



Shrewsbury
Public Library
INSPIRING LEARNING, EMPOWERING OUR COMMUNITY

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

May 23, 2023, 7:00 PM

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

Present in person: Deb Lebeaux, Jeff Billingham, Poornima Tekumalla, Clare O'Connor, April Jones Prince, Barbara Trudel, Moe Boisvert, Noor Ali, and Library Director Priya Rathnam

Chair Deb Lebeaux welcomed our two new members, Barbara Trudel and Moe Boisvert, to the Board, and each member introduced themselves.

Review and act to approve minutes of April 25, 2023, meeting:

Minutes were reviewed and approved with no changes. A motion to approve was made by Clare O'Connor, seconded by Noor Ali, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Reorganization of the Board:

Board members expressed gratitude that Chair Deb Lebeaux will continue her leadership for one more year. Motions, seconds, and unanimous approvals were made for the other Board positions: Vice Chair Lisa Powers; Secretary April Jones Prince; Treasurer Jeff Billingham. Committee assignments were also made:

Personnel Committee: Deb Lebeaux, Poornima Tekumalla, April Jones Prince

Facilities Committee: Barbara Trudel, Lisa Powers, Noor Ali

Finance Committee: Clare O'Connor, Moe Boisvert, Jeff Billingham

A motion to approve the entire Board reorganization was made by Jeff Billingham, seconded by Barbara Trudel, and unanimously approved.

Jason Molina, Chair of the Community Preservation Committee, solicited feedback on feasible CPA projects:

Ideas discussed:

- Digitizing microfilms, SHS yearbooks, etc. This wouldn't fall under CPA consideration because it's not preservation (i.e., the original materials are not in danger or poor condition).
- A partnership with Parks and Recreation for Open Space or Recreation at the Lake Street Park StoryWalk, where metal or wooden installations would be more permanent and weatherproof than the current setup. Jason is unsure if this project would fall within any of the CPA categories or if it would be eligible, but it is worth looking into.

The CPC is changing its application process to a rolling one, which we should be aware of in terms of submitting an application for a potential project.

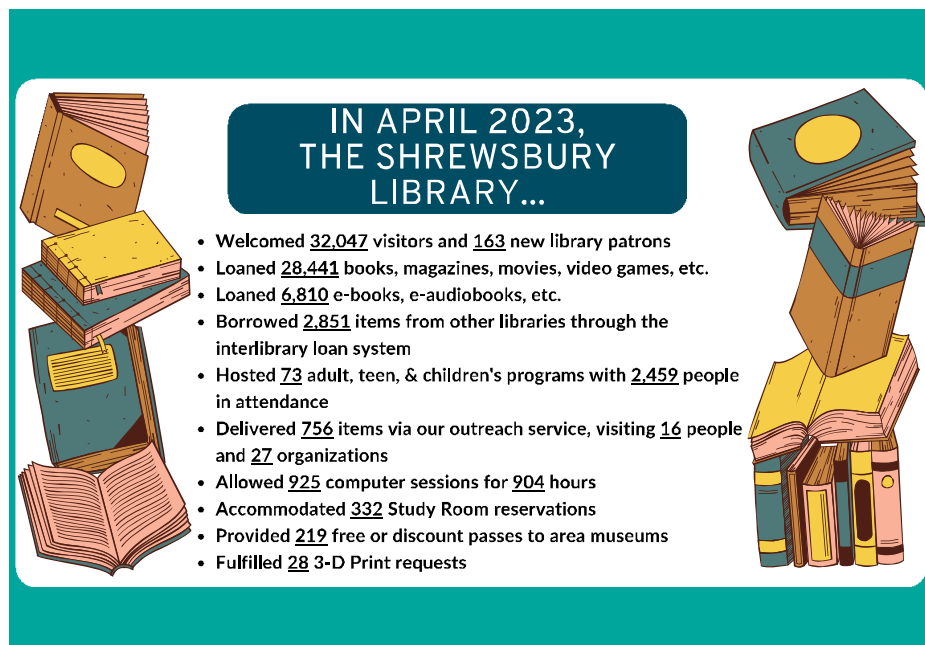
Review and act to approve report of Director's activities of April 2023:

Director Priya Rathnam spoke about Shrewsbury Way Academy, the Town's leadership program for

department heads. A motion to approve the Director's report and programs and services was made by Clare O'Connor and seconded by Moe Boisvert, and the report was unanimously approved.

Programs and Services: Director's report of programs and services offered in April 2023:

Library Director Priya Rathnam reviewed programs offered in April 2023. The Elephant and Piggie event for children and families was wonderful and well attended. The Board commented on the continued terrific variety of events overall. Library Director Priya Rathnam also read the library's usage statistics for the month:



Clare O'Connor created and shared a graph of the library usage trends from Dec. 2021 to April 2023. Noor Ali noted that the consistent heavy usage statistics point to the library's need for adequate custodial staff.

Financial and Legislative:

- The budget was approved at the Annual Town Meeting earlier this month, though it was not the enhanced budget that proposed the hiring of a Community Services Librarian and additional hours for the Technical Services Librarian, from 17 to 19 hours a week.
- Review and act upon YTD report as of 5/18/23: We are on target for expenses and library materials at 97.5%. A motion to approve the YTD report was made by Lisa Powers and seconded by Noor Ali, and the report was unanimously approved.

