

## **Holliston Board of Library Trustees Minutes – Feb. 1, 2023**

**Attendees:** Karla Alfred, Nancy Baron, Kara Peterson, Gwyneth Swain, Mareoun Bo Yai, Library Director Deric Wilson, Dora Messana

Karla Alfred called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

Karla read the statement regarding the suspension of certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law and the authorized use of remote participation. She noted that a roll call of attendance will be taken; that all votes during the meeting will be by roll call (to satisfy the legalities of teleconferencing), and that any motions, seconds, or discussion should be preceded by the member's announcing their name.

Roll call taken.

### **1. Approval of minutes from Jan. 4, 2023**

Karla noted one edit needed to change from Karla to Kara as to who read the opening statement. Moved to approve with edit.

**Motion:** Karla Alfred

**Seconded:** Gwyneth Swain

**Approved:** Unanimously

### **2. Director's Report**

a. The library had a roof leak. It's been repaired. It was under the warrantee so we didn't have to pay for it. Nothing broke and no books damaged. James Keast was on top of it. Thanks, James!

b. The library closed early, at 4 pm, for snow on Jan 23. Deric contacted Karla, and they coordinated with Assistant Director Jennifer who was on site, and made the call to close. The safety of staff of the priority.

c. As an update on the grant process, Deric contacted Andrea Bono-Bunker the MBLC Building Specialist who spoke at our last meeting, for recommendations of professionals for the feasibility or needs assessment. Andrea said they'll be posting the full information packet which will include a list of professionals we can contact. It should be posted soon. We already have a Building Condition report. We can update this as needed.

d. The Finance Committee Review will be on Feb. 28, 2023. Deric provided the draft budget to the Trustees. Deric has discussed the budget with Karla as well as Travis and Vin (on Finance Committee). According to Vin, everything looks okay but the entire Committee will need to review. A more detailed budget discussion occurred later in the meeting, see notes below.

e. Deric contacted the owner of the lot across the street, behind the old Kamala building, about parking. They requested we not suggest people park there; they are hoping to expand and will need the parking.

f. Nathaniel Philbrick's author talk is on Wed. Feb. 8 at 6:30 for One Book/One Holliston. Deric will set up the tech in the Gilman for people who want to attend in person. The author is presenting remotely. People can join remotely as well. About 50 people have signed up.

g. Karla commented that she likes having the numbers for the author talks. Attendance has been strong. There's a lot of enthusiasm for this format.

### 3. Budget Presentation and Vote

Deric provided both a spreadsheet and a narrative explaining the changes for the FY 24 budget. The breakdown of expenses in the budget for FY24 is as follows:

- personnel at 69.86%, increase of 14.07% over FY23 – see notes below
- building and utilities at 8.91%, increase of 8.96% over FY23, most of which is for increased energy rates, at the suggestion of J. Keast.
- Minuteman membership / phone lines at 5.70%
- books at 15.52% (15% min. required for state certification).
- Overall increase of \$62,741 (11.16% )over FY 23

Karla and Deric have been talking with Travis and Kathleen and Staff, about what we need to function as a library. Much of the budget changes is to increase hours in order to service the town's needs.

Summary of 3 staffing request increases:

- **Circulation Supervisor:** Increase requested: \$24,214.08 (\$4,398 for existing position step and COLA and \$19,816 for new hours, a 59.93% increase in total) in order to add 12.5 hours weekly to this position for FY24. This is the highest priority request and will have the most impact on correcting issues with library scheduling and available services.
- **Library Technicians:** Increase requested: \$22,182 (\$6,072 for step and COLA, and \$16,110 for 12 staff hours, a 25.11% increase in total.). This is our second highest priority for FY24.
- **Cataloger:** Increase requested : \$11,017 (\$1,231 Step and COLA for existing position and \$9,786 for new hours, a 43.49% increase in total) in order to add 7 hours / week to this position. This re-creates a benefitted position (in the past our cataloger was a 30 hour benefitted position) that is necessary to handle the work load of the cataloging department. This is our third priority in terms of new requests mostly due to the gradual nature of the problem. We anticipate further increases to this position in future budget requests to keep pace with the increases outlined here.

