

Draft of Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting of April 29, 2021

Salem, Massachusetts

April 29, 2021

A meeting of the Board of Trustees was held via Zoom on this date at 4:05pm with Trustees April, Austin, Marte, Morin, Rourke, and Trustee Buckley present and presiding. Mayor Driscoll was absent. Miss Mansfield was present.

Approval of draft minutes from February 25, 2021 UNANIMOUS.

Current Library Use and Financial reports were distributed. Miss Mansfield reported that appointment based visits began on March 15th in addition to curbside pickup hours. Miss Mansfield reported that Salem was sixth highest in NOBLE for circulation of physical items in February and fifth highest in March. Salem was fourth highest in February and third highest in March for Overdrive circulation. Discussion of the rising electronic usage followed, and funds will continue to be allocated to Overdrive to try to offset the decline in NOBLE circulation.

Financial reports were distributed along with the quarterly investment report. Trustee Buckley suggested that it was time for a visit from John Doherty. Trustee Marte and Miss Mansfield will arrange for Mr. Doherty to attend the next Trustee meeting.

Miss Mansfield reported that the library was granted a waiver by the Mass Board of Library Commissioners for FY21. The library will retain certification and will be eligible for State Aid to Public Libraries grant money.

Miss Mansfield reported that the main door and entryway restoration had been rescheduled for July. Wayne Towles' staff had suffered injuries and illnesses that had delayed projects scheduled before the library's restoration project, causing delays for subsequent projects.

Miss Mansfield noted that a donation had been made to the Bertram Kimball Grounds Beautification Fund for the spring planting and landscaping. The Trustees expressed their gratitude for the donor's generosity.

Discussion of the Poseidon Fountain followed. Miss Mansfield announced that the Community Preservation Committee had recommended funding the remainder needed for fountain restoration project, and that the next step would be for City Council to make the final vote on May 13th. The project will go out to public bid once the CPA funds were available. The Trustees discussed sending a letter to City Council in support of the project. Trustee Rourke will draft the letter. Discussion of a communications plan for the project followed. Trustee Austin volunteered to help.

Trustee Morin reported that the proposals from the RFP were 95-97% accurate, and noted that the real work would now begin. Due to the non-standard job and complicated scheduling, on site

management would be necessary. Trustee Morin and April volunteered to help fill this role once the project is underway.

The Trustees expressed their thanks to the benefactor who donated a significant portion of the funds, the past and present Trustees, and Friends of the Fountain group, and the Community Preservation Committee for making the project a reality. Trustee Buckley suggested that contingency funds be set aside for the project. The Trustees agreed that a vote will be in order once the project is bid. The Friends of the Fountain will update the sign near the fountain.

Trustee Rourke reported that the library's sign was showing wear and chipped paint. The Trustees agreed to add this project to the priority list. Mr. John Hermanski volunteered to examine the sign to see if any restoration is needed, and Miss Mansfield will ask the library custodian about sanding and repainting the wooden exterior of the sign.

Miss Mansfield reported that the library is seeing an increase in Children's books being challenged. Some publishers have stopped publishing titles due to racist content and there have been individual challenges to titles in the collection for not being appropriate for children. Miss Mansfield noted that the library staff normally handles these issues on a case by case basis, but was seeking a solution that can work with the library's intellectual freedom values. Public comment was made by Alyssa S. who works at the Pittsburg Carnegie Library. Their library had created a collection of non-circulating historic titles that are separated from the regular collections. The Trustees agreed that this was a good solution, as the titles may be useful for research. The Trustees thanked Alyssa for her thoughtful input.

Meeting adjourned at 5:07pm.