

**PLAISTOW PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
August 12, 2014**

The Plaistow Public Library Board of Trustees held a regular meeting at the Public Library on Tuesday, August 12, 2014.

Present: Catherine Willis, Chair
James Peck, Treasurer
Jennifer Kiarsis, Secretary
Jane Query
Luann Blair

Others Present: Michelle Sykes, Alternate Trustee
Cab Vinton, Library Director
Gail Martin Swiderski, Minute Taker

Call to Order

Catherine Willis called the meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 10:32 am.

Secretary's Report

A motion was made by Jane Query to accept the Minutes of the June 10, 2014 Board of Trustees Meeting, seconded by Jennifer Kiarsis; Ayes 5, Opposed 0, Abstentions 0.

A motion was made by Jane Query to accept the Minutes of the Special Meeting of July 16, 2014, seconded by Luanne Blair; Ayes 2, Opposed 0, Abstentions 2.

Treasurer's Report

Jim Peck presented the Treasurer's Report through June 30, 2014. Jim reported that there are line items that continue to be over budget while the staff line item continues to be under budget. An active discussion ensued on the idea of staying on budget. Jim suggested that the Board might want to begin to slow down/reign in on certain line items with the thought that the Board needs to stay within a reasonable amount of the original budget by line item. Catherine agreed that paying attention to line item budgets is important during normal times; but the message the Board has given to Cab is to purchase the items that are needed this year while there is a surplus of funds as a result of being understaffed. Catherine noted that Materials is never budgeted for the correct amount and is normally over budget by September resulting in adding funds from the bottom line or from the Fines Fund if needed. The Public Activities line budget was established without having full experience of what the Library could

put together and offer to the public and it was agreed that additional funding would come from the Library's own funds or the bottom line if there was extra money there. Supply line automatically goes up with the Public Activities line. Extra funds, at one time, came out of the Utilities budget where there was substantial surplus, currently that is not the case and the cold months are ahead.

There was an open discussion on anticipated line item budgeting for 2015 that was tabled until the September 9, 2014 meeting.

Catherine questioned a charge under the Legal line item, possibly background checks, Jim and Cab will check and adjust as needed. Legal funds are available for the possible settlement of law suit.

A Motion was made by Jennifer Kiarsis to accept the Treasurer's Report. Seconded by Luann Blair; Ayes 4, Opposed 0, Abstentions 1.

Correspondence/Communications

Cab reported on thank you notes received, in particular a lovely thank you from the Girl Scouts signed by each scout.

Friends of the Library

Michelle Sykes indicated that there was nothing to report as of the last meeting of the Friends of the Library. The next meeting will be August 25, 2014.

Director's Report

HVAC, Cab reported that in talking with an engineering firm and with Reid Mechanical, company that does the HVAC work for the Town, as well as 4 to 5 other people, the idea of putting out an RFP for the software/hardware system without fixing the things in place that are currently not working was deemed not the appropriate way to go at this time. There is a possibility that the current software may work, they felt that the system we were considering may be overkill and that the RFP was not specific enough for what we need. Reid Mechanical, in particular, thinks that a very simple system might meet our needs and we should not have to spend \$30 – 40,000 to control temperature space. Cab reported that Reid Mechanical would be at the Library on Wednesday, August 13th to do a walk through. Catherine noted that Reid Mechanical had been to the Library in the past and never followed through or returned phone calls. Cab indicated that the Town speaks highly of Reid Mechanical, as did the consulting company he spoke with; he will stay on top of this and get the Town involved if needed. Cab noted that Reid Mechanical is in possession of the report issued by Advantage listing the items that need to be fixed; in theory Reid should come back with an amount to repair the problems. Cab will push this work along as quickly as possible, he will report back to the Board on the cost involved should the Board want to seek a second quote.

Old Business

Old Business was tabled until the September 9, 2014 meeting.

New Business

Catherine reported on Rose Bayek's interest in becoming an Alternate on the Library's Board of Trustees. The Board members had no objection to her request. Catherine will notify the Board of Selectman of Rose's interest for their consideration and vote.

Director's Report on Past Year Goals and Objectives

Catherine reported that she has had discussions with Atty. Mark Broth (Labor Law Atty. for the Town) regarding a Director's Contract; do we want a contract, do we not want a contract. Mark Broth and Sean Fitzgerald feel that we absolutely need a contract and that we should be working toward employee retention. They also felt that the contract should include a severance agreement. This continues to be opened for discussion and will be finalized at the September meeting.

Catherine reported that last year when the Director's performance evaluation was discussed the Board listed Goals and Objectives to be worked on for the following six months. It is understood that goals and objectives are not always accomplished during a certain amount of time, they often take longer.

