

Thomas Crane Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
April 13, 2020 via Zoom

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:28 a.m. by Ms. Costagliola.

Trustees Present

Diane Costagliola, Arthur Foley, William Griffin, May Mayyasi, Corinne Mitchell, and Peter Tam.

Staff Present

Director Megan Allen, Assistant Director Clayton Cheever

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Mayyasi moved and Ms. Mitchell seconded that the March 9, 2020 minutes be approved as submitted. The motion passed with one abstention.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Foley moved and Mr. Griffin seconded that the April 13, 2020 Treasurer's Report of trust fund income and expenditures be approved as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report

Staff

Building custodian Harry Jones resigned effective March 9 and Part-Time Senior Library Assistant Cinzia Lavin has submitted her resignation effective May 1. Adult Services Librarian Dorothy Cronin returned from maternity leave on March 25.

Facilities

The roof and clerestory window replacement is still in process at the North Quincy Branch and some internal demolition has begun. New photos were added to the North Quincy Renovation album in the library's Flickr account.

At the Adams Shore Branch, the basement stairwell has been repainted, and the ceilings and lighting in the main lobby, hallway and side rooms are being replaced, with LED fixtures installed. New floor and/or carpet tiles will be installed in the hallway, side rooms and staff workroom.

The Main Library fence replacement and staff parking lot expansion project is substantially completed. Automatic door openers have been installed on the children's room door and the community meeting room doors to enhance accessibility for people with mobility challenges.

Before the library closed, work in preparation of re-carpeting the Main Library had begun, including the relocation of some less-used microfilm collections to non-public areas and the shifting of adult non-fiction collections on the second floor. CBT, Inc. is continuing to work on the carpet replacement specifications and has proposed several options for the adult and children's public areas and for the staff areas.

Emergency Closing Response

Due to concerns about the health and safety of library employees and visitors, all library locations were closed as of Sunday, March 14. The initial closing period was for two weeks but has since been extended to at least May 4, in accordance with the statewide emergency declared by Governor Baker.

Although several pandemic contingency options were in the planning stages when the library closed, these were not well developed at the time of closing. Library administration and department heads have been working intensively to enhance the library's digital offerings and find a way to provide personal assistance to residents while staff are isolated at home. Department heads have also been meeting virtually with their staff to develop additional programs and services.

Custodians John Marsters and Kevin Mele are sharing the duty of checking every library facility and book drop on a daily basis. Most of the library's remaining staff have volunteered to work during the emergency closing, although not all have yet had the opportunity to do so.

The library already provided a robust collection of online resources for learning and recreation, accessible via its website. However, knowing that many regular library users have never used these resources, the first priority was to establish live one-on-one assistance from outside the library buildings..

Led by IT Coordinator Andria Lauria, options for live chat and cloud-based phone service were reviewed and then implemented, and several library laptops were configured for home use and then delivered to individual employees.

Beginning on Tuesday, March 31, the library began offering four live help desk hours per day, staffed by two employees at a time, including three hours per week in Cantonese and Mandarin. A group of eight librarians and library assistants led by supervisors Jessie Thuma and Theresa Tangney are road testing the help desk and continue to fine tune its operation so that additional employees can be trained and scheduled to assist. Since the new service was publicized, many residents have called with a broad range of questions about their library accounts, signing up for e-cards, using their devices to access free library e-content, information about unemployment assistance, and more.

Plans for delivering online programs for all ages are well underway, including webinars for literacy tutors, online Talk Times, book clubs, and story times presented by library staff as well as Friends of the Library-sponsored programs offered by outside presenters. Young Adult

Librarian Kerri Darcy has collaborated with a Quincy Public Schools colleague to create 14 database training videos for students doing school work from home.

Getting the word out to Quincy residents about online library services has been of special concern and all available traditional and social media channels are being used, in both English and Chinese.

Reflecting a month in which the library's buildings were only open for two weeks, physical circulation dropped 48% compared to the previous month while digital circulation increased. Overdrive e-collection use increased 14% and hoopla e-collection use jumped 23%.

Although the library's book drops remain open, patrons are encouraged to keep their items at home. All due dates have been extended to May 4 and all holds and overdue fines are suspended. An extensive fine-free period is anticipated after the library re-opens.

All pending orders for physical materials have been paused, although online carts are still being created with the library's principal vendors. Usage of e-resources such as Overdrive, hoopla and Kanopy are being closely monitored and funding will be shifted to support these collections as demand requires.

Library supervisors and staff have demonstrated extraordinary commitment and creativity given the many technical and logistical challenges of serving the public while the buildings are closed. Email, chat, phone and video conferencing are all being employed to keep employees connected within and between departments to the extent possible, including a weekly all-staff meeting via Zoom. Staff will continue to explore the possibilities of different online platforms for developing public programs, classes, and readers' advisory services. Although at this time, it is unknown when the library buildings will re-open and begin to operate normally, it is certain that the innovative virtual services now being developed will be incorporated to some extent into the library's long-term operations and services and that the experience of this extended pandemic situation will inform future strategic and emergency planning.

Other

The library has received its second and final State Aid to Public Libraries award for FY2020. Because of the statewide emergency and the temporary closing of all public libraries, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners has suspended the FY2020 service requirements related to hours open and materials expenditures.

TCPL Foundation Liaison's Report

Ms. Costagliola, on behalf of the Foundation Board of Directors, renewed the Foundation's Non-Profit Organization Directors and Officers Liability insurance for three years. Ms. Allen reported on Leslie DiBona's decision to establish an endowment fund to benefit the TCPL via the Boston Foundation instead of the TCPL Foundation.

Old Business

Investment Committee Report

Ms. Mitchell reported on the committee's activities and the status of accounts. She asked all trustees to set up virtual access to account information before the end of the current fiscal year.

Revised Public Programs Policy

Mr. Foley moved and Ms. Mayyasi seconded that the revised Public Programs Policy be approved as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

Ellis Realty Advisors Fee Donation

Mr. Foley moved and Ms. Mitchell seconded that, as suggested by Ellis Realty Advisors, any cafe realty fee be used for the purchase of library materials as a donation from the realtor. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

None

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:37 a.m. The next meeting will be held on Monday, May 11, 2020, either at the Main Library or via Zoom.

Documents Distributed

- Draft Minutes from the March 9, 2020 Trustees Meeting
- FY2020 Citizens Bank Trust Fund Income and Expenses Summary to Date (4/13/2020)