More detailed descriptions can be found in the FY24 Library Budget Narrative.

In this budget we asked for one increase to a benefitted position, the cataloger position. The cataloger position was previously a benefitted position is currently being performed by Amy who is at 18 hours and not a benefitted position. (Welcome back, Amy!) She is at the max hours for part time and it needs to move from part time to benefitted.

Per Deric, FinCom guidelines this year were : Level service but not level funded. This budget is intended to maintain service at current levels.

Nancy asked about a plan if FinCom rejects the recommendation for the benefitted position. If FinCom rejects this proposal, we will repeat the request next year as this issue will continue to be present.

Gwyneth asked about coverage. Per Deric, the proposed budget is designed to correct coverage problems and lessen the pressure on staff.. Deric has a supervisors meeting scheduled 2 weeks from now for vacation staffing and general communication. If the increase in staff hours is approved, it will make vacation and absent time coverage easier to coordinate.

Deric is working on communication mechanism regarding vacation scheduling and also short term/long term absences. For short term absences, text/email are currently used to contact staff for availability. For longer term absences, there is a group email, but it does not guarantee a quick response. The upcoming meeting will attempt to address these communication challenges.

Gwyneth suggested Deric reach out to other libraries with a similar size regarding communication methods for covering absences. Deric noted that our employment environment is different than many others because we have so many part time staff, and few full time employees. He hasn't found another library with our approximate organization demographics, but will continue to look.

We are currently open 50 hours/week. Based on our population we are required to open 40 hours/week. Our current population is 2 people under the threshold for a 50 hour/week minimum open time. Once we cross that threshold, we will have 3 years to comply with the 50 hour/week rule.

Discussion of Amy's hours which is proposed to increase by 7 hours from 18 / week to 25 hours / week.

We have 3 years lead time to get to the service level for hours based on our population. This year doesn't count, assuming we exceed 15,000 residents, we have 3 years to increase our hours to 50. We want to have a cushion when 50 is required. Our increasing size is a compelling argument to FinCom to gradually increase hours for individuals and move to more full time staff so we can satisfy hours by the time they are required, with some cushion.

FinCom meeting is Tuesday Feb 28 - Travis, Deric, Karla will be there. Others are welcome to join.

**Motion to approve budget:** Kristy Wiwczar

**Seconded:** Nancy Baron

**Approved:** Unanimously

#### **4. Policy Discussion Inclement Weather**

Travis inquired about a written inclement weather policy. We have no written policy for closure for inclement weather. Previously, closures were decided by mutual agreement with Trustees Chair and the Director.

We have a procedure, but not a policy. Per Deric, the idea of a policy is so people know what to expect, both staff and patrons. Nancy suggested that the most senior person in the building in consultation with the Library Trustees Chair determine if library should close, keeping in mind the safety of staff. Karla read the Hubbard Memorial Library (Ludlow Public library) Inclement Weather Policy.

(<https://www.hubbardlibrary.org/library-policies/snow-day-policy.html>) It did not mention Town Hall, only schools. Our Town Website and Holliston Reporter will have notice of a closure. Deric will re-draft the Hubbard Memorial Library policy to fit our circumstances and we will review at the next meeting.

#### **5. Other business**

Kristy mentioned the MLBC is hosting 2 discussions: Mon. Feb. 7 Meeting Spaces and Wed. March 1 Library Collection Discussions.

Karla noted an issue with parent objections to LGBTQ books at a local school library (Medfield High School). Parents took issue with their children's access to these books. Diverse Holliston requested our policy on Holds (i.e. who can pick up books) and how we deal with requests to ban/remove books from our Collection. Karla will connect Diverse Holliston with Deric. We are committed to a safe and supportive environment for all.

**6. Next meeting: March 1, 2023 at 7 pm**

Hybrid Meetings will be required starting April 1, 2023. At least a few people will need to be in person.

**Motion to Adjourn:** Karla Alfred

**Seconded:** Kara Peterson

**Approved:** Unanimously

Adjourned at: 7:54 pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Kristy Wiwczar