Charlotte & William Bloomberg Medford Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
111 High Street
Minutes for Meeting of September 23rd, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 2:40 pm.

Trustees Present: David Chia, Ellen Tonello, Elisabeth Schaefer, Janaka Stucky and Barbara Kerr
Trustees Absent: Grace Caldara
Guest: Assistant Director Sednek

Review and Approval of Minutes
The Minutes from August 19th were reviewed and approved.

Director's Report
Leadership Team
The Library ran well while Director Kerr was out on sick leave. Staff all stepped up to make sure things operated smoothly. Director Kerr specifically thanked Assistant Director Sednek, Head of Youth Services Perrault, and Office Manager O'Rourke.

Administrative Changes at City Hall
Consultants have recommended several changes in the daily operations in Medford's city government. All City staff are now required to submit signed paper time sheets each week. Director Kerr spoke to Nina Nazarian, Mayor Lungo-Koehn's Chief of Staff about the change. The change is to bring Medford into compliance with state law, once work records have been established in paper Medford will move to electronic records.

Medford has also developed a new Citywide Policy Employee Travel for Training which includes preapproval for all job-related training. Training less than 50 miles from Medford may be approved by the Department Head (Director Kerr). Training over 50 miles from Medford must be preapproved in writing by the Mayor. Under the new policy Director Kerr has to approve attendance at job-related training and Chief of Staff Nazarian will approve expenditures.

Union Contract
It is time to renew the Contract. Director Kerr will meet with Maddi Ranieri, Children's/Teen Librarian and Judith Nudelman, Adult Services to compare notes on possible changes in the contract. The Union may want to include the new paper time sheets and travel approvals in contract negotiations. The Library Union is a small division of the Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA).

Speaker Series
Carmen Maria Machado, finalist for the National Book Award and author of the bestselling memoir, *In the Dream House* is scheduled to speak at the Library on Monday, October 7th and enrollment two weeks before the event is low. Carmen Maria Machado is the first author in the Library's Speaker Series and Trustees expressed concern about the low enrollment and asked that additional measures be taken to promote the event. After considerable discussion it was decided that a special event email could be sent to all patrons on the Friend's email list. Flyers would also be distributed throughout the community and to local book stores. Outreach to Tufts was also recommended.

Director's Report (continued)

Bloomberg Digitization Grant

The Library has been accepted to move to the second part in the Bloomberg Digitization Grant application process. Zoey Mills, Head of Reference and Jenna Barry, Information Reference will be the team putting together the application.

Medford Public Library Foundation, Inc.

The Foundation is hosting three events to celebrate the Library's successes in the first two years since it has been open and to thank funders for making the successes possible. The events will be held on October 5th, 6th and 20th. The invitation for the event on October 20th was sent to 900 people and Trustees expressed concern that it will be difficult to manage if a substantial number of those invited attend. Trustee Tonello will contact Foundation Director, Joey Leroux to get a clear idea of what the plans are for October 20th.

Computer Classes

A new series of computer classes began and no one signed up ahead of time, but several people attended as walk ins. The Library is going to do more publicity.

Early Release Day

The first early release day was Wednesday, September 18th. A total of 189 children and teens were at the Library that afternoon and it went well – having extra staff members makes a huge difference. Director Kerr noted that the Somerville Public Library has had teens attacking other patrons and throwing things and has closed temporarily for two hours after dismissal at the High School. The Somerville Library is located next to Somerville High School and the number of teens going to the Library after school has become unmanageable.

Personnel /Staffing

Children's / Teen Librarian Maddi Ranieri will be presenting at the New England Library Association Conference in Portland, ME. Her session will be on Programming for Neurodiverse Youth.

The Library has two new staff members – Valerie Vaz and Rebecca Shedd have joined the Youth Services Team. Corrine Richter who was working in Circulation upstairs will also join the Youth Services Team as a Librarian.

Non-union Staff are getting cost of living raises. The non-union staff include Director Kerr, Assistant Director Sednek, and Custodian Peter Hansen. They will also get 3 personal days a year.

