



Fletcher Free Library
LIBRARY BOARD of COMMISSIONERS
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 8, 2019

Present: Emilia Bloch, Megan Butterfield, Ariel Felcan, Peter Ireland, Patrick Kinner, Molly Loomis, Glenn McRae, Cate MacLachlan, Mary Ellen Manock, Amy Mellencamp, Gale Batsimm

Approval of Minutes: from March 13, 2019: Peter Ireland/Cate MacLachlan/all in favor

Public Forum: No public attendance to report. Glenn reported that as this was his final meeting, he has moved into a volunteer role at the circulation desk of the Library. He is seeing first-hand the impact volunteers have in allowing staff to do other important work. He also commented on the calm, professional demeanor of the circulation staff. Peter Ireland and Mary Ellen Manock have one meeting left before their terms expire.

Friends Report: Peter Ireland reported on a meeting of the Finance Committee earlier in the week. The Finance Committee consists of a combination of Friends and Commissioners. He noted that the new accounting software, Aplos, will bring greater ease of fund accounting. There were suggestions of reaching out to RSVP of the United Way and Senior Corps for volunteers to serve on the Finance Committee.

Commission Openings: The Commission has one Commissioner position and two Trustee openings becoming available. Amy asked the Commission to provide suggested names, especially seeking to provide greater diversity of the Commission to represent New Americans and other communities in Burlington. Cate said that she would speak to a contact. Gale noted one person had inquired about available positions. Amy said that the Commissioner applies online to the City and must be a Burlington resident. The Trustees are approved by the other two Trustees and may reside in Chittenden County. Molly asked for a skills assessment or greater clarity on the specific qualifications needed at this time. She suggested we look at the demographic profile of trustees and see how we are doing reaching out so we might best fill those positions. There was a recommendation that we consider volunteers who are dedicated to the Library for these positions. Peter suggested we might have a member of the homeless community. The group also raised the question of whether trustees, in addition to commissioners, should fill out an on-line application and wondered about the process to make trustee positions more public. There was also discussion about formalizing the role of the student commissioners and a request for that to be added to the next agenda.

Evaluation of Library Director: The Commission requested that the evaluation be put on the March agenda next year and wondered whether they should also solicit staff feedback. Cate mentioned 360 assessments and engaging the community in feedback. Gale said that the Commission will be updated on the strategic plan follow-up survey that should be sent out later this month. The Commission would like to receive more visible metrics during the year so they may speak directly to what is being measured

in the evaluation. Commissioners commented favorably on the approachable and informative nature of the director. Also on her ability to build and hire strong staff. The Commission was also pleased with the outreach (eg. Early Literacy Outreach Program) and innovation (eg. opening for holidays) that the Library has demonstrated under the director. It was noted that Mary has taken the momentum and moved it forward under her direction. Amy will send a written evaluation to the Mayor by May 24. The Commission noted that the delay of the Ordinance in moving forward over the past two years has made Mary's role more difficult.

Annual Report: Glenn requested that a list of Commissioners and Trustees be added to the report. The Commission approved the annual report for FY18: Patrick Kinner/Megan Butterfield/all in favor.

Jazz Brunch Update: The Jazz brunch was a sold-out event, grossing about \$6000, netting about five times last year's event. The event committee met recently with Jenni Johnson. If she determines she would like to hold an event next year, it is her desire that it be a concert, not a brunch. The Commission reviewed event feedback and analysis of the silent auction sales.

Communications Project: Patrick Kinner discussed the interviews he conducted in late April and showed some of the visuals he created, using photographs his daughter took of iconic Library images. Patrick said his ten interviews were with a wide mix of patrons and that most people had one primary reason that brought them to the Library and then find more reasons while they are here. Patrons commented on how well the librarians listen. He reported that one family bases their home schooling around Library offerings and that another patron came from St. Albans to do genealogy research. Patrick will meet with Jonathan, Mary and Gale to discuss how to use these marketing materials for the Library. The group discussed social media, connecting the project with survey feedback, and utilizing it for the annual appeal. There were suggestions of having an art display at City Hall or a bus campaign with the images. Glenn noted that the Library is about people and connectivity also, so it might be nice to have photos of people. As a different project, the Commission thought it would be nice to have staff photos on the website and in the Library with a get to know your librarian message.

New Business: Two new programs kicked off in the past week. The Howard Center began staffing a community service desk at the Library on Tuesdays. The 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program launched with Champlain Valley Head Start. Gale Batsimm and Megan Butterfield explained that this national program encourages children and parents/guardians to read 1,000 books before they reach kindergarten, decreasing the word gap that exists among preschool-age children. Research shows that children may be 18 months behind by the time they reach kindergarten. The kickoff included author Elizabeth Bluemle reading two of her books. Children were allowed to choose from a selection of books to take two home to keep. The program will reach three Head Start sites and begin in-house at the Library in the fall.

Move to Adjourn: Megan Butterfield/Patrick Kinner/all in favor

Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 17, at 8:30 am at the library.