**Stoneham Public Library**

**Board of Trustees (Virtual) Meeting**

**February 8, 2021**

**Attending:** Ciccarello, DiPietro, FitzGerald, Francis, Killilea, Director Langley. **Staff:** Rachel, Bruce, Angela. **Absent:** Fixman

Call to Order: **7:04**

**Approval of Minutes and Statistics:**

*Motion to approve minutes and statistics: Francis, 2nd Killilea; Vote: Unanimous; one abstention.*

**Projects for Assistant Director Duties:** Nicole presented an idea for a short term way to fulfill some assistant director duties through the end of the fiscal year (June 2021) with 5 hour per week projects. The project could involve:

* the newsletter
* updating email lists for the Junior Room and adult services
* social media and website posts

The position could be paid; potentially at the same level as other part time reference positions ($24/hour). Nicole has a candidate in mind who has a library degree and is currently working as a paraprofessional; the project would offer professional development experience in a limited time frame. The town would not fund the project; it would be paid for out of state aid.

Jane asked how many staff members are qualified to perform these job duties and whether the library could offer 10 hours per week if multiple staff want to take on the projects. Nicole believes all professional level staff and some paraprofessional staff are qualified.

Tricia noted that she would like the project to include visible, public-facing work, not only behind-the-scenes work.

**Action Item***:* Nicole will email draft project description by **Friday, February 12** to trustees to review before voting on it in a special session before the next regular meeting

**Readiness to Reopen**: Nicole has done additional research into the current library services landscape, including surveying NOBLE libraries and other MA libraries as to their budgets and reopening plans. One respondent cited an ALA statistic that only 8% of libraries nationwide are open. In Nicole’s survey, over 50% of respondents either had no plans to reopen or would not reopen until late spring/early summer. Nicole also noted that of peer libraries, Stoneham had the smallest percentage circulation decrease year over year between January 2020 and January 2021. Stoneham is still on track to begin offering in-person services sooner than most other libraries.

The Trustees each expressed frustration that Stoneham is not yet open and that the timeline for reopening keeps changing.

Jessica asked what training is still needed and whether all necessary training can happen within the next 3 weeks.

The Trustees and the Director agreed to a new target date of March 1 for reopening.

**Waiver Meeting:** Rocco and Jane attended the library’s MBLC waiver hearing with Nicole and the Town Administrator. Five communities presented; one commissioner seemed concerned about the level of Stoneham’s cuts in particular. Rocco noted that the lost AD position has a ripple effect on service levels and hours of operation; he would like to work with the town to restore the lost position and hours.

Jessica asked what the dollar amount of the shortfall is and whether the library has discussed the situation with the Finance and Advisory Board. Tricia said that $110,000 was cut, of which $70,000 came from eliminating the AD position and $22,000 came from eliminating a senior library tech position for half the year. The senior library tech position has been restored and Nicole reported that the town has agreed to fully fund it through FY22.

Tricia pointed out that the MBLC’s requirements were relaxed during the pandemic. Right now the threshold is budget cuts of 10% compared to the rest of the town; normally the threshold is 5%. If the threshold is lowered to 5% again the library will be in danger of losing accreditation without the AD position.

Nicole noted that each department has a Finance and Advisory Board contact; she will write a summary of the library’s current situation and challenges to share with that board before their next meeting. Rocco requested that the TA also be included in that communication.

Kathryn asked whether our FAB contact could be invited to a Trustees meeting; Rocco agreed that the FAB should be added to an upcoming agenda.

**New/Other Business**: Nicole is buying a new laptop through NOBLE for staff and programs. Jane requested that the library also purchase a cell phone so staff can offer remote shelf-browsing without having to use their personal phones. Jane would like to donate an electronic doorbell for the front door to assist with pickup services.

Jane asked whether any current staff have experience writing grants; Nicole thought no one had as much experience as the former youth services librarian. Jane suggested that would make another good 5 hour/week project.

**Next Meeting:** March 8 at 7pm. Virtual. Interim meeting for COVID/AD coverage TBD.

**Adjournment:** 9:06. *Motion to adjourn: Francis, 2nd FitzGerald. Unanimous.*