



Ryan Brennan Director
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Margaret Connolly, Co-Chair
Mary Ann Sliwa, Co-Chair
Tracy Driscoll
Sarah Santos
Monika Wilkinson

**DPL TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 18, 2020, VIRTUAL, 9:00AM**

MEETING CALLED BY	Board of Library Trustees, Dedham
TYPE OF MEETING	Board Meeting
CO-CHAIRMAN	Margaret Connolly and Mary Ann Sliwa
SECRETARY	Tracy Driscoll
ATTENDEES VIA PHONE	Margaret Connolly, Sarah Santos, Mary Ann Sliwa, Monika Wilkinson, Tracy Driscoll, and Ryan Brennan
PUBLIC ATTENDEES	None

PLEASE NOTE DUE TO THE COVID19 PANDEMIC THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIRTUALLY TO DISCUSS LIBRARY RESPONSE TO CLOSURE

The meeting of the Dedham Library Board of Trustees was called to order at 9:00am by Co-Chair, Ms. Sliwa.

Public Input:

No public input.

Discussion and Vote: Minutes Monday, March 16, 2020

Ms. Wilkinson made a motion to accept the minutes from Monday, March 16, 2020. Ms. Connolly seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken to accept the minutes as presented. Ms. Connolly, yes; Ms. Driscoll, yes; Ms. Santos, yes; Ms. Sliwa, yes; Ms. Wilkinson, yes.

Discussion: Meetings During Closure

Mr. Brennan stated that he and Ms. Shrewsbury would set up a Zoom account for the Trustees to use for meetings going forward until in person meetings are deemed safe by state and local health officials. Ms. Sliwa asked if the Trustees could use the account without Mr. Brennan and Ms. Shrewsbury, if necessary. He stated yes.

Ms. Wilkinson expressed great frustration with the lack of clear direction from the Town and Town officials regarding holding meetings during this time. She asked what the Town was doing and wondered why a Town-wide approach was not being introduced for Boards to use.

Discussion: Trustee's Pandemic Response

Ms. Sliwa read into the record the Trustees' Pandemic Response to date:

Monday, March 9, 2020 the Trustees began contacting other libraries regarding their response to the COVID-19 virus and their established pandemic and health emergency policies.

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 the Trustees had their monthly meeting and addressed the concerns about the COVID-19 and library responses and policies at length.

Wednesday, March 11, 2020 at 2 pm. Ms. Driscoll, Ms. Sliwa, Ms. Shrewsbury, Ms. Weggeman, Ms. Moroney attended Dedham Community Stakeholders Group meeting led by Town of Dedham Department of Public Health.

Friday, March 13, 2020 at 11 am. Ms. Wilkinson and Ms. Shrewsbury attended department head meeting led by Town Manager regarding Town's response to COVID-19.

Friday, March 13, 2020 at 12:45 pm Ms. Connolly and Ms. Sliwa met with Ms. Shrewsbury who was acting as the Library Director in his absence. They conveyed the Board's intent to close the library to the public this day and the desire to keep staff safe. They expressed full support for a skeletal, rotating staff with the branch library closed. They also supported having all staff work from home. However, they were awaiting clarification from Human Resources regarding contractual issues as they did not want staff to be without pay in these possible responses.

They requested that Ms. Shrewsbury convey to staff that anyone who considered themselves vulnerable or high risk would let her know and NOT come in to work on Monday, March 16,2020.

They arranged to have both libraries closed to all but the custodial staff for the weekend for a deep cleaning to protect staff in the event that the contractual issues were not resolved. Ms. Connolly and Ms. Sliwa committed to advocating for payment for the scheduled employees of March 14 and 15, as the harsh chemicals and other methods of deep cleaning prohibited having staff other than custodians trained to use these on the premises.

