



Amber Moroney
 Library Director
 Dedham Public Library
 43 Church Street
 Dedham, MA 02026
 781-751-9281
amoroney@dedham-ma.gov

Board of Library Trustees
 Shirin Baradaran, Chair
 Tom Turner, Vice Chair
 Annette Raphel, Clerk
 Brian Keaney
 Crystal Power
librarytrustees@dedham-ma.gov

DEDHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
7:00 p.m., March 2, 2023: Main

MEETING CALLED BY	Board of Library Trustees, Dedham
TYPE OF MEETING	Regular monthly meeting
CHAIR	Shirin Baradaran
VICE-CHAIR	Tom Turner
CLERK	Annette Raphel
ATTENDEES	Brian Keaney (Trustee) Crystal Power (Trustee)
PUBLIC ATTENDEES	Amber Moroney, Director Rosemarie Shrewsbury Lisa Desmond Edward Dockham Walter Kiesling Laura Bowler

Comments or Questions: Amber Moroney, amoroney@dedham-ma.gov, 781-751-9281

Underlined items are action items

Call to Order

- **Call to Order**
 - Chair Shirin Baradaran called the meeting to order at 7:00pm
- **Public Comment**
 - Ed Dockham reported that he is unsatisfied with the materials he requested about the evolving decorations and displays policy, and that the proposed draft of the policy will not alleviate problems that happened this year. He requested the board to verify whether changing the current reporting structure of the Director without the required state approval would be legal.

- Rosemary Shrewsbury who is the Assistant Library Director for Administration shared her feelings that the board does not understand the issues of the staff and any proposals to work on supporting the staff community will not be effective.
- Lisa Desmond who serves as the branch supervisor for the Endicott branch would prefer more interaction as a means of communication at board meetings.
- Laura Bowler asked why there is a policy for decorations and displays.
- Board member Brian Keaney feels that there has been more conversation in the public part of past meetings, but given the tenor of the December public meeting, that would not have allowed as many people to speak. He asked Mr. Dockham who should be the arbiter in case of difference of opinions and Mr. Dockham both felt that the Director has too much power currently but should ultimately be the decision maker. As an example, he brought up his objection to the February theme in the library of Resistance.
- There was conversation about the need for balance.

- **Director's Report**

- We continue to enjoy encouraging increasing numbers of visitors and materials accessed.
- Each month there has been print outreach in *The Dedham Times*.
- The Newsletter numbers of recipients and those who have opened the message have remained relatively static and the next area of focus will be to implement strategies to increase the number of recipients.
 - Does the time of sending impact the efficacy?
 - Are there other ways beyond social media to invite people to subscribe to the newsletter?
 - Can we invite people to subscribe when issuing new library cards?
- Donations – The Friends of the Dedham Library will donate a sum of money to cover the cost of all museum passes and the library will manage the subscriptions, as well as money for other initiatives-which will need to be approved by the Selectboard.
- There is a security assessment draft coming which will include recommendations for emergencies, especially evacuation plan. Amber Moroney will make sure that there is consideration to ADA compliance as much as feasible in our building.
- Staffing – The new part-time archivist will begin work next week and that appointment means that the library is fully staffed.
- The Young Adult collection will move to the media room downstairs to accompany the Teen space.
- The Children's collection will mostly be organized using the Dewey Decimal system.
- Once relocations are complete the library will work on signage and a map.
- Everyone was invited to participate in the Minute Madness Challenge.
- The Library Union will use Endicott for a meeting on Friday, March 3, after work.
- The library presentation at the town-wide summit went well and people can view the summit online.
- Mass Library Legislative Day will be March 15th in Boston and two librarians will attend.

- **Discussion and Vote: Policy for Library Decorations and Displays**

- The policy continues to evolve in draft form and now includes a shortened summary authored by Brian Keaney to reflect feedback about wordiness. A draft went to the staff and both staff and trustees had reactions that will result in continued work.
- Ultimately, there will most likely be a staff committee to both generate and react to ideas.

