



**Shrewsbury**  
Public Library  
INSPIRING LEARNING, EMPOWERING OUR COMMUNITY

## **BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES**

**April 25, 2023, 7:00 PM**

**In-person Meeting**

### **7:00 PM Call to order of Board of Library Trustees Meeting:**

Present in person: Deb Lebeaux, Jeff Billingham, Nancy Gilbert, Poornima Tekumalla, Clare O'Connor, April Jones Prince, Joan Barry, Noor Ali and Library Director Priya Rathnam

Absent with Notice: Lisa Powers

### **Review and act to approve minutes of March 28, 2023, meeting:**

Minutes were reviewed and approved with no changes. A motion to approve was made by Nancy Gilbert, seconded by Jeff Billingham and minutes were unanimously approved.

BoT Chair noted that this will be the last meeting for two members. Deb recognized Joan Barry who has been on BoT from 1991 and Nancy Gilbert since 2006 and thanked them for their hard work.

### **Review and act to approve report of Director's activities of March 2023:**

Director Priya Rathnam spoke about hiring new staff for two positions. BoT Chair Deb Lebeaux reviewed key points from meeting with DEIB Committee. A motion to approve the Director's report and programs and services was made by Jeff Billingham & seconded by Clare O'Connor and the report unanimously approved.

### **Programs and Services: Director's report of programs and services offered in March 2023:**

Library Director Priya Rathnam reviewed programs offered in March 2023. The ground hog activity will be removed from this list as it was a February activity. There was a discussion on story time which is a popular activity. Tokens are issued on Tuesday and Thursday is a drop-in. Brief overview was provided on mud story time, seed lending library, spice library (this month was cinnamon and next month is harissa). Library statistics will be added to the facebook page for National library month as they are impressive.

### **Financial and Legislative**

- Review and act upon YTD report: On target for expenses and library materials is at 90.4%. A motion to approve the Director's report and programs and services was made by Clare O'Connor & seconded by Joan Barry and the report unanimously approved.
- Review Director's goals for 2023: Discussion focused on ARPA funds, usage on 3D printer, textile printer, laptops, and ipads with educational apps. Director Priya Rathnam said that she and Mike have contacted college faculty, for helping with STEM and STEAM programs, as part of the LSTA grant, Creative Communities. Librarians are excited to offer the programs. If

we don't get the grant, the library will still be able to go ahead with these programs. FY24 Director's goals was approved. Community partnerships with local agencies, organizations, schools will go ahead. An opportunity to hire an outreach librarian was added. The selected individual will have the responsibility of marketing also. Hiring a marketing person gives staff more time to do their job commitments. Deb will be retiring in August and Director Rathnam recommends starting the hiring process in summer to allow the selected candidate some time to learn before Deb retires. There is a need for a change in grade that Director Priya Rathnam discussed with the HR Director. Library goals are aligned with town's strategic outcome areas. There was a discussion on the set up of a mobile space that could be moved as needed. A motion to approve the Director's goals was made by Nancy Gilbert and seconded by Poornima Tekumalla and unanimously approved.

- The BoT reviewed mission and vision statements. The thought and efforts behind putting these statements together were appreciated by all. A decision was made to include "programming" in the mission statement and removing the words "cutting-edge", as well as remove the word "unique" in the mission statement. Should we include programming in the mission statement, "engaging programming" add in. A motion to make the changes in the mission statement was made by Joan Barry and seconded by Nancy Gilbert and unanimously approved.
- Update by Barbara on the strategic goals effort (by zoom): Project launch was on August 15, when the project goals and timelines were discussed with stakeholders. A Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC) was set up. The first meeting was in October 2022 with the SPAC. They were asked key community engagement questions. SPAC will continue to be a good resource even further on. There were meetings with BoT members, Friends and the Library Foundation. During October and November 2022, there was a community survey which was very successful and had a large volume of responses. The survey was overachieved in terms of number of people, diversity age groups. The survey was done in Mandarin and Spanish but that did not get much success. A Second SPAC meeting took place and discussion was on finding ten key community attributes, to understand the library. November and December 2022 was set aside for planning focus group questions. There were three focus groups with 24 people who participated. In January, the strategic pillars were drafted, in March 2023, data was collected from the community to complement the soft data from the survey. Priya Rathnam put together a library infographic and Barbara is analyzing data with about 4000 data points. April 2023 was focused on drafting mission, vision and values statements. Priya and Barbara met every 2-3 weeks for updates. No major issues were identified from the surveys but there were requests that are being discussed such as program scheduling especially for working parents, programs for diversity. Improving marketing was discussed as well as expanding the physical visibility of the library with more virtual presence and collaborations as required during the pandemic. High satisfaction with staff was recorded and staff liked the collaborative support of coworkers. The biggest challenges included identifying ways to get to non-library users and additional population outreach. Discussion also included additional target groups. The next steps are drafting the document with pillars and goals for voting in May. Director Priya Rathnam will submit the plan for a vote in June. The plan will then be submitted to MBLC by October 2023.

