



LIBRARY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Minutes of Meeting
Wednesday, November 17, 2021

Present: Gale Batsimm, Sally Blanchard-O'Brien, Megan Butterfield (call in), Allie Cashel, Jonathan Chapple-Sokol (call in), Emily Copeland, Mary Danko, Chol Dhoor, Patrick Halladay (call in), Amy Mellencamp, Jessica Nordhaus (call in), Mona Tolba (call in), Ailsa Oneil-Dunne, Laura Zhou-Hackett.

Approval of Minutes: From September 8, 2021. Emily moved/Chol seconded. Approved.

Approve Agenda: Emily moved/Sally seconded. Approved.

Public Forum: No public in attendance.

Friends Report: Jonathan reported that the Friends Board of Directors met last night and he is impressed at the work the Friends are doing. He also noted that new, younger volunteers have become active in roles like treasurer and publicity and are working hard to raise money for the library. The annual appeal has been mailed and everyone is encouraged to support. The Friends will have a book stall at the Holiday Artist Market on December 11 at City Hall Park.

Director's Report: Mary announced the future opening of a New North End Branch. She had been in discussion with Burlington Telecom about using their office during hours they were not open and learned they weren't using it at all and we could take over prepaid lease. Mary went through City and attorney, it is all done. BT will provide free wifi and furniture. Landlord David Hauke has been generous as well. Branch will be open four hours day, four days per week, starting slow and gauging foot traffic to branch. Then we need to make a case if we want to extend, as there will be costs involved after May. Library will set up shelving (given by South Burlington) and move books there. Emily asked how commission can be involved. Mary welcomed commissioners and trustees to attend the ribbon cutting ceremony December 15 at 1pm at Ethan Allen Plaza. NNE City Councilors are very excited about this pilot. Ailsa asked how we would expand if it goes well. Mary said slowly in this time of COVID, although we are seeing more people coming and hanging out at the library. Laura asked if we would consider South End as well. Mary explained that the library survey indicated that transportation is an issue for folks in NNE, we are much closer to South End, but that library is open to ideas and listening to community. Branch will give people a taste of what main library has. Amy talked about summer pop up libraries in parks set the tone for library coming out to community. Sally asked about metrics -- Mary said we can benchmark and compare to other libraries. Jessica said for benchmarking may be very different than main branch. She noted we should explore connections with Hunt and BHS, also with opening to work with hyper local businesses to drive some activity—free bagel, coupon to skate at Leddy, get people to use library. Interesting to see what data for people walking through door. Patrick said the overall increase who is walking into overall libraries. Main branch traffic is half of what it had been per Mary. Circulation is only down 18%. Suggested examining four-year average instead of just last year. Chol noted this is an exciting program because location is strategic, how many current users are from that area, so we can engage that number. He agreed with Jessica that we have schools there to work with, and Franklin Square where engagement can go deeper. Engagement aspect is very

important. Count new card sign up. City may be able to do that by neighborhood. Just using 05408 zip code per Amy.

Patrick, Jonathan and Amy were involved in interviews with architectural firms for schematic design phase and are very close to making a decision. That will start this process of taking architect's vision document and putting more meat to it to have cost estimate and see what is achievable. Need those documents to start capital campaign. Exciting to think about sustainability and how space can be used differently. Keen on making building energy efficient, exciting and welcoming to community. Exciting new work that will consume commission for some years to come. Jonathan said as designs become solidified capital campaign steering committee will meet December 9 with Christine Graham for training. Working on timelines and make sure we have money we need to make this happen. Municipal funding needs to be a component of it. Some strategy work will need to happen. Mona can we use some ARPA money? Mary said city is doing outreach to see what community wants, will be a January town hall to put out ideas and score them. Opportunity to advocate for library. Limitations on what money can be used for. Build Back Better bill may benefit library—energy piece and being green. We met with Senator Leahy's folks and discussed historic renovation piece. Better chance with infrastructure than with ARPA money. If City money is freed up from ARPA funds they may have additional money for other things. High School will also have impact. That might also benefit from congressional dollars. Library gets impact fees and has over \$100,000 for the schematic design that has been approved. Also have some donated funds left in city coffers for additional. Mary will go on December 13 to City Finance. Firm that is chosen can sign after that. Chol noted the need to be clear on why library wants to do this now for the community is space limited, accessibility, very clear moving forward for it to be owned by people who will benefit from the project. Mary noted firm will engage with public meetings. The strategic plan and surveys led to the 2019 vision document, followed by a feasibility study completed just prior to the pandemic. The schematic process will help refine case statement. We've learned so much through COVID. Mary also noted better communication and partnerships in the community with groups such as Trusted Community Voices during this period. She noted that commissioners helping library reach communities will be important.

Mona asked about requiring vaccines. Mary said we cannot require that. Mandates must come from government. Anyone can come into building and can be unmasked. For the children's area we were able to say masks are required because in our ordinance we can establish room rules so felt comfortable with that. We have a staff requirement that those working with public must be masked. Library is on high-level pandemic ventilation.

Mary would like to create a small committee to work on policy, using City racial equity toolkit, and would like to tackle room use policy first. Amy asked for 3-4 people to step forward. Emily asked what type of experience is helpful, writing, law, etc... Mary said just being a library user, want policy to be user friendly. If we have legal issue can turn to attorney's office: Ailsa, Allie and Emily volunteered to be on committee. Chol inquired about space issues. Mary said there is more last-minute use and we need to tighten that up to make it equitable.

The Annual Winter breakfast, hosted by the Friends, will be January 19 at 7:45 am. There is a breakfast meeting with city councilors to have them hear what library is doing. Last year was a Zoom meeting with swag bags. We hope for hybrid at library with breakfast bags to go. Zoom option to maximize attendance. Commissioners suggested possible speakers.

Emily asked about how City ARPA money was used for the houseless. Library will purchase bins for homeless (an idea that was generated by City Innovation Fund) and outside outlets, wiring. ARPA funds through VT libraries will provide wipeable furniture, STEAM and LEGO tables for youth, and technology. Library partnered with BSD for last summer's grant from Dept of Education for youth outreach. VT afterschool grant we partnered with BPRW for outreach. Mary is keeping an eye on the Build Back Better monies, how will it flow and how do we make a case. These funds are targeted—transportation, climate... City has engaged law firm, but city has said departments should know what has happened in their agency. Mary may share note sheet on Build Back Better Act with Patrick for suggestions.

Chol asked about elevator, which needed repair. Mary said repair was happening and issue was due to state going to 10 digits on phone, and we have to have working phone on elevator. As of these minutes elevator is now functioning again.

New Meeting Schedule: 7:45 am on January 19, Winter Breakfast.

Meeting adjourned: Chol moved/Jessica seconded. Approved.