

BELMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY
BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

JUNE 10, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m. by Chair Hal Shubin. Present were trustees Elaine Alligood, Mary Keenan, David Rich, and Heli Tomford, Director Maureen Conners, and incoming president of the Friends of the Belmont Library, Wendy Delorey. Trustee Matt Lowrie was absent.

The minutes for the meeting of May 20th, 2008, were unanimously approved on a motion by Trustee Alligood, seconded by Trustee Rich.

Old Business:

Director Conners reported on the progress of the Long Range Planning Committee; 472 surveys have been entered into the computer to date. Patrons are encouraged to take the survey online.

Director Conners is continuing to seek data from other libraries as to the existence of a discretionary fund; Concord and Norwood have such a fund. The trustees would use such a fund for staff recognition, etc.

The Circulation Library Assistant II position is proving difficult to fill. Director Conners noted the stress this adds for the Circulation Department. Trustee Tomford suggested that this position remain posted on the town web site.

The Circulation Reconfiguration work is proceeding with the asbestos removal on June 10th. Concern was expressed for the time expended by the pro bono architect, David Johnson, who now must travel to Connecticut to check on the mill work as the local source was not up to the task. The library owes its sincere appreciation to Mr. Johnson.

Report on the status of the library and a new building:

Chair Shubin, Director Conners, Selectman Firenze, and Town Administrator Tom Younger met to review the library's position in the grant process. Legislative action is expected by July 31st; the Governor has ten days to sign a bill; the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) will then take action with grants announced, perhaps, in mid-August. The choice of a definite site for the new library remains critical. Chair Shubin will work with a sub-committee of trustees to expedite discussions with appropriate town entities. Trustee Rich expressed interest in working on this sub-committee.

Digital media:

This topic, proposed by Trustee Rich, will be on the July agenda. This would fit nicely with the Historical Society's collection of historical pictures which are computerized.

New Business: Bids for the cleaning contract will be opened at noon on June 23rd. The RFP has required that all workers have legal status. This will be a one year contract with the option of a yearly renewal for two years.

Staff Day is scheduled for Friday, June 27th. The morning will focus on training workshops such as PhotoShop, while in the afternoon individual departments will work on the state-mandated Long Range Plan (LRP). Members of the LRP committee will be invited to join the wrap-up discussion at 4 p.m. Trustee Tomford made a motion that the library be closed on Friday, June 27th, in order to have a professional day for the library staff. Seconded by Trustee Rich, the motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:

The Collection Policy for Tangible Gifts - Art, Sculpture, Rare Books, Furniture has been completed. Trustee Keenan moved that this policy be accepted by the trustees. Seconded by Trustee Alligood, the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Shubin noted that a publicized meeting about Benton Library is needed. With library and town funds in such constricting circumstances, the question of why keep a branch library open for only five hours a week is a recurring one. Many other towns in the Minuteman system have closed their branch libraries; at least one of the branches remaining open has a very active Friends group.

Friends of the Belmont Public Library incoming-president Wendy Delorey was introduced to those who had not yet met her. Ms. Delorey, who that morning had participated in the policy committee meeting on monetary gifts to the library, was warmly welcomed. She explained her philosophy of the Friends as the PTA arm of the library, one it very actively supports with funding a staff wish list, museum passes, and programs.

In response to a question from Trustee Alligood, Ms. Delorey reaffirmed the fall Friends Book Sale as an important community event. With the tremendous number of volunteer hours needed, it will probably be shortened with no Sunday hours. Belmont teachers have appreciated the opportunity provided by the Friends to select books for their classroom libraries, free of charge, before the sale is open to the public. The Friends meet on the first Thursday of every month, September to June, with the exception of September when the meeting is held on the second Thursday - this year on September 11th.

Trustee Tomford noted that there is a box of children's books at the Belmont Food Pantry.

Director's Report:

Ms. Conners announced the resignation of Young Adult librarian, Caron Guigli, who will be assuming a full-time position in her hometown. The Belmont YA librarian position is for 25 hours a week, making it very difficult attract and to keep a librarian who thus does not have a full work week. For the last three years, the Director and Trustees have made a formal request that this position be made full-time. Belmont's library is unique in the many outreach programs to the schools, providing invaluable assistance to curriculum projects and instruction in information technology skills to the students. Trustee Alligood moved that the Young Adult position be advertised as soon as possible. Seconded by Heli Tomford, the motion passed unanimously.

The next meeting is Tuesday, JULY 15TH.

Respectfully submitted, Mary E. Keenan, secretary.