#### **Facility, Equipment and Grounds:**

Shrewsbury Cultural Council and SELCO identified 5 electric boxes in town, one of them is on the library parking lot. Art work is solicited to wrap the boxes in. The artists will submit their artwork to

the town and five pieces of art will be approved by the town. A stipend will be provided to the selected artists and the art will be created on vinyl which will be wrapped on the electric boxes. The art will be unveiled at the Spirit of Shrewsbury.

**Gifts and Grants:**

Received a note from MBLC on the second installment of state aid of \$42K.

**Personnel**

- Org chart and changes were discussed. Some positions were approved by the personnel board including some title changes although some of the title changes were not accompanied by salary increases. The Grade changes will be effective from April 6, 2023. Positions that were discussed noted below:
  - Library managers will be library managers and changed from grade 6 to grade 7.
  - Library associate will be library professional associates with only title changed (no salary change).
  - Library technology specialist will be library professional associate with grade change.
  - Part time positions were not discussed this time by the personnel board.

**Shrewsbury Public Library Foundation:**

Nancy Gilbert provided the update. Looking to fill one confirmed vacancy and anticipating another person leaving the board in the foreseeable future so soliciting some new board members. The foundation will approach BoT for approval. The distinguished speaker event is on May 24 and Hank Philipe Ryan should draw a nice crowd. The second lecture is scheduled in fall. Moe and Nancy are co-chairing the effort and are looking to recruit influencers.

**Friends of the Library:**

- No update

**Policies:**

- No update

**Miscellaneous**

- Review of letters of interest from candidates for vacancy in BOT: The BoT will consider further and meet in mid-May when the select board meets to make a final decision.
- Approval of the sale of authors' books: There is a request from few authors, Ronnie Leblanc (Expedition bigfoot scheduled for June 12), Janice Dailey (Unlocked path) Marty Gitlin (about Red Sox) Tom Eggrassia. A motion to approve the sale of books by the above authors was made by Clare O'Connor and seconded by Deb Lebeaux and the motion was unanimously approved.
- Review and act upon request to set up donation box and flyer for Eagle project: Atharv Mahajan, troop 250, wants to have donation bins in library and collect personal care items. The plan is to give these kits to the church of St. Michaels on the Heights. The request was for two boxes for two weeks to be set up starting May 1. He is a Shrewsbury resident. One box will be at the entrance and one in the children's room. A motion to approve set up of donation boxes was made by Jeff Billingham and seconded by Joan Barry and the motion was unanimously approved.

- Funding for summer reading prizes (\$1,500) was approved after a motion made by Claire O'Connor and seconded by April Jones Prince.
- The window in front that was broken on an early release day is fixed with plexiglass. It will be replaced by permanent glass at a later time.

**Next meeting:** Mid-May meeting to determine new Board member, Next monthly meeting on May 23, 2023

**Board meeting dates in 2023:** June 20, September 26, October 24, November 28, December 19.  
A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Clare O'Connor and was seconded by Lisa Powers.

SUBMITTED RESPECTFULLY BY TRUSTEE POORNIMA K. TEKUMALLA