

November Library Board of Trustees Meeting
Mon, Nov 8, 2021 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM (EST)

Present: Rocco, Jane, Kathryn, Tricia, Sue; Nicole; Tim Waitkevitch and Wendy Smith (FAB); Rachel Overbeck, Maureen Saltzman

AGENDA

1. 7:01 Call to Order
2. FY22 Library Budget Discussion and Approval

Nicole reported that departments have been asked to level fund budgets. Issues to consider:

- NOBLE services will be subject to 2.5% increase.
- Pay compression between pages and casual library technicians – they receive the same compensation for different job duties, the current minimum wage of \$13.50/hour. Pages' major duty is shelving books; LTs handle money, patrons' personal info, answer phones. Previously there had been up to \$1/hour wage difference. Minimum wage is rising again, so pages will receive another pay increase. Nicole would like \$0.50 to \$1 difference. Tricia noted that \$0.50/hour difference does not seem not adequate. Kathryn asked what the salary differential is between casual/union LTs. Nicole says unionized library techs start at \$17/hour, which is up for renegotiation next year. Wendy asked that Nicole include how many casual library techs are impacted, how do neighboring libraries compare, and qualifications/job duties in budget request. Tim agreed there is not a lot of space between higher minimum wage and bottom of union contract
- Assistant director position: Nicole applied for one of 200 ALA Humanities grant, which is \$10K – won't fully fund position but could help cover costs. The library could still apply for other federal funds (ARRA) as long as different projects are specified in each application. Rocco would like town to fully fund position from general budget. Assistant director role is key role to apply for other grants. Tricia noted that the AD role is full time; without it library is at skeleton staff, in danger of losing certification if any other staff are out for extended period of time and hours can't be covered. Programming is not being offered, grants not being pursued, AND state certification is endangered. Nicole has asked neighboring library directors about staffing levels. Initial responses indicate that Stoneham is low compared to other towns (1 professional librarian:6000 residents for Stoneham vs 1:5000 or lower for surrounding towns). Wendy asked what the annual salary of the AD is. Nicole said the salary range is around \$75K, plus 15-20% for benefits, around \$90K total. She noted the town gave \$10K this year to cover hours to protect certification. Wendy said she understands that this is restoring a previous position, not requesting new position. Tim is concerned that coverage of hours is so thin.
- Capital requests: Nicole stated that the most critical need is replacing carpeting in Junior Room, which will require asbestos remediation/removal. The library has \$30K budgeted; original estimate was for \$60K total. Nicole is discussing with Brian/Facilities. Security gate is also at the end of its life (dates from building renovation in 1984) and may be unrepairable at this point. Previous estimate was \$8-10K, so is not considered capital cost. Wendy

suggested sharing complete list of capital improvement items with FAB so that board has fuller understanding. She asked whether the new procurement person is aware of the situation with the security gate? Nicole said yes. Rocco pointed out the library is working on a strategic plan that will also address capital.

Nicole will present at 12/8 tri-board meeting at senior center. Wendy said that was an opportunity to showcase new programs/services and also present limitations; she added that the library can/should request to present even without being scheduled.

Nicole will send amended budget to trustees to review and vote on before budget is due 11/19.

3. 7:30 Approval of Minutes and Statistical Reports

Minutes: Motion to approve amended minutes: Sue Fixman; second: Jane Francis. Unanimous.

Statistical reports: Jane had asked about museum passes; for this year at 806, despite entry restrictions. Motion to approve statistical reports: Sue Fixman; second: Jane Francis. Unanimous.

4. Approval for Additional Funds for Junior Room Nonfiction Collection

Nicole reported that Rachel has been weeding and overhauling collection. Board had approved funding from state aid for purchases. So much of the collection is outdated, Rachel would like an additional \$5K from state aid.

Motion to approve additional \$5K from state aid to add to non-fiction collection in junior room: Jane Francis; second: Sue Fixman. Unanimous.

5. Library Building Updates

Nicole reported that Building Evolution will be conducting the building assessment; assessment has not been scheduled yet. Nicole would like it to be completed before tri-board meeting in December. Town's ADA report found many places in the library not up to code. This evaluation will look at major building systems. Issues with flooding continue. Other building issues include windows, HVAC.

Nicole reported that in-person programming is resuming in downstairs meeting room to allow for social distancing.

Nicole said that a new circulation desk is needed in the Junior Room. Jessi would like the setup addressed urgently to allow staff to sit together and make space more welcoming. Cost for modular setup would be \$11K, which could be covered by state aid or donation fund, and could be done before new carpeting is installed. Rocco asked whether asbestos would be disturbed if old desk is removed, and whether carpet goes all the way under the old desk? Nicole thinks the old carpet does go under the desk, but that it should not be an issue with the asbestos. Rachel pointed out that there are other bare spots in carpet and bare spots under the desk could be covered with an area rug; parents do not like current setup; if a new desk is ordered now, it won't come till Jan/Feb. Any delay in ordering will delay delivery even further. Tricia likes the idea of using a bequest fund and putting a plaque on desk. Nicole mentioned the recent bequest of \$67K from Celia Schulhof (spelling?) that could be used. Rachel would like to replace current circ desk with comfy seating and play area.

Motion to approve up to \$11K from bequest fund for purchase of modular desk for Junior Room: Tricia DiPietro; second: Sue Fixman. Unanimous

6. Strategic Planning Updates

Nicole reported that the sub-committee held a virtual meeting with Kristi Chadwick from MLS and community volunteers. Nicole and Kristi are connecting tomorrow. Next step: meeting to discuss goals.

7. Staffing Updates and Approval of New Appointment

Nicole reported that the vacant senior library tech position was posted internally; Matthew applied and is a strong candidate. Matt would be comfortable taking over the gaming programming. Jane asked how Matt's position will be filled? Nicole said there is an interested internal candidate; other staff are willing to cover some additional hours.

Motion to approve moving Matt S. into full-time senior library technician position: Jane Francis; second: Sue Fixman. Unanimous.

8. Staff Training Day Approval

Nicole said the library has not had an in person staff training day since before the pandemic. She recently completed a workshop with Anna Popp from MLS on juggling/time management/to-do lists. She would like the whole library staff to complete the workshop to help staffing subcommittee understand who does what, where skills gaps are, staffing shortages, etc. The workshop is a 2.5 hour program at no cost to library, but the library would need to close for half day; proposed for Friday 12/10. Staff could participate virtually.

Tricia asked whether half the staff could participate at a time so the library could remain open; if staff are developing own lists and only sharing with Nicole, she saw less need for all staff to participate at once. Jane agreed with Tricia that it would be better for library to stay open.

Nicole mentioned that other libraries have closed for staff training since reopening. Library would be closed 9:30-noon. She will find out whether Anna could accommodate two sessions.

9. New / Other Business

Nicole has seen increase in use of library by young patrons after school.

Jane has seen kids painting windows around town; could kids paint the windows in the Junior Room instead of hiring an artist to do it? Nicole noted that one window requires a ladder.

10. Next Meeting

Monday 11/15 7 pm budget meeting

11. 8:36 Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Jane Francis; second: Sue Fixman. Unanimous