

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Meeting Room Side A
Monday, September 18, 2023

Present: Rachael Armstrong (Chair), Elizabeth Greenberg (Vice Chair), Caitlin Powers (Treasurer), Monica Cataldo (Secretary), Lorraine Lindenberg, Pete Marcotte, Margaret Ives, Erin Spencer (Town Council DPL Liaison, attending virtually), Eric Stern (Director), Lisa Carvalho (Recording Secretary)

Absent: Meryle Zusman (Trustee Alternate), Victoria Austin (Trustee Alternate)

The Meeting was called to order at 6:33 by Trustee Armstrong.

PUBLIC SESSION:

Amendments to Agenda:

There were no amendments to the agenda.

Acceptance of Minutes:

Motion to accept the Minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting held on August 21, 2023, by Trustee Armstrong. Seconded by Trustee Greenberg. Motion passed 7-0.

Treasurer's Report:

- Trustee Powers noted that she caught an expense that had been misclassified to the Special fund. Director Stern noted that it is being reclassified. Trustee Powers proposes \$42,100.00 for the FY2024 Special Funds Budget. The fine budget was lowered (no more late fees), but she accounted for fines that have already been collected in FY24, as well as damaged/lost payments. Amounts were adjusted based on where we finished last year, on the revenue side. Expenses went down based on the approval of the all-in materials budget. Operating expenses were adjusted based on Director Stern's proposal to set aside funds for the new storage area conversion. Trustee Marcotte asked what the budget was last year for fines. Trustee Powers noted that each year for the last 4 we have budgeted to spend more money out of the fine account than we collected. We have had enough money in the general fund to cover some of the things that we earmark out of the Special Fund. Any material adjustment was the fines and the operating expenses.

Motion to approve the proposed FY24 Special fund budget by Trustee Armstrong. Seconded by Trustee Marcotte. Motion passed 7-0.

Director's and Staff Reports:

- Director Stern gave an update on the HVAC system. There were issues with keeping the chiller running consistently. It would run for an hour and then shut off, be powered down by the breaker to restart and then reached the point where it stopped completely. ENE investigated. It is the primary compressor, and it will need to be replaced. Unfortunately, it is outside of warranty by about a year. All the materials were under an 18 month warranty. However, the temperature in the building is stable now as ENE was able to bypass the primary compressor to have the other 4 functioning in sequence. For this season, we are fine, but the primary compressor will need to be replaced by spring of 2024. Director Stern does not yet have a quote

but he believes it will be expensive. It is a small component of the original chiller system (that cost over \$100,000.00 to install 3 years ago) but it is specific to this chiller system. Trustee Armstrong asked if the other compressors were checked. Director Stern said that the other compressors were fine. Typically, the primary turns on first and the other compressors kick on in sequence. This is the way the chiller is designed to function. Trustee Lindenberg asked if the issues we had last year could have caused this issue. Director Stern responded that it could have, but he does not believe that would account for the issue in its entirety. Perhaps it was a defect, in his opinion. For the remainder of the warm weather this season, the other 4 compressors will be sufficient. The chiller will be shut down for the winter.

- Director Stern addressed the sprinkler system. There's some good news on this front. He and Mike met with a company that DPL feels isn't trying to take advantage of the library. Code Red Fire Systems, of Billerica, MA was recommended by Erin Matlin of the Leach Library in Londonderry, and they spent significant time examining all the system components. They did a preliminary view of the pipes in the old attic space. Instead of offering a quote to replace all the pipes without ever laying eyes on them (as Impact had done) they would like to do a brief inspection to see where the leaks are happening and then quote materials that need to be replaced. Code Red believes that the leaks are not all occurring in the attic space but may be happening in the room where the pipes come into the building. In their experience, this can occur around gauges. Also, the pipes in the "found" space could not have been properly inspected by Impact. The issues Impact described would only occur, for example, if the Fire Department was pumping water into the building from the street. Code Red will perform the initial inspection at an hourly rate. If they find that sections of pipe need replacing, a list of materials will be compiled, and DPL will only be charged their usual hourly rate for installation. Code Red has also offered a quote to do annual inspections for all the systems we have – sprinkler, fire panel, alarms, and extinguishers. That total cost was just over \$1,000.00 per year. Director Stern recommends this action. Director Stern had a conversation with Mike Fowler about moving away from working with Impact. DPW has had similar conversations about their dissatisfaction with Impact, and they will likely be putting together a RFP to go out to bid for all municipal buildings. When the Town moves forward, Mike Fowler said that he could include DPL if the Trustees approve. Director Stern noted that Impact had quoted over \$1,000.00 to install hydraulic design placards that he acquired for \$60.00, and were approved by the Derry FD.
- Trustee Greenberg asked for an update on the plumbing issues. Director Stern reported that hot water had been coming from the cold water tap in the staff break room, kitchen, bathroom, and toilet. This was caused by a worker error in piping the water heater when it was done 2+ years ago. They put a recirculating valve and motor on the cold water line, which is attached to the water heater. This was confirmed by a plumber from Absco, of Manchester NH. Director Stern believes that a valve was turned on by an inspector that had been kept closed. It would have taken a day or two for the water to be noticeably hot. The fix was to close the recirculating pump. There is no danger to the building. We will know if this needs to be re-piped over the winter, if water fails to get hot in the upstairs bathrooms. At that time, Director Stern will have the recirculating valve re-piped.