- There was vigorous discussion, which included each trustee, about
 - the need for the policy (transparency for both patrons and staff)
 - the consistency in language with other policies (less legal sounding)
 - the opportunity and format for public feedback (invited and written)
 - staff issues with administrative decision-making
 - Civility and manner, and forums for discourse when disagreements occur
 - Representation of community input given that it is human nature to believe that one's ideas are the most widely held and correct
 - The grace with which people react about errors and mistakes
 - The relative importance of this policy compared to those which are more central to the mission
 - Comparison of this policy to those that other towns have had in libraries and other public buildings
 - Whether displays and decorations should be linked
 - Annette Raphael and Crystal Power will work on another slimmed down draft for the April meeting which will reflect feedback from staff and the above conversation and recognize that this will continue to be a work in progress.
- **Discussion and Vote: Update on FY 2024 Budget Proposal**
 - Fin Comm liaisons, as anticipated, were most interested in the \$7,500 for website. There will be a meeting with the Communication Director to determine whether the website will be part of the town's or whether we will actually need the money to make necessary updates to our current website.
 - On March 11 the Fin Comm will hold their all-day meeting.
- **Discussion and Vote: Capital Projects and Building Improvements, Including Expenditures on the Front Stairs and Ramp**
 - Amber Moroney and Annette Raphael met with Denise Moroney from the Facilities Department about the front stairs, surrounding front site work, and necessary repairs to the back ramp.
 - Shirin Baradaran made a motion to pursue the front stairs project at the quoted price using the allocated funds. Crystal Power seconded. The affirmative vote was unanimous.
 - Shirin Baradaran made a motion to pursue mitigating structural damage (both the ramp and front water damage) by asking town meeting to authorize \$122,000 for repairs. Crystal Power seconded. The affirmative vote was unanimous.
 - If the town would prefer to split up the two projects (ramp and front site work), the board authorizes that change, and then the asking amounts would be \$20,000 for the ramp, and \$102,000 for the front site work.

REASONING:

 - Ramp
 - There is Capital money from '15 for ramp and front steps \$24,000 which is roughly 50% of what the repair is estimated to cost.
 - For the ramp project we will need an additional \$20,000 to put granite in for the structural repair of the corroding cinder blocks, and will ask for that money as part of our Capital requests at Town Meeting
 - This has been a clear need for at least 8 years, as evidenced by the first approval for money to address the issue.
 - Front Stairs

- Capital money from FY '13 for the front steps is \$42,000 which may disappear if not immediately spent (and a clear indication of how long, after the intended repairs, the library has waited to act on this need).
- There is a \$50,000 allocation for Capital improvements already in the budget for this fiscal year.
- Combined projects in the front of the library – steps and site work
 - Our needs for both the front stairs and surrounding site work to address structural issues that are the results of inadequate drainage, water seepage, and below-grade water damage to a window totals roughly \$42,000 for the stairs and \$152,000 for the site work.
 - The front stairs alone will cost an estimated \$42,000 which there is money for.
 - The site work will cost roughly \$152,000, and will involve serious excavation, determination about the viability of a dry well, and will fix the water damage as well as install new pavers to eliminate the problem in the future. This means that we will need an additional \$102,000 from the town. This total is roughly half of the original request as we have worked in good faith to pare down the request to what is absolutely necessary for the structural integrity of a building which is 135 years old.
 - Ideally both the steps and the site work would happen at the same time, since it affects the same general area. However, it is impossible to have that done by the end of the fiscal year.
 - We are asking for a continuance of the availability of the \$42,000 for the front step repairs (pitch, alignment, mortar, cleaning, compliant railings) beyond the end of the fiscal year, and if granted, will address the stairs at the same time as the mitigation of the water damage. If not approved, we will fix the steps by the end of the fiscal year in order to take advantage of the allocated funds.
- All three projects
 - We will ask for \$132,000 from the town to address the \$20,000 shortfall from the ramp repair and the \$102,000 which remains after the \$50,000 budgeted allocation. That involves three projects: the ramp, the front stairs, and the front site work to address water damage. If the town denies this request, we will reevaluate the ramp and the site work.
 - We see the ramp repair as necessary (8 years ago it was budgeted and never completed and it is the least we can do for wheelchair and mobility challenged patrons) in order to ensure a safe entry and avoid lawsuits given the crumbling nature of the cinder blocks.
 - We have to do the front site work to prevent mold and further structural deterioration of the town's oldest civic building.
 - Any unnecessary, but previously identified work, such as signage, lighting, landscaping, bike racks, benches etc. will be addressed by the library or through a future project.
- **Discussion and Vote: MBLC Building Project, Including Building Committee**
 - Right now the town is catching up with buildings as it has created three new schools and one new public safety building recently, but for 30 years prior to this building boom, there was no new building at all, instead of implementing a meaningful replacement cycle. The current fiscal climate is challenging given the status of three old elementary schools that need replacement

