**Stoneham Public Library**

**Board of Trustees (Virtual) Meeting**

**January 11, 2021**

**Attending:** Ciccarello, DiPietro, FitzGerald, Fixman, Francis, Killilea, Director Langley. Staff: Maureen, Katie, Debbie, Rachel, Matthew, Bruce, Angela.

Call to Order: **7:01**

**Approval of Minutes and Statistics:**

Minutes: Jane asked why minutes are not being posted online; Nicole is investigating.

*Motion to approve: Fixman, 2nd Killilea; Vote: Unanimous.*

Statistics: Nicole noted that circulation and interlibrary loan statistics both increased in December.

*Motion to accept December statistics: Killilea, 2nd Fixman. Vote: Unanimous.*

**New Staff Appointment:** Katie Witham applied for the senior library technician opening in the Junior Room. Katie also received her master’s in library science in December. Nicole and Rachel are negotiating with the town for her starting salary to be higher than step 1 to reflect her academic credentials. Jane asked whether the position will be for the Junior Room only. Nicole stated that the job description is for a Junior Room position but that Katie will help in other areas of the library until a replacement can be hired for her current position. Tricia wondered whether the Trustees could recommend a specific salary step without causing issues with the union; she suggested the union could have a memorandum of agreement for a specific position based on education. Jane asked when the posting for Katie’s current position could be posted; Nicole will post as soon as possible.

*Motion to accept Kathleen (Katie) Witham for the position of senior library technician at a salary to be determined by the town administrator; the Trustees recommend a starting salary at step 2: Francis, 2nd Fixman. Vote: Unanimous.*

**Reopening Updates**: Nicole and Jane both spoke to Health Agent Erin Hull about reopening. Nicole also contacted neighboring libraries to find out their current status and plans; she reported that:

* Wakefield plans to remain closed until the vaccine is widely distributed as staff are currently using public spaces as work spaces
* Reading plans to reopen for appointments January 25 at the earliest; staff receive 2 weeks’ advance notice to plan changes in schedules.

Nicole would like to explore enhanced remote services, such as video browsing consultations. She noted that the town has extended the availability of emergency pandemic funds through December 2021. She also noted that the new phone system in the Junior Room is not operational yet.

Kathryn asked for an estimate of real numbers of daily visitors. Nicole thinks with current capacity restrictions the library could have 5 appointments at a time. Rocco noted that people could book consecutive appointments if they anticipate needing more time in the library (e.g. to use computers for resume updates).

Jane asked whether reopening would include evening and Saturday hours as the Trustees have previously requested. Nicole would like to begin with limited hours and then expand. Nicole and Bruce noted that time to clean between appointments is necessary.

Tricia asked about the logistics of offering both in-person appointments and front-door pickup and whether the front door would be unlocked. Kathryn thought the front door would be locked to control how many people are in the building and to ensure patrons comply with covid policies. Rocco asked for walk-in appointments to be accommodated if there were open slots.

Jane requested clear signage. Nicole noted the library has a sandwich board but the letters are missing. Tricia suggested the library buy a new sign instead.

Jessica asked how the library would decide to close once it reopens. Rocco suggested that the Chair and the Director can make the call as needed.

*Motion to reopen to the public by appointment with limited hours beginning January 19 and regular operating hours beginning January 25: Killilea, 2nd Fixman. Vote: Unanimous.*

 **Action items:** Nicole to buy new outdoor sign(s) to publicize library reopening

**Strategic Planning and Marketing:** Nicole would like to restart the strategic planning process; she would like to re-run the survey to see how patron priorities have shifted during the pandemic. She would also like to create a marketing plan to support moving the strategic plan forward and plans to speak with consultant Barbara Alevras on this topic. She reported that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners has extended deadlines to submit strategic plans by 1 year.

Tricia would prefer that the library finish the strategic plan started before the pandemic; she pointed out that the Trustees have not had a chance to review survey responses. Tricia also suggested that patrons’ priorities during the pandemic have paused rather than shifted.

Jane urged a continuous marketing effort and noted that the library website did not reflect current events, such as the Stoneham Reads project. Nicole noted that marketing and web maintenance have been the Assistant Library Director’s duties. Kathryn asked for the marketing plan to designate role owners and backups so that work can continue until the assistant director role is filled without a permanent redistribution in job duties.

Rocco added that the library will need to think strategically about needs both during and after the pandemic. He suggested forming a subcommittee; Jane and Kathryn volunteered for it.

**New/Other Business**: The Director reported that the library would like to use CARES Act funds to purchase self-checkout machines. The estimated cost would be over $30,000 for two machines plus software. Tricia wonders whether the library is busy enough to need them. Rocco asked whether the machines would work with the library security system. Nicole said they will work both with the current security strips and with RFID tags, if the library adopts those instead. Jane would prefer to invest in more programs. Jessica stated that it would be better to buy the machines with CARES Act funding than out of the library budget. Tricia asked what staff think. Katie said they could help make the library more accessible.

Tricia asked whether the library had received the air purifiers that were backordered. Nicole reported that the library has received the air purifiers, hand sanitizer stations, new computer chairs, and an electrostatic sprayer.

Jane spoke to the town IT department and they can set up the phone lines to ring at multiple extensions until the Junior Room phone system is installed.

Jessica asked about the article Nicole shared via email about Peabody’s accreditation being jeopardized by funding cuts. Nicole would like to work on a similar article for Stoneham.

Jane requested investing in additional online services (e.g. Twitch, AcornTV) and publicizing them, as well as services we have already invested in (e.g. Ancestry.com).

**Action Items**: Nicole to share research on impact of self-checkout machines with Trustees and staff

**Next Meeting:** February 8 at 7pm. Virtual.

**Adjournment:** 8:41. *Motion to adjourn: Fixman, 2nd Francis. Unanimous.*