Landscaping

The Library switched to a smaller company. The new company weeded, trimmed plants, and removed 68 dead plants. The dead plants will be replaced with new ones better suited for the space.

Maker Faire

The Library had 210 people at the Maker Faire on August 25, Tufts sent many volunteers to help out at the Faire.

Baby Animal Day

Baby Animal Day was a hit, attended by a goat, a pig, a kitten, chickens and a big crowd of people.

Discussion of the Future of Chapters Coffee Cart

Secretary Schaefer summarized meetings she had with Carol Nigro, the current owner of the Chapters Coffee Cart at the Library. The Chapters Coffee Cart opened in June 2022 when the new Library opened. Carol Nigro has chosen to retire from operating the Chapters Coffee Cart at the end of September due to health reasons. One of the benefits of the Chapters Coffee Cart, from the perspective of the Library and Library patrons is that it provides employment for individuals with disabilities, setting a tone of inclusion at the Library.

Secretary Schaefer met with Chapters Coffee Cart owner Nigro to learn how she had worked to set up the Cart and make it a place where individuals with disabilities could get job training and employment. Chapters Coffee Cart owner Nigro had worked with Joan Bowen the Director of Student Services and Charlotte Heim, Occupational Therapist and Transition Specialist from the Medford Public Schools to set up the Cart. Students from Medford High School participated in job training at the Cart.

Secretary Schaefer set up a subsequent meeting with Chapters Coffee Cart owner Carol Nigro and Director of Student Services Joan Bowen and Transition Specialist Charlotte Heim on September 17th, to discuss the fact Carol was retiring and the need to plan for the future of the Cart. As a result of the meeting Transition Specialist Heim contacted Corey Grant, Chief of Workforce Initiatives at Triangle, Inc., who recommended a meeting with Evan Reppart, Development Director at the Boys & Girls Club of Stoneham & Wakefield. The Stoneham & Wakefield Boys and Girls Club have been very active in supporting individuals with disabilities and are setting up INspire Cafe at the Boys & Girls Club. They have also supported several pop-ups providing coffee and pastries at community events. Additionally, Chapters Coffee Cart owner Nigro did outreach to one of INspire Cafés founders Tonya Sullivan, who is on the Board of the Medford Public Schools Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC).

Review of Proposed Schedule of Meetings
Given Trustee Caldara was absent and Trustee Stucky had to leave the meeting early, it was decided that an email would go out asking Trustees to indicate whether they could make the proposed meeting dates and if they could not asking them to propose alternative dates.

Library Fines – Discussion of Going Fine Free
Chair Chia agreed to draft a letter to Mayor Lungo-Koehn presenting the data that supports the Charlotte & William Bloomberg Medford Public Library going fine free and asking for her support.

Director Kerr's Annual Review
Director Kerr entered some comments on her review before her illness. She will review those comments and send them out to Trustees for their review.

Old Business
<u>Staffing and Salaries</u>
At the last Trustee Meeting Secretary Schaefer volunteered to do some analysis of why the Library may have trouble attracting and retaining staff. She reviewed data from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) database on staffing and salaries. She reviewed library data from the following cities and towns: Arlington, Belmont, Lexington, Medford, Melrose, Somerville, Watertown, and Winchester.

The two charts (in Appendix A) taken together, show that:
1. Medford's Library staffing levels are much lower than those in neighboring municipalities, and
2. we are paying some of our professional staff much less than our neighbors

Old Business

Staffing and Salaries (continued)
The staffing chart illustrates that while Medford has a larger population than Arlington, Belmont, Lexington, Melrose, Watertown, and Winchester the library in Medford is currently staffed at a much lower rate; .76 hours per capita with other area libraries ranging from 1.09 to 2.04 hours per capita.

The salaries chart illustrates that Medford is the lowest in offering minimum hourly compensation to professional staff (Adult Reference, Children's, Circulation Services Librarians), in some categories $18.00 / hour in some $15.00 / hour. About half of the amount that is paid by other area libraries.

