



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

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Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

Board of Library Trustees

Date: 2024-11-13

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: Reading Public Library

Location: Community Room

Address: 64 Middlesex Avenue

Session: Open Session

Purpose: General Meeting

Version: Final

Attendees: **Members - Present:**

Cappy Popp, Chair; Patrick Egan, Vice-Chair; Andrew Grimes, Secretary;
Cherrie Dubois; Monette Verrier

Members - Not Present:

Andrew Gregory

Others Present:

Amy Lannon, Director; Michelle Filleul, Assistant Director;
Meaghan Clemente, Administrative Assistant; Mark Wetzel, Reading Lions
Club Treasurer; Desirée Zicko, Reading Lions Club 3rd Vice President

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Andrew Grimes, Secretary

Topics of Discussion:

I. Call to Order 7:02 p.m.

II. Public Comment

No public comments were made in person or remotely.

III. Funds2Orgs Coolidge Middle School PTO Collection Request

The Board received a request from a Coolidge Middle School PTO member regarding a fundraiser collecting gently used shoes to donate to developing countries in partnership with Funds2Orgs. This is the Coolidge Middle School PTO's first time running this collection. They are happy to regularly empty and maintain the collection box. Collection boxes are currently in place at Planet Fitness and the Police Station.

The Board discussed the box's placement since there will also be a Toys for Tots collection box and the Festival of Trees display in the lobby area. Ms. Verrier suggested temporarily placing the collection box in the main entrance vestibule and relocating it to the lobby once the other collection boxes are removed.

The original collection request specified a period of November 1 to January 1. The Board agreed to allow the collection to continue through mid-January to compensate for time lost in early November.

Motion: To approve the placement of a shoe collection box for the Coolidge Middle School PTO on behalf of Funds2Orgs through mid-January 2025 in the Reading Public Library lobby.

(Egan / Verrier)

Vote: Approved 5-0

IV. Reading Lions February Food Drive Request

Mark Wetzel and Desirée Zicko introduced themselves as members of the Reading Lions Club and coordinators of the requested food drive. The Reading Lions Club is the local chapter of Lions Club International, the world's largest membership-based service club organization. The Reading Lions Club hosts a July road race, a comedy night, a scarecrow decorating contest, and seasonal wreath sales to raise funds for charitable purposes.

These activities fund important community projects such as the Reading Friends and Family Day in June, senior dinners at the Pleasant Street Center, a holiday Adopt-A-Family program, a Reading Scholarship Foundation scholarship, and free eye screening programs using mobile eye clinics. Mr. Wetzel thanked the Board for allowing an ongoing eyeglasses collection box in the Library's Health Nook.

Reading Lions Club members are eager to help the local community in new ways. They recently met with the Director of the Reading Food Pantry to plan and discuss the timing of a food drive in February. Therefore, the proposed donation drive would begin on Saturday, February 1, and run through Tuesday, February 25.

The Lions Club will coordinate with the Reading Food Pantry to determine what specific items are needed. Volunteers will regularly and actively monitor and empty the collection box as needed. Volunteers will take the food to the Reading Food Pantry on Wednesdays.

Ms. Zicko asked if the Library would be listed as a co-sponsor for the collection. The Board discussed Ms. Zicko's co-sponsorship request and decided to maintain its policy of providing space while organizers retain primary sponsorship of charitable collections.

Motion: To allow the Reading Lions Club to conduct a food donation drive for the Reading Food Pantry from Saturday, February 1, 2025, through Tuesday, February 25, 2025.

(Egan / Verrier)

Vote: Approved 5-0

Mr. Wetzel and Ms. Zicko thanked the Board and excused themselves at 7:17 p.m.

V. Friends of Reading Public Library Fundraiser

The Friends of the Reading Public Library are selling \$10 customized playing cards, to be sold at the Borrower Services Desk. This fundraiser falls within existing Library policies and does not require Board approval. Like their other initiatives, including the book sale and house tour ticket sales, the Friends will manage sales and proceeds independently. The Board expressed enthusiastic support for this fundraiser.

VI. Discussion: Ad Hoc Commemoration Establishment ("ACE") Committee

The Board can appoint one Reading resident to the Ad Hoc Commemoration Establishment (ACE) Committee. The Board confirmed that no members are interested in the position and have yet to hear directly from any other interested candidates. The Board discussed various application and appointment processes.

The Board discussed approaching applicants not appointed by the Select Board's November 19, 2024 meeting. Ms. Lannon will send the Board copies of the ACE applications when they are made public.

The Board could invite interested volunteers to the December meeting for further discussion. Mr. Egan will make a public comment at the Select Board meeting inviting interested volunteers to contact the Board's public email address. Mr. Egan and Mr. Popp will confer and hopefully have a recommendation for the Board at the December meeting.

VII. Discussion and Vote: Holds Pickup Policy

Ms. Lannon reviewed changes to the Holds Pickup Policy discussed at the October meeting. Mr. Egan suggested a minor edit to replace capitalized "OR" with ", or" between the two bullet points.

Motion: To approve the Holds Pickup Policy as amended.