Gifts:

There were no unusual gifts.

Motion to accept any and all unrestricted monetary gifts received between the last Board of Trustees meeting and this meeting by Trustee Powers. Seconded by Trustee Cataldo. Motion passed 7-0.

Correspondence:

There was no Correspondence.

Announcements:

Director Stern noted that the Hunchback of Notre Dame Parody video is up!

Public Comment

Erin Spencer (Town Council Liaison) commented as a Derry resident that the new interface is super easy to use!

NEW BUSINESS:

- Library holiday schedule for calendar year 2024: Director Stern noted the Staff Training Day on Patriot’s Day, going forward, as it is not a federal holiday. A few other libraries in the area are closing on Patriot’s Day for staff training. Staff would have all federal holidays off and the patrons would not be unduly inconvenienced. Attendance would be required for the training day, which DPL has not been able to do previously. Trustee Armstrong asked regarding school vacation weeks. This is the MA week. Trustee Cataldo commented that our April meeting is during NH school vacation week. Director Stern responded that it is the 4th Monday because April 15 would be a day we would be closed to the public. Trustee Armstrong clarified her understanding that it would be a training day, on a day that the library is closed, but the staff is working. Is it a paid holiday? Director Stern stated that it would be treated as a holiday for patrons, but a regular workday for staff. All regular full-time and part-time staff will be required to attend the training day. Substitute attendance will be encouraged but not required. Trustee Powers suggested holding the Board meeting for January on the 8th. The Finance Committee meets early in January and the budget needs to be sent in January. This will give the Board ample opportunity to review the budget before submission. April BOT meeting is scheduled on the 22nd to accommodate Patriot’s Day.

Motion to approve the 2024 Holiday Closings & Board Meeting Dates as amended and to add a Staff Development Day on Patriot’s Day, during which the library would be closed, by Trustee Cataldo. Seconded by Trustee Greenberg. Motion passed 7-0.

- Expansion of janitor’s closet into “found” space – review quote: Director Stern included an estimate in the packet for \$10,103.17. This company, Solid Roots Construction, also worked on the mezzanine catwalks, and did a great job. They do all the permitting and the subcontracting for different parts of the work that need to be done to improve the janitor’s closet and more than quadruple the storage space. The job would include plumbing for an extension of new sprinkler heads into that area to meet code; electrical, carpentry and finishing. Director Stern recommends the company. He recognized the expense of the project, but the amount of space gained from reclaiming this area would allow DPL to change the use of the back of the Friends space. The new space will hold all the janitorial supplies and equipment, and improve the staff’s workflow. In the Friends space, we would gain a lot more “library” storage. Trustee Lindenberg asked about shelving in the new space. Director Stern responded that shelves would be moved from the Friends space or other shelves would be repurposed. Trustee Greenberg noted that the increase in the fines account in the Treasurer’s Report is earmarked for the project. Trustee Powers believes that initially it would be paid for via the General fund, and it could be reclassified at year end. The estimate for the compressor has not come in yet. There is benefit to

having it earmarked so that we could proceed with this project. Trustee Powers stated that although she has not seen in her tenure how the expense of the project would be expensed, DPL has a large amount set aside in capital reserve. She asked if there was a financial threshold, or a certain type of project required to access the funds. Director Stern recognized Erin Spencer (Town Council DPL Liaison), saying that he believed the action needed is to ask the Town Council to release the funds for a qualified expenditure. Erin Spencer stated that if the Town Council is the right agency to ask to spend from capital reserve, then a simple request would be all that is needed. She recommended checking with Town Administrator David Caron. Trustee Powers clarified that the project estimate is above the amount up for Board approval but below the amount at which other quotes would be required. Director Stern stated that anything in excess of \$20K must go through the RFP process, and anything over \$5K requires BOT approval. He stated that with the Board's approval to proceed, this project could be accomplished quickly. Trustee Armstrong asked how widespread the construction would be. Director Stern stated that it would be localized to the storage closet, and anything disruptive to the children's room would be done before the library opened. He will oversee the project.

