

Minutes of the Meeting of Library Trustees

Wednesday December 4, 2019

Members Present: Bob Malone. Bob Ostrow. Karla Alfred, Kara Petersen, Nancy Baron, Kristy Wiwczar

Staff Present: Leslie McDonnell

Guests: Mary Braney, Library Consultant, Yvette Cain, Holliston Reporter

Bob called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. A quorum was present

Nancy motioned to approve the meeting minutes of November 6. Kristy seconded. The minutes were approved.

Mary Braney, Library Consultant, attended to lead the Trustees through the SOAR exercise (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results). We began with introductions to the Library Trustees.

Recap of Public Forums

Leslie recapped the two public forums, which were well attended, with 25 – 30 people at each event. Per Mary, this was a greater attendance and great variety of attendees than she typically sees. She went through SOAR exercises and it went well with both. These meetings were a valuable and useful method of gathering information from the patrons.

One primary takeaway from both events is an overwhelming consensus that parking is an issue and people want us to stay in this location.

Leslie sent in excess of 100 personal emails to patrons, town officials, and various groups that she knows, targeting people who use the library and are invested in the library's future. People who attended the public forms care about what happens to the library and tend to be heavy users the library.

Karla added that some attendees at today's public forum didn't seem to understand that a new building was an option. Ideas centered on what to do in current site. Leslie did ask the question "Does the town need a new library." Mary presented it today with "we'll be here 8 – 10 years" minimum before a "new" library happens, so suggestions may have been couched with that view in mind. Per Karla, at the public forum today, the "in town" location seemed to be more important than the "same building". So one question is what would be considered "downtown"?

Leslie reminded us that in the survey, it is clear that a new building is an option. So some people at the focus groups did understand that a new building is an option. Going through the process does not commit us to staying or going to a new building. Options are always do nothing, renovate or build new. It's not the trustees responsibility to determine where that new location

may be if that is the final decision. We would need to do a full building program when we get the grant. The Mass Board of Library Commissioners requires full consideration of staying in place and moving.

TD Bank Building Discussion

The TD Bank building is for sale. Jeff Ritter has been in touch with Leslie. The price is not publicized. Leslie will check on the status of this at Department Head meeting tomorrow.

SOAR Exercise with Trustees

2021 is the soonest we could apply for a planning grant. That would allow us to do a building program and bring on architect and others to determine what we can do, what we should do and a rough cost. The study results in a schematic design, a cost estimate and then we can apply for the construction grant (actual funding). Grant awards are part of state bond.

Strengths

- Staff
- Patrons (about half the town has a library card meaning they've used the library in the last 4 years)
- Central and convenient location
- Part of downtown fabric
- Strong collection
- Good use of resources
- Excellent leadership
- Children's / adult programs
- Due to our small size, can effect change quickly, be more flexible and nimble; be responsive to patron's needs.
- Creative fundraising by the Friends, also can be implemented quickly
- Cooperation with Friends, Trustees, Library Director and Staff – alignment is good
- Library has a good reputation, people are willing to help, town departments and churches, this was in evidence during the roof repairs
- Minuteman Network involvement is a great benefit; get the advantages, reach and breadth of a large library system

Opportunities

- Acquire parking
- Update physical plant
- Stronger coordination/cooperation with other town organization: parks & rec, senior center, historical society. No town facilitator to bring dept. heads together.
- More cooperation with schools
- Expand resources for children – enlarge children's room, budget and areas for activities (story time, play, craft)
- Better space for events
- Storage
- No facilities manager, no HR, no town engineer, no building committee. This takes up Leslie's time and energy.

- Partner with the school and do update simultaneously.
- Meeting space, small meeting rooms
- Easily accessible kitchenette space for meetings

Aspirations

- Leslie: ebooks will continue to grow, nonfiction will shrink; print continues to shrink; musical cd / dvds also declining will also free up shelf space. Sections of reference are online so the library doesn't need those hard copy materials. There's still a need for certain hard copy materials; less research based materials, more recreational materials.
- Still need knowledgeable staff who can help patrons.
- People still come to the library for guidance, to print, to use computers
- Community space
- Better upkeep/full renovation, and then maintenance program to keep everything up to snuff
- Digitally sound building; electrically sound; and anticipate future growth/use
- Comfortable seating
- More professional development for staff

Additional Commentary: Town has a capitol plan and the Library is part of it.

Bob M: We need to articulate a vision and then advocate for it.

Results

- Increase patron base, diversity of patron base, and families, others who would not normally come in to the library
- Pull in families who are going to other libraries
- More space
- More parking
- Increased membership in Friends
- Increased participation in events by patrons
- More time for Leslie to spend on library matters and not building matters
- Increased foot traffic and circulation

If Money is No Object

- Parking garage
- Bigger more flexible building
- Larger staff
- More funding for new books
- Video games
- State of the art - Electrical and Digital abilities
- Bigger meeting rooms/small auditorium
- Fully funded professional development
- Greener building
- Café
- Services / Streaming
- Children's room 2 – 3X the current size

- Social spaces to sit and read/have coffee (for older population)
- More accessible space, automatic door
- Entry way with storage for strollers
- Outdoor space
- Drive through bookdrop

At the conclusion of the SOAR exercise, Mary left and the meeting continued.

Leslie presented the Director's report and Jennifer Carlson's report on the Children's room.

Cleaning Contract: The Library cleaning staff had an altercation with a patron last month. Leslie called the company and found out the employee had been clocking in and spending an hour on computers, before starting work. The cleaning company has replaced him with another cleaner. Leslie has changed the door code. The cleaning company says it will take some time to get the entire library up to proper standards. Once there, it will be maintained but it may take some time to reach the proper levels of cleanliness.

Children's programming: Jen has implemented excellent programming, with the help of the recent generous donation. The 4 part children's cooking series has been a big hit. The Non-violent gaming program was also well-received. The gaming program leader brought all the games and 25 kids grade 4 – 8 attended. Jen is doing a great job, trying new things. The donor's funding has allowed us to offer programs we couldn't before. The donor has been pleased with what the library is doing with her generous donation. Leslie submitted an article to the Holliston tab about the donation.

History Book Club: The club has a new leader; they are switching to morning meetings.

ROKUS: The library has acquired 2 new ROKUS, with a total of 4 in circulation, with Disney +.

Leo's (Junior Lions) have helped with the kids programs.

Paws to Read: Paws to Read, a program where kids read to dogs will be held in the future.

Next Meeting Jan 8, 2020

Kara motioned to adjourn, Nancy seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kristy Wiwczar