and the need to finish paying for the three new schools and public safety building. However we enjoy a very favorable bond rating.

- If we are going to be prepared to even contemplate a new or vastly renovated building in accordance with our strategic plan, we will need to submit a letter of intent by April to the MBLC alerting them to a request for state funding. Amber Moroney will do this and send a draft to the trustees. The letter does not commit us to anything, but does allow us to proceed if we choose to. The process is newly reconfigured and the next opportunity to even apply will be in 2027.

The timeline is as follows:

- April '23 simple letter of intent must be filed.
- May '24, 2023 \$150,000 must be available for planning and Town meeting needs to approve application for design process – not necessarily to affect the budget if the money we use comes from our own resources of state aid, donations, and trust funds.
- October '24 we find out whether we have been accepted. There will only be one community on the wait list. MBLC is hoping to fund 10 communities in this round and those asking for consideration will also be from their previous wait list as well as new applicants like we would be.
- Spring '26 would be the big ask from town meeting. If we were awarded state money it would cover 54% of the costs and the town would have to allocate the rest.
- Brian Keaney would like to better understand the impact on taxes should we be so fortunate, with data analysis.

- **Discussion and Vote: Update on Trustee Training Plan**

- We have each participated in the MBLC Building Project Webinar.
- Annette Raphael also participated in an MBLC Webinar about library foundations, which can be stand alone non-profits, or subsets of the board or the Friends group, each configuration having advantages and disadvantages.

- **Discussion and Vote: Plan for Onboarding New Trustees:** How do we transition effectively?

- Brian Keaney will be the trustee liaison – he has greatest info about the way Dedham works.
- Amber Moroney will update the onboarding materials she shared with us two years ago.

- **Discussion and Vote: Update on Implementation of 2023-2026 Strategic Plan**

- Tabled until the next meeting

- **Discussion and Vote: Planning for Director Review and Contract Renewal**

- The trustees each received a copy of the town evaluation form for administrators. Each of us use the evaluator section as a guide and send our thoughts to Leon Goodwin, Town Manager by March 31st.
- Shirin Baradaran will check with Leon Goodwin about whether he will collate and summarize feedback or directly share each trustee's written thoughts.
- Leon Goodwin will meet with Amber Moroney and talk about her evaluation. We will talk about general impressions at the April meeting in general but will not share any of our written materials.
- We will also participate in the board self-evaluation at the next meeting, using the checklist we used last year which will, once again, be forwarded by Shirin Baradaran.
- The staff is not yet being evaluated pending conversation with the unions.

- **Discussion and Vote: Approval of Minutes from February 2, 2023**
 - Brian Keaney made a motion to approve both the open and executive session minutes of 2/2/23. Crystal Power seconded the motion which was then unanimously approved.
 - Brian Keaney made a motion to not release the minutes of the executive session until the reason for it had passed. Crystal Power seconded the motion, which was also unanimously approved.

- **Old/New Business***
 - Brian Keaney made an excellent suggestion to invite the Building , Planning and Construction Committee to a future meeting.

- **Schedule Next Meetings**
 - April 6, Endicott
 - May 4, Endicott
 - June 1, Main

- **Executive Session:** To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body
 - There was no need for an executive session.

- **Adjourn**
 - Brian Keaney made a motion to adjourn at 9:07 pm, seconded by Crystal Power, and unanimously affirmed.