Motion to approve the proposal of the storage room expansion at the proposed cost of \$10,103.17 by Trustee Marcotte, seconded by Trustee Lindenberg. Motion passed 7-0.

- Discussion of FY24 Special Fund budget: Discussed during the Treasurer's Report.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Strategic Planning – Review results of community survey: Trustee Cataldo began by stating that there were many positive comments, far more positive than negative. She then referred to Question #5: Do you feel that the DPL 's collection of traditional materials (books DVD 's video games etc.) meets your needs? If not, what would you suggest we add to the collection? She noted a comment that stated, "The printed selection leans very heavily to liberal/progressive. It wouldn't hurt to buy some conservative themed materials every now and then." Trustee Cataldo conducted two online searches on the DPL website, for "conservatism" and "liberalism." For "conservatism", DPL had 67 books and GMILCS had 299 books. For "liberalism" DPL had 49 books (less), and GMILCS had 240 books. Trustee Cataldo pointed out other comments on LGBTQ in the children's library. For example, "I'd like to see less political stuff in the kid's room. Don't get me wrong, I'm happy they're there for those that need it but I don't need publicly displayed items that deal with LGBT and inappropriate things for young children in the kids room... Do you have a lot of books I have a lot of suggestions of LGBT. What I'm thinking of is I want to be a vase not a plunger or something like that it looks so pretty and then when you read it the meaning behind it is a little too much." Trustee Cataldo's impression is that this patron did not like the book or felt that it was misleading. Trustee Cataldo read the book and gave a synopsis. She watched a YouTube video of the author reading the book. Trustee Cataldo stated that the book was about kids being who they want to be, but she gathered that some people may see other messages. Trustee Cataldo felt that people should not seek to ban the book based on their perceptions. Trustee Lindenberg asked for clarification from Trustee Cataldo, if the patron wanted to ban the book. Trustee Cataldo was not sure of the patron's intentions. Trustee Ives noted that approx. 100 patrons did the survey and inquired as to how there could be more responses. She also noted the comment of having programs in the afternoon and encouraged the practice. Director Stern noted that a book club was started by Jess last week and will start in October. Director Stern was impressed with the way Jen administered the

survey. She asked questions in a way that elicited responses that are unbiased and truthful. Jen did a great job constructing and compiling the survey. To answer Trustee Ives, he noted that the survey focused on our patrons rather than the community at large, to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our existing patrons. He felt that the number of responses was actually quite good given the focus of the survey. This was designed to meet the goal of the Strategic Planning Committee to ensure diversity of in-house offerings. The survey was largely distributed in-person (with checkouts) and emailed to active users of DPL. Trustee Powers asked if the demographics of the respondents correlate to the actual demographics of our patrons. Director Stern believes this to be the case, with the exception of young children, but that their parents were well represented. Overall, our patrons tend to skew a bit older. To Director Stern, this indicates that he needs to focus on the needs of the older patrons. He recently participated in the first meeting of the Older Adult Services in Libraries Group. Director Stern has also discussed at length with the staff the promotion of our Unusual Items. We are working on visibility with a new display to promote them, which should be accomplished soon.

- Update on sprinkler system repairs: Discussed in the Director's Report.
- HVAC Update: Discussed in the Director's Report.
- Court-ordered supervised visitations update: Director Stern shared the memorandum prepared by DPL reference staff. As the memo shows, the situation has gotten progressively worse over time. He would like to bring this issue to our local representatives. It is not the public library's mission to host supervised visitations. Trustee Lindenberg has brought the issue to the attention of representatives to reinstate funding for visitation centers. Director Stern would like them to see the full picture, as he did when he read the memorandum. He will make the opening remarks on the State Library Directors call next week, summarizing the memo. DPL's only prohibition at this time is booking the meeting and study rooms for the specific purpose of supervised visitations, as they should be held in a public place. Trustee Greenberg noted that Manchester has made a policy to stop these meetings, to which Director Stern replied that in spite of the prohibition, they are still happening. There has been no contact with DCYF since he spoke with their attorney. Erin Spencer (Town Council DPL Liaison) added that she would be happy to speak with the Legislative Committee at their next meeting, to encourage them to move forward. Director Stern believes that this is a bipartisan issue. The next meeting of the Legislative Committee would be after the findings period of this year. Trustee Marcotte asked how many families are affected. Director Stern stated that there are hundreds state-wide. The number of reported problems leads him to believe that there are many more visitations than are being reported.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Trustee Marcotte. Seconded by Trustee Armstrong. Motion passed 7-0.

- Meeting adjourned at 7:46 pm.

Next meeting is Monday, October 16, 2023, at 6:30pm in Meeting Room Side A
Minutes respectfully submitted by Lisa Carvalho, Recording Secretary