On March 16, 2020, a Board Meeting was held at 9 am. There was still no response from Human Resources nor the Town Manager regarding contractual issues. The Board expressed the intent to go to a skeletal staff OR close completely as soon as the issue of payment was resolved. The Board again reiterated that any staff who considered themselves vulnerable or at high risk would let the Director know and stay at home.

On the morning of March 17, the Co-Chairs requested the Director contact the Town Manager directly to communicate its strong desire to close the libraries entirely. Mr. Brennan submitted a plan to the Town Manager, Leon Goodwin. Mr. Goodwin stated that he was meeting with the Union Representative, Bill Chaisson, in the afternoon and would get back to us.

On March 17, we were informed that Human Resources sent an email directing staff "If you fall into the high risk population in accordance with CDC guidelines, please correspond with me confidentially in order to make arrangements for you to NOT report to work."

On March 17 at 3:21 pm, the Board was forwarded the following communication from Mr. Goodwin:

"I want to thank you all for your continued dedication to serving the public during these challenging times. As you all know, the COVID-19 situation is rapidly evolving and we are doing our best to respond accordingly in order to protect the health and safety of both our employees and residents.

Town buildings closed to the public today and will remain closed through at least April 3rd. We are in the process of finalizing a reduced staffing plan and will communicate the same to you all tomorrow. This Friday, March 20th, Town Hall will be undergoing a deep cleaning process and no employees will be permitted on the premises. Essential staff (which we will further define tomorrow) will be expected to work remotely.

I kindly ask that everyone (with the exception of those who have received prior approval from your supervisor) report to work tomorrow so that we can finalize the reduced staffing plan, communicate the same, and provide any necessary technology to those of you who will be working remotely to allow for the continued provision of essential services.”

Ms. Wilkinson asked that the following additions be included in Ms. Sliwa’s statement: On March 6, Ms. Wilkinson contacted and spoke with the library director for Stoughton, WI. Stoughton, WI at the time was the only library that had an on-line version of a Pandemic Policy from 2009. The Director forwarded Ms. Wilkinson an undated version of the policy. On March 12, Ms. Wilkinson and Ms. Driscoll prepared the Pandemic Policy for the Dedham Public Library.

Discussion: Status and Procedures for Closing

Ms. Sliwa then asked Mr. Brennan for an update on the Town’s decision regarding paying employees if Board votes to close library to staff. Mr. Brennan stated that Ms. Lauren Bailey, Human Resource Director agreed that all employees would be paid with the exception of per diem employees.

The Board then discussed per diem employees that were previously classified as Sunday hour employees. Mr. Brennan relayed to the Board that these employees did not have regular weekly schedules and some weeks had no hours. They essentially are used to fill in gaps when needed. Ms. Santos asked if the Board was willing to fight to make sure these individuals got paid. Ms. Wilkinson stated lots of schools and libraries have per diems. She suggested we reach out to the school department to see what they intend to do. She also stated that at this time of crisis she would advocate to support people. Ms. Driscoll and Ms. Santos also agreed. The consensus of the Board was to continue to pursue this issue. Mr. Brennan stated he would check with other libraries.

Ms. Sliwa charged Mr. Brennan with looking into schedules of per diems to see if hours have been consistent. He was also asked to look into part time employees’ schedules to see if they have consistently worked over their hours to fill in for currently vacant positions.

Ms. Connolly asked if Mr. Brennan had in an email that the staff would be paid. He did not. She requested that Mr. Brennan send a letter to Ms. Bailey asking for confirmation with the understanding if she did not respond that would be taken as an affirmative answer.

Ms. Driscoll asked what the expectations of the staff were while working from home and what preparations were in place when we close the buildings to staff.

Mr. Brennan stated that all would need to check work emails daily. Ms. Moroney and Ms. Weggeman would be responsible for social media. Mr. Brennan and Ms. Shrewsbury would be responsible for payroll and paying vendors. Staff would think about programming for summer. Mr. Brennan hoped to purchase, launch and promote a new data base “Creative Bug.”