Trustees agreed that both issues should be addressed in Fiscal Year 26 budget negotiations.

Meeting adjourned 4:35

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 21st at 9:30 am at the Charlotte & William Bloomberg Medford Public Library. The Agenda for the meeting includes: Review and Approval of the September Minutes, Director's Report, Director Kerr's Annual Review, Old Business.

Elisabeth Schaefer, Recorder

APPENDIX A

Municipality	Municipal Population	Total Number of Hours Worked per Week by All Staff	Number of staff working 35 hours or more per week	Number of staff working fewer than 35 hours per week	Ratio FTE to Total Staff	Total FTE + PTE	Full Time Equivalency	Total Annual Staff Hours Worked per Capita	MLS FTE	Professional FTE	Children's Librarian FTE	MLS FTE per 1,000 population served by the library	Total Number of Positions at Library	Circ per FTE
Arlington	45,617	1221.50	25	13	**1.9**	38	34.90	1.39	15.9	15.89	119.0	0.35	53	30,462
Belmont	26,838	917.00	20	33	0.6	53	26.20	1.78	11.1	14.94	70.0	0.42	51	23,145
Lexington	34,071	1366.00	29	24	**1.2**	53	39.03	2.08	15.5	19.14	81.0	0.45	64	25,860
Medford	**62,098**	**908.00**	**17**	**15**	1.1	**32**	**25.94**	**0.76**	**18.6**	**23.17**	**135.0**	**0.30**	**31**	**20,669**
Melrose	29,312	616.40	13	28	0.5	41	17.61	1.09	6.1	7.66	36.0	0.21	39	16,025
Somerville	79,815	1725.00	33	23	**1.4**	56	49.29	1.12	24.0	26.86	40.0	0.30	61	12,621
Watertown	35,149	1332.50	27	19	**1.4**	46	38.07	1.97	17.5	18.23	111.0	0.50	46	21,528
Winchester	22,662	891.00	12	31	0.4	43	25.46	2.04	11.9	11.89	73.0	0.52	41	17,528

Mumicipality	Population Served by Library	Director's annual salary	Library Director Maximum Hourly Compensation	Total Hours Per Week - Director	Adult Reference Services Librarian Minimum Hourly Compensation	Adult Reference Services Librarian Maximum Hourly Compensation	Children's Librarian Minimum Hourly Compensation	Children's Librarian Maximum Hourly Compensation	Circulation Services Librarian Minimum Hourly Compensation	Circulation Services Librarian Maximum Hourly Compensation	Page Minimum Hourly Compensation	Page Maximum Hourly Compensation	Administrative Assistant Minimum Hourly Compensation	Administrative Assistant Maximum Hourly Compensation
Arlington	45,617	$110,767	$81.71	35	$31.94	$39.83	$31.94	$39.83			$15.00	$15.00	$31.05	$42.13
Belmont	26,838	$126,781	$73.81	40	$32.10	$39.93	$32.10	$39.93	$26.79	$32.25	$14.25	$14.25	$24.98	$36.64
Lexington	34,071	$152,173	$83.61	35	$31.34	$38.97	$31.34	$38.97	$32.78	$40.21	$13.52	$17.84	$32.58	$45.20
Medford	62,098	$119,922	$74.46	35	$18.00	$39.42	$18.00	$39.42	$15.00	$33.71	$13.00	$13.00	$15.00	$31.37
Melrose	29,312	$110,273	$66.90	35	$27.56	$37.64	$31.01	$41.48	$27.56	$37.64	$15.00	$17.00	$26.23	$35.25
Somerville	79,815	$128,883	$61.96	40	$25.24	$26.27	$28.62	$28.62	$28.91	$28.91	$17.09	$20.72	$30.63	$30.63
Watertown	35,149	$116,367	$71.78	38	$29.86	$35.69	$29.86	$35.69			$15.00	$15.00	$25.91	$31.86
Winchester	22,662	$112,204	$69.37	35	$31.30	$45.69	$31.30	$45.69			$15.01	$18.46	$29.80	$43.52