



Fletcher Free Library
LIBRARY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Minutes of Meeting
Wednesday, March 17, 2021

Present: Gale Batsimm, Emilia Bloche, Megan Butterfield, Allie Cashel, Jonathan Chapple-Sokol, Emer Feeney, Ariel Felcan, Molly Loomis, Mona Tolba, Cate MacLachlan, Patrick Halladay, Amy Mellencamp, Rachel Muse.

Welcome: Amy welcomed everyone. Emer Feeney will be representing the library today as Mary Danko has another meeting.

Approval of Minutes: From January 27, 2021. Patrick/Cate. Approved.

Public Forum: None present.

Friends Report: Volunteers are not allowed in building, Friends work is limited. eBay sales have been successful; if anyone has valuable books to donate, contact the Friends. Incredible work being done and innovation happening at the library during a difficult time. 100% participation by Friends of Board in Annual Appeal this year.

Director's Report: Emer highlighted some of director's report. The library is partially open, no extended visits with tech center as library offered at the beginning of winter. FFL is not anticipating opening more right now due to COVID variants. We still offer the same hours. Contact tracers have returned to full service at library. We continue to have successful programming in virtual realm, such as Dad Guild Book Club. Library is gearing up to do science-based programming. Both local and adult programming that will have larger scope. Beanstack helps track what you've been reading. Teaching people about digital services in digital arena. Offering take and makes for people. Digital Provide Project funded by local grants, laptops and hotspots for loan; it will meet a need in the community about digital access that has become clear during pandemic. Window has artwork for community. Exciting to continue some of this past pandemic. Biggest thing we are working on as a team, moving toward KOHA, and consortium system, that will Segway us to collecting more tightly with other libraries and will greatly improve searching capacity for patrons. UVM students working on capstone project looking at how to connect with immigrant and refugee communities.

Cate asked about when library might remove hour long close for cleaning in the middle of the day. Emer noted that this is necessary right now for reduced staff to have lunch break. Still cleaning, but not as hyper focused on cleaning as earlier. Emer said we might reword why we are closed at that time. Patrick asked about vaccines for library staff and Emer said that some library staff is working from home and not anticipating getting vaccinated earlier.

Library Update: Rachel Muse, Technical Services and Digital Content Manager: her team are the behind the scenes librarians, they buy books, catalog them, manage collection. Rachel shared PowerPoint participation. Nora joined team in December, along with Nga and Rachel. Doug Chamberlain retired after decades at the library. Library has posted for that position, dual function in both circ and tech services hours, so important for library. Stats show the library added zero new books in April 2020. It is

likely unprecedented in library history not to add any new adult new fiction. During April 2020 had a huge jump in Overdrive eBooks collection, from 1014 in January 2020 to 2373 in April 2020. While physical book sales have increased, eBooks downloaded have not decreased. This poses an interesting challenge to the budget. We've added new digital services: TumbleBooks (for youth), Pressreader(digital newspaper and magazine service to fill gap of magazines not circulating)., Ancestry.com (numbers skyrocketing during the pandemic), ValueLine (financial services info and research).

Cate asked about hiring for Doug's position, Rachel said hiring is happening, very glad City approved hiring for this position; Doug did much of the ordering for the library. Jonathan asked how new system will change Rachel's job. One of big changes is all ordering is through our current system, helps with managing budget. No library has done this in Vermont with KOHA, we will be the first to do this. Cate asked about how we anticipate what people will use, will we be surveying patrons? Rachel said there is more data for the eBooks, which she monitors. There is a challenge to be able to determine what to purchase. Library cancelled a number of magazine subscriptions. Hoopla is a canned system where we can't add to it. Overdrive we can buy multiple copies when we have many holds on one. We did do purchasing over summer to add to racial justice books.

New Business: Amy noted the Capital Campaign is on hold. Commission will want to be involved in that. Strategic Planning will be coming up, not ready to launch that yet, but Commission will be involved. Also looking at updating policies with racial equity lens. Hoping to have more guided presentation, identifying which policies need more updating, at next meeting.

Patrick was thinking about ways post pandemic to get people in and checking out real books, part of our duty is to be 21st century library and to promote a literate society and not just digital books. Molly would like to see demographic data on who is checking out physical books and eBooks. Are eBooks the gateway into the physical space? Rachel noted it is really a balancing act. People really want to browse the shelves, but people are also becoming more willing to try eBooks. People read magazines on sight and didn't check them out as much. We pride ourselves on curated collection of books and we are much more able to do that in physical library than digital library. Amy said with relocation of BHS downtown, would some partnership between BHS and FFL promote student awareness of library and resources. Emer noted that teen librarian and BHS librarian are meeting today, FFL is hoping to embed with BHS once we have physical space open at library. Emilia noted that it is a huge opportunity to have common area at library and study space. School library didn't have book Ariel was looking for, but knowing if FFL had it would be helpful. Can't come and go from building during the day, but if campus opens that would be attractive to students. Duplicating resources seems so perplexing to Molly when she sees local elementary school struggling to fundraise. The half cent tax for library collections helps the libraries. Library can't have BHS volunteers now because of pandemic. Megan said Listen and Read kits are going out to elementary schools (physical book and playaways) and sets of books out to the elementary schools. Gale noted we apply for grants to support the elementary schools, like CLiF Year of the Book and At-Risk Youth provide books directly to the students and their school libraries. FFL has also focused on book distribution to youth during the pandemic at school meal sites. Gale said the library will be celebrating National Poetry Month and Global Citizen Science Month in April.

Next meeting: May 19 at 10 am

Meeting is adjourned.