(Egan / Dubois)

Vote: Approved 5-0

VIII. Financial Report

Ms. Lannon reported that the FY25 budget is continuing to run smoothly. Ms. Lannon will present the draft Level 1 FY26 budget to the Select Board on December 10, the day after the Board's next meeting on December 9. The Finance Committee's guidance is for an overall municipal budget increase of 3.5%. This is comparable to the increase in the prior year. Based on this, the Town Manager has set FY26 non-union salaries to increase by one step plus a 1.25% cost of living adjustment (COLA). This translates to a salary increase of approximately 3.6% to 3.8% for each employee, depending on the grade of their position.

The substitute budget has remained the same. Collection Services and Public Services Sunday hours have a flat 3% increase. Due to voluntary personnel transitions, the Library has moved ten weekly Public Services Librarian I hours (Grade D) to Collection Services Library Associate hours (Grade B) for further cost savings, resulting in an overall salary increase of 3.2% across all departments.

The FY23 and FY24 municipal budgets were fully expended and supplemented by gifts and state aid funds as needed. Administrative and acquisitions staff work to control costs using best procurement practices and pricing. Inflation and rising costs have led to expected increases for library technology licenses, maintenance contracts, and the Library's North of Boston Library Exchange (NOBLE) membership.

Ms. Lannon noted a new \$17,000 expense line dedicated to the Office of Equity and Social Justice (OESJ) professional services, training, and programs. Presently, the

Library funds all related OESJ expenses. Mr. Pless will present to the Select Board about the use the funds to

- 1) Deliver Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training for Town staff
- 2) Offer community-wide programs such as the Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Juneteenth celebrations
- 3) Hire third-party consultants or contractors as needed.

Ms. Lannon moved \$6,500 from the Library programming budget to the OESJ budget, so the net of new funding is \$10,500.

When reviewing FY25 expenditures, Mr. Lannon clarified that the large state aid expenditures were primarily for developing the Library's new mobile application, event management software, and ongoing website improvements through Communico.

IX. Director's Report

The Library offers over 18 free and discounted passes to local and regional cultural attractions. Use has been up almost 50% since FY22 after dropping during the pandemic. RPL uses Assabet Interactive software to manage museum pass reservations and track renewals.

Ms. Dubois suggested adding or renewing museum passes to the Institute of Contemporary Art and the Concord Museum. The municipal budget includes funds for all museum passes. However, donors occasionally sponsor certain passes.

The Board discussed how the museum passes are advertised and made several suggestions on how to increase usage.

Ms. Lannon reminded the Board of the upcoming event on Saturday, November 23, at 11:00 a.m. Indigenous artist and Vice President of the Massachusetts Tribe Thomas Green will unveil the community art beading project. He will also talk about the "Three Sisters" that inspired the project and the significance of these plants in indigenous culture. The artwork will be framed and displayed alongside new tribal maps.

Ms. Filleul reported that over 100 residents attended the Connected Reading Community Resource Fair on October 22. The event featured 46 town and community organizations. She noted that participants made meaningful connections and that next year's fair will go a bit later to increase accessibility for working residents. The Connected Reading planning committee hopes to target newer community members and those living in apartment complexes.

The Adult Autism Support Center at Northeast Arc held a Resource Fair at the Library last week. It helped form partnerships and connections between local organizations and young adults with autism.

Rooted in Reading programs and activities are underway. Gardens by Demetra and Gagnon Landscaping assisted with numerous indoor and outdoor plantings in October, including an example sensory garden. The Library is working on cataloging all the new plants and creating educational signage to engage visitors. Some staff members have

offered to water and care for plants for now until the Library can establish a regular volunteer care schedule.

Twenty-seven Library staff members attended the Library's Staff Development Day on November 1. Ms. Filleul, Ms. Clemente, Collection Services Librarian Kathryn Geoffrion Scannell, and Local History Librarian Jocelyn Gould were on the planning committee for this special day, which highlighted the Library's core values. Staff gathered and had lunch at UTEC, a local organization dedicated to sustainability and helping young people. Activities also included a presentation by New Americans Librarian Katelyn Duncan from the Worcester Public Library, a Boott Cotton Mill Museum tour, and a National Park ranger-led talk about immigrants' historical and current impact in Lowell and the surrounding areas. Ms. Lannon thanked the Friends of the Reading Public Library and the Reading Public Library Foundation for their generous support of this program.

Ms. Lannon highlighted other recently completed professional development and the important contributions of retired staff members like Suzy Axelson, who continue to work occasional substitute shifts at the Library.

X. Approval of October 15, 2024, Meeting Minutes

*Motion: To approve the minutes of the October 15, 2024, Trustee Meeting as written.
(Grimes / Dubois)*

Vote: Approved 4-0-1 with Ms. Verrier abstaining

XI. Future Agenda Items

The December agenda will include updates on Winter Programming and Local History/Archives will be presented. Ms. Lannon will also present the FY26 Level 1 Budget to the Select Board on December 10. The Board will further discuss their appointment options for the Ad Hoc Commemoration Establishment ("ACE") Committee.

Adjournment 8:16 p.m.

Motion: To Adjourn (Egan / Grimes)

Vote: Approved 5-0

Respectfully Submitted,



Andrew Grimes, Secretary