Facility, Equipment and Grounds:

- The Board discussed that library staff is unable to find the panel that controls the outdoor lighting on the stairs leading to the lower part of the parking lot. The Facilities subcommittee will work on reaching out to Town personnel to find the panel, as it's unsafe to have the steps unlighted, especially in the winter. Working on this now will ensure we are ready for snow and ice this winter.

Gifts and Grants:

In the MA state budget for F24, Library Director Priya Rathnam requested a \$30,000 earmark via State State Rep. Hannah Kane to purchase furniture for the children's room because the tables in the children's

program room are getting unsteady from being used and moved so much. The earmark was approved and can be used for furniture in the YA room as well.

Personnel

- Amanda Bernat, our part-time reference librarian, has resigned for personal reasons. Library Director Priya's plan is to put the funds from this part-time position toward a full-time Marketing and Outreach Librarian.
- Library Director Priya Rathnam requested a meeting with Parks and Recreation and Shrewsbury Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Joseph Sawyer for this summer, to address the high volume and sometimes disruptive behavior of middle schoolers coming to the library on Friday afternoons and early release days. Moe Boisvert reported that the Library Foundation Board has been discussing this as well and suggested hiring a part-time employee to help monitor and get to know the kids. Perhaps the BOT could also invite a middle school student to come and talk about the situation; the Foundation Board did this and found it helpful. Since we don't have a Youth Center in town, kids come to the library. This is a community issue and not solely a library issue, and we need to pull in other community groups to find a solution. The BOT will be notified of when the meeting with the schools and Parks and Rec is scheduled so Trustees can be present.

Shrewsbury Public Library Foundation:

Moe Boisvert, co-chair of the Foundation, reported that library foundations often struggle with presenting to the community what they are all about and how the BOT, Foundation, and Friends have different but complementary goals and purposes. We should look for a theme that cuts across all three groups that we can present to the community via an Annual Report. Library Director Priya Rathnam said she compiles an annual report for the Town, and we could pull material from that for the Annual Report. Perhaps two people from each group should meet quarterly to touch base and make sure the three boards are all on the same page.

Moe encouraged everyone to come and bring a friend to the May 24 Distinguished Speaker event featuring Hank Phillippe Ryan. The Foundation is partnering with Shrewsbury schools to have the speaker visit schools during the day. The Foundation's goal is to have 2-3 distinguished speakers a year, increasing the stature of speakers as they go and funding the visits via sponsors. The Foundation is looking at Legacy Gifts for people to leave funds to the Foundation in their wills—a gifted annuity where they get an income from the annuity and a tax break as well. The second speaker event is scheduled for the fall, and Moe will keep us posted on whom it will be.

The Foundation Board is looking to fill a position on the Board. Community member Autumn Hotaling expressed interest and met with Foundation Co-Chairs Nancy Gilbert and Moe. Ms. Hotaling's letter of interest and her background are an excellent fit. The Foundation Board is looking for 2-3 additional members, one of whom needs to be a lawyer, for a total of 12, maybe 15 Board members eventually. The Board will solicit letters of interest via the web site and on the library's electronic bulletin board. Once letters are reviewed, the Foundation will approach the Board of Library Trustees for approval. Lisa Powers made a motion to approve appointing Autumn Hotaling to the Foundation Board, seconded by Jeff Billingham, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Friends of the Library:

- No update

Policies:

- No update

Miscellaneous

- Library Director Priya invited comments on the Strategic Plan update. Using the Strategic Plan framework, Priya will create an Action Plan every year that has measurable goals and outcomes and includes who is responsible for each goal. The Board appreciates the modern vision of the library and the pillars embraced in the Plan. These were generated via the focus groups and advisory committee that has been meeting with Barbara Alevras. Priya is working on the body of the Strategic Plan as the next step. She will have it ready for Trustees' review by our June meeting. Then she will work on the Action Plan.
- Library Director Priya made a funding request to use State Aid. The children's librarians have been using the app Beanstack for summer reading, 1000 Books Before Kindergarten, etc. The MBLC funded two years of access for all libraries; the State Aid funding would renew the annual license to access Beanstack, which is \$898.96/year. A motion to fund up to \$1,000.00 to be spent on the Beanstack software was made by Deb Lebeaux, and seconded by Moe Boisvert, and was unanimously approved.
- Library Director Priya thanked the sponsors who supported Sunday hours at the library this year (October 2022 - May 2023). The last one was last Sunday, and Sunday hours will resume in the fall. Thank you to:

Providing eight Sundays:

Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union

Providing four Sundays:

Dr. Dale Magee and Mrs. Melanie Magee

Providing two Sundays:

Dr. Anne Larkin and Peter Larkin

Providing one Sunday:

Olive I. and Anthony A. Borgatti, Jr., Donor-Advised Fund of the Greater Worcester Community Foundation

Olivia, Peg, and Don Harbert

Kathleen and David Rocheleau

In memory of James A. Heedles

Bette and Rick Kirby

Providing one Sunday:

Jack and Nancy Collins, in memory of Dr. John P. Collins

Maureen Fujimori, in honor of Eileen Mooney Evans

The Bachini family, in honor of Ruth Seward

The Del Dotto grandchildren: Drea, Dylan, and Devin

Central One Federal Credit Union

Shrewsbury Garden Club

Dean Park Grill & Pizza

The Friends of the Library, in honor of Claire Nagle

One anonymous donor

The SPL Foundation, in honor of Chris Mehne

Next meeting: Next monthly meeting on June 20, 2023

Remaining Board meetings in 2023: September 26, October 24, November 28, December 19.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by April Jones Prince, seconded by Moe Boisvert, and was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted by Trustee/Secretary April Jones Prince