Ms. Wilkinson stated we need to be prepared in case this lasts longer than currently projected by Town. There might not be in-person summer programming. Therefore, staff through Director needs to create plans going forward based on various scenarios. That way when we do come together again the library is ready to immediately move forward. Suggestions during the time working at home would be to plan remote staff development. Provide on-line story times and regularly scheduled virtual staff meetings.

Ms. Connolly asked about the summer lunch program. She wanted to make sure the program was moving forward. In the past it has taken time to arrange and she did not want the library closure to negate our ability to provide this service.

Ms. Santos suggested the library be prepared if we are still closed to public in summer. Schools are doing grab and go. We should be prepared logistically, if this becomes necessary. We should also consult with schools regarding their plans for summer lunch.

Ms. Connolly wanted the Director to make sure all staff can get on Zoom. She asked about the ability to get on-line library cards if people discover they don't have one but would like to access materials.

Mr. Brennan stated that anyone can create a temporary card but our on-line services would not be available to them. He said Boston Public Library did have the capability to provide people with on-line cards and then they could have access to all their on-line materials. Comcast internet essentials are free for two months. Xfinity hotspots are available, even if you are not a customer. Mr. Brennan said this information will be added to the Library Guide located on the Library website. Mr. Brennan also said the most frequently asked question has been whether or not people could use the library parking lot to access Wi-Fi. The answer is a YES.

Ms. Sliwa asked that Mr. Brennan test whether or not you could access Wi-Fi from parking lot at Endicott and Main. Mr. Brennan was going to check.

Ms. Wilkinson reiterated that having super clear and prominent information on our website was imperative. There needed to be basic, easy to follow instructions for the non-technological individuals.

Ms. Santos suggested staff take home anything they needed to continue to provide services to patrons.

Ms. Wilkinson outlined four categories for Mr. Brennan to focus on while staff is working remotely.

1. Curating content

Provide digital content and tutorials for patrons to access. This needs to be strategic not just a dump of materials but carefully rolled out. Regularly updating and evaluating.

2. Professional Development on-line

Examples would be customer service; public safety

3. Planning

Planning programming for the future whether it be physical or remotely. Each scenario must be fleshed out. We need to be creative and prepared.

4. Creating real time content

On-line story-time crafts, etc.

Ms. Santos asked how Mr. Brennan was going to get information to staff regarding remote work requirements.

Ms. Wilkinson stated everyone should have a clear directive for what they are doing in the immediate future. There is also the expectation that a short-term and long-term plan needs to be developed. Mr. Brennan stated he would be speaking with all of the staff after the Trustee meeting to formalize a remote plan.

Ms. Driscoll asked that periodic updates regarding what is happening be forwarded to Trustees.

Ms. Sliwa asked who would be in charge of making sure the heat was working and/or any other unforeseen problems with the physical buildings happen.

Mr. Brennan states that the custodial staff would have designated hours and that he could also check. Custodial hours would be in conjunction with the facilities department. Facilities might need our custodians to help with other building during this time.

Ms. Santos inquired about the phones and whether or not they were being forwarded.

Ms. Sliwa made a motion to close the library to both patrons and staff through April 6, 2020 with the understanding that the staff will have short-term plan prior to closure and confirmation from the Town that

employee pay was guaranteed. It was seconded by Ms. Connolly and a roll call vote was taken. Ms. Connolly, yes; Ms Driscoll, yes; Ms. Santos, yes; Ms. Sliwa, yes; Ms. Wilkinson, yes.

Old/New Business:

Ms. Connolly stated that she had received a bill from Siemen Eckert that needed to be paid. Ms. Santos suggested that she take a picture of the bill with date before submitting. Ms. Connolly will deliver to Mr. Brennan this afternoon.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ms. Wilkinson at 10:31am and seconded by Ms. Santos and a roll call vote was taken. Ms. Connolly, yes; Ms Driscoll, yes; Ms. Santos, yes; Ms. Sliwa, yes; Ms. Wilkinson, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracy Driscoll