

Thayer Memorial Library Trustees Meeting

October 13, 2021

Meeting held via Zoom videoconference

Roll Call

Present were:

Emily Rose, Chair  
Frank MacGrory, Vice-Chair  
Frank Streeter, Secretary  
Ann Frantz  
Anne Ogilvie  
David Spanagel  
Joe Mulé, Director, Ex Officio

Also:

Youth Services Librarian Maren Caulfield  
Assistant Director Rachel Rosengard

The meeting was called to order over Zoom at 6:30 pm. Chair Rose called the roll of attendees and opened the meeting.

Chair's/Staff Report:

Youth Services Librarian Maren Caulfield updated the Board on the Library's redecorated play area. She reported that most of the new furniture has finally arrived and it is ADA accessible with multiple sizes and functions to accommodate all patrons. Furniture previously stored in the area has been relocated to the basement. The work on the play area was funded by federal funds provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

Youth Services Librarian Caulfield reported that she was holding programs outside as the weather has been warm, but she would be moving them to the play space once it opens in November. All of the grant funding must be spent by September 2022, which she does not see as a problem even with supply chain issues.

Assistant Director Rachel Rosengard reported that she had a great first week in the job. She noted that more patrons are coming into the Library at a rate significantly increased since the Spring, although still less than pre-pandemic levels. The demand for curbside pickup has dropped to only about two a day. The displays in the Rotunda have all been refreshed. She notices a lot of patrons reading newspapers again and returning to the computers.

Past Minutes

After reviewing the minutes from the September meeting,

**Trustee Frantz moved to accept the minutes; Trustee Spanagel seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 5-0-1 vote with Trustee Ogilvie abstaining as she was not at the meeting.**

#### Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 6:30 PM. Due to COVID restrictions the Board's meetings will continue to be held over Zoom until further notice.

#### Chair's Report:

Chair Rose referenced her written report. She reported that she and Director Mulé had met with Shawn Wegner of Ramsey, Barber & Associates about a full analysis of the Library's HVAC systems. He was recommended by preservation architect Lynne Spencer, who has done a great deal of work for the Library, and he will write up a comprehensive report on the HVAC systems.

#### Fundraising Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair Spanagel reported the group had their first meeting on October 5 via Zoom with 6 in attendance. He discussed the status of the Children's Room window replacement project and was pleased to report that \$7750 has been raised so far, with 100% participation by the Trustees. The Subcommittee is working on the letter Trustee Spanagel plans to send to potential major donors. He announced that the Subcommittee's next meeting would be on October 26 and that the final Tuesday of the month would be their regular meeting time.

Trustee Spanagel was also very pleased to report on the success of the Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library's annual book sale. It ran for 5 days this year: October 1-3 and 9-10. The total raised from the sale of books and media was \$9569, plus \$936 in new memberships and \$29 from the sale of tote bags, for a grand total after expenses of \$10,430.75. The Board congratulated and thanked the Friends for their efforts.

Trustee Spanagel reported on the Friends' new leadership. Hannah moved to Florida, so Melissa Carlson is the new Chair and Judy Elwell will be Vice Chair.

#### Policy:

Secretary Streeter reported that Director Mulé and Assistant Director Rachel Rosengard would be reviewing all existing Library policies before any new ones are considered. The thought is to have a set of fresh eyes take a look at each policy and make sure they all reflect the Library's current aspirations and operations. The review will be ordered by priority of use of each policy.

#### Director's Report:

Director Mulé referred to his written report and reviewed the Library's current financials. He noted that the Library's MAR is a moving target. While programming has been difficult during the pandemic, Director Mulé feels it drives circulation and use of the Library in general. Right now all programs are being held outside as the weather is

cooperating, but they will be moved inside by November as the fall advances.

Assistant Director Rosengard will start hosting a book group to be held in the Library's Dexter Room beginning in November. It will be a maximum of 9 people and all in attendance must be masked. Director Mulé expressed his feeling that the Library needs to be holding programs indoors to get people coming into the Library, which he feels is a critical part of the Library experience. The use deliverable is "people in the building".

Chair Rose asked Director Mulé about the feasibility of installing UV lamps in the ductwork to kill viruses and bacteria. Director Mulé said it is more difficult than it sounds but that he is researching the matter.

#### New Business:

Director Mulé confirmed that the Strategic Planning Subcommittee will not meet until some time in 2022, and that its first task would be to set out a scope of work and vet the process for usability of the results. He feels this is a major task and should not be rushed. Trustee Spanagel suggested that Trustee Ogilvie take part of a regularly scheduled Trustees meeting to gather information from the Board for the plan. Director Mulé feels the Board needs to have a separate meeting with an outside facilitator about this in Q1 of 2022. He wants the Board to agree on a time commitment before he sets up a meeting and retains a facilitator. Trustee Ogilvie will meet with Director Mulé about specifications for a focus group, including format and topics to be addressed.

#### Action Items:

To be continued as previously set.

Executive Session – will not reconvene in open session

**Secretary Streeter moved to adjourn the open session and open executive session; Trustee Ogilvie seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 6-0 vote at 7:23 PM.**

The Board adjourned the open session. The Board opened in executive session to review the renewal of Director Mulé's contract. Chair Rose called the roll and all 6 Trustees were still present.

The Board first discussed if it was necessary to record the Zoom of its executive sessions. Apparently this is not required as long as good minutes are taken. Trustee Ogilvie asked about the minutes and when they might be released.

The Board discussed Town Counsel's comments on the current draft of Director Mulé's contract and areas of concern, including remote work arrangements, calculation of benefits, termination provisions, and changes needed to comply with Town by-laws. Chair Rose reviewed next steps with a plan to vote to approve the contract at the Board's November meeting.

The Board closed the executive session.

Adjournment:

There being no further business for the Board to consider,

**Secretary Streeter moved to adjourn; Trustee Ogilvie seconded the motion,  
and the motion passed on a 6-0 vote.**

The Board adjourned and the Zoom meeting ended at 8:38 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Frank S. Streeter, Secretary

List of Documents:

Agenda

Chair's Report

Director's Report