff having to handle cash. Maureen said that staff support eliminating late fees. Jane reported that some residents are afraid of using the library because they are afraid of having overdue books.

*Motion that the Board of Trustees eliminate collection of fees and fines on overdue books to take effect January 1, 2021: DiPietro, 2nd: Killilea. Vote: Unanimous.*

Printing and Copying Fees: The Director has also been looking at printing and copying fees. The library previously had a revolving fund for these charges, which was eliminated by the town last year; the charges also did not cover printing costs. Currently, rates are $0.10 per page for black and white, and $0.50 per page for color. The Director asked Matt to look at what other libraries are charging. Some libraries charge the same for black and white and color; some libraries offer a certain number of pages for free. Rocco noted that ink is expensive and that having some charge would encourage patrons to only print what they need. Tricia asked how printing and copying currently work. Maureen reported that many patrons are printing resumes and homework; color printing is popular. Maureen felt that current charges are too low (for black and white) and too high (for color). She noted the library printers are a backup option for people who are having trouble printing at home. Jane supported having one price for both color and black and white printing. Debbie said the staff would also support that.

*Motion to amend printing and copying charges to have a single price, $0.25 per page, for both black and white and color printing, effective immediately: Francis, 2nd DiPietro. Vote: Unanimous.*

**Pilot Floating Non-Fiction Collection with Middle School:** The Director reported that the non-fiction items in the Junior Room are currently 12% of the collection but just 1% of circulation. Rachel has been working on ways to increase usage; one new initiative is “Non-fiction November.” She has also been weeding out of date items. Rachel has previously worked with the middle school librarian on a horror book club; they are now discussing creating a floating non-fiction collection, through which the library would check out a number of non-fiction books on a given theme to send to the middle school, where students could borrow them from the middle school library. The middle school library would report circulation statistics back to the Junior Room and would handle missing/damaged items. The floating collection would help the middle school provide materials to students following book budget cuts. The library has had staff cuts but not materials cuts due to the pandemic. Jessica asked whether it would be easier to offer books through interlibrary loan. The Director said staffing and transportation would be more challenging. Jessica asked whether Stoneham residents outside the public school system would lose access to materials with this program. Tricia thought the proposed loan period (half to all of the school year) was too long and would like to see the timing aligned to the curriculum. Jane is happy to see the library and school collaborating; she wondered how the program would be promoted at the middle school and suggested signage near the library materials. Rocco wondered how the program would impact foot traffic in the Junior Room. The Director and Jessica will work with Rachel on refining the proposal.

**Book Delivery Service and Partnership with Senior Center**: The Senior Center has a new van and driver; the Director and Maureen Canova have been discussing offering home book deliveries to seniors and homebound residents twice a month. Patrons would need a library card to participate. For privacy, the library would put materials in tote bags, which could be purchased through State Aid. Kathryn asked how returns would work. The Director pointed out that bimonthly deliveries would align with the library’s two-week loan period and the driver could pick up returns while making new deliveries.

*Motion that the library work with the Senior Center to set up a book delivery service: Killilea, 2nd DiPietro. Vote: Unanimous*.

**Community Reads Sponsorship**: The Human Resources Commission and the School Committee have proposed *Stamped* as a community read. The Community Development Corporation is sponsoring it. The goal is to have 75-100 people reading the book and participating in small group and panel discussions. The Director would like the library to cosponsor the event and thought it was a good opportunity for the library to participate in a town initiative. Jane asked whether the library would have copies of the book for people to borrow; according to the Director the library currently has one copy and could order more. Jane suggested making the racial justice reading list on the library website more prominent and also suggested creating a list of companion books available at the library. Kathryn suggested working with Book Oasis to distribute the reading list.

*Motion that the library support the community read with $500 in financial sponsorship and with promotion and expertise: Francis, 2nd DiPietro; Vote: Unanimous.*

**Staff Training Day**: The Director would like to have a round robin format where staff could share what is new and what they are working on; however, she is concerned about having all staff in the building at the same time. Tricia suggested having smaller groups share updates instead.

**COVID Changes to Behavior Policy**: The Director shared a revised draft of the COVID behavior policy with the Board, in the agreed-upon one-page format. Jane asked whether the reservation system would also collect contact information for contact tracing. The Director reported that the library can use the system for reserving museum passes for making appointments to visit the library in-person; patrons will check a box acknowledging the COVID behavior policy when making a booking. Tricia asked whether Town Hall needs to approve collecting patron contact information. Rocco noted that it was like making a restaurant reservation. Jessica suggested putting any information about contact tracing in the reservation form rather than in the COVID behavioral policy.

*Motion to approve the new COVID behavioral policy: FitzGerald, 2nd Killilea; Vote: Unanimous.*

**New/Other Business**: The Director submit the library’s waiver for certification to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. The MBLC informed her that 57 out of about 360 communities are applying for a waiver this year, half the amount that applied during the last recession. Within NOBLE, Stoneham is one of only 3 libraries to have received a disproportionate budget cut. The MBLC could grant the waiver, or it could grant a “waiver with reservations,” requiring two years of hearings. The current waiver hearings have already been rescheduled from January 2021 to February 2021. The Director will not know more for some time. Rocco reported that he, Tricia, and the Director spoke with the Town Administrator about the situation and the town is supportive of the library. Rocco also pointed out that the library’s budget is much smaller than other town departments, so smaller cuts have a bigger impact.
Jessica asked whether there is an ETA for the new air purifiers; the Director is working with the facilities department to get that information.
The Director would like to discuss the assistant director job description at the next meeting.

**Next Meeting:** December 14th at 7pm. Virtual.

**Adjournment:** 8:55. *Motion to adjourn: Killilea, 2nd DiPietro. Unanimous.*