Cab reported on the following seven goals

1. **Reorganize appropriately in order to run the Library effectively.** Cab reported that this remains a major work in progress. Cab distributed the job posting and job description for the Programming and Publicity Coordinator, creating this position is part of the reorganization, explicitly responsible for adult programming; there have been 16 responses to the job posting. Cab reported on the possible reorganization of the Circulation Department, going to more of a team model, staffed with 4 individuals. Reduction of hours by one staffer (personal request) would allow for additional staff without increasing the overall hours with no impact on the budget. One position may also be shared with the Assistant Children's Librarian position. Cab indicated he has had budget discussions with Cathy and Jenn regarding an Assistant Director and how that position could be somehow combined with the Programming position if the budget allowed.

Cab addressed collection development (purchasing materials for the Library), in the past this had been done by the Director along with the Children's Librarian but over the past

three years has been delegated, by default, to the Circulation Staff which is not an ideal situation and is an area that needs additional attention.

2. **Head of Youth Services.** Cab reported that Jenn has been great, positive feedback from parents. She is still getting comfortable with public library culture vs. school libraries. She has many connections with the public school system, outreach, seeking funds from the community to support programs she wants to develop that are not currently in the budget.

Catherine noted that Jenn is doing a great job interacting with the children; good reports have been posted on face book. Her King Arthur flour program had 63 people sign up and this was an adult program.

Cab reported that Jenn is organizing a Babysitter Certification Course for late October, including some fundraising as needed to support this program; this would also involve a 2-year CPR certification. She currently has 8 individuals interested.

Jim inquired as to additional training that Jenn may be open to. Cab stated that he has encouraged her to network with other local librarians as much as possible. Cab provides support and guidance; she is very knowledgeable about children's programming. If a children's assistant is hired Jenn may need support on how to manage staff since she has never done that. Jenn has been encouraged to sign up for workshops and conferences.

Cab is hoping to have a more formalized approach to checking in with staff, to see how they are doing, are they getting what they need, are they doing what they think they should be doing, is there anything hindering them from doing what they should be doing, standard checking in, what are their goals.

3. **Continue to establish yourself and promote the Library in Plaistow.** In an effort to establish himself, Cab is on the Elders Affairs Committee and he attends the Department Head Staff Meetings. Once a Programming and Publicity Coordinator is hired it will afford him more opportunity to establish himself in the community. A long term goal would be to have the Library the center of the community, by providing additional programs the residents would look to the Library for things to do.
4. **Focus on the creation of an active adult program including senior programs.** This continues to be a work in progress. The book groups have been revived and need to continue. There is more to be done. Until an additional person is hired the focus will be to maintain the programs currently running and add additional programs the Town will support as developed.

There was a general discussion on how often should the Library sponsor adult programs, once a month, once a quarter...etc. Continued research into what the Town residents will support is important as to what programs should be offered and how often.

5. **Knowledge of the budget, following expenditures appropriately.** Cab reported that he is comfortable with the expenditures he has incurred to date and the reasons why each expense was necessary. Jim indicated that he and Cab will work together on the upcoming 2015 budget.
6. **Overseeing and correction of HVAC issues.** This was a goal that was not accomplishable within the time frame. The Board encouraged Cab to get the Town involved with this project. Cab has reached out to Sean Fitzgerald for guidance with the RFP which was helpful in taking Cab to the next step in getting the problem resolved.
7. **Assist the Board in updating its employee handbook.** Cab and Jenn have been meeting throughout the summer working on updating the handbook. Cab has posted the updates for employees to update their individual handbooks.

Jim asked Cab which of the above goals he would consider his top priority. Cab indicated number 1. Right now the Circulation Department is in flux and hiring the new programming person is crucial, Cab feels without a full staff it is difficult to build strongly.

Catherine spoke about salaries and her recent conversation with Sean who is also concerned with Town Hall staff salaries. Sean reported back to Catherine that he is hiring a consultant to review all the salaries including the Library staff. Catherine mentioned that it would be important for the Library to look at salaries independently by looking at some towns with similar structure.

Jim suggested setting benchmarks for each goal. SMART Goals – **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**ealistic, **T**imely.

Catherine reported that previously she had met one on one with Cab when discussing his evaluation, she asked Cab his preference of meeting one on one or with the Board, Cab indicated that he has no preference, meeting with the Chair (or designee) if there is a consensus is fine, if there is a lack of consensus, it may be worthwhile to have more than one person, Cab is fine with the ultimate decision of the Board.

Catherine reported that the Board will come up with some goals and inquired of Cab if he would like to establish goals as well. Cab indicated that the Board could establish 4 to 7 provisional goals and after meeting jointly there would be a collaboration of established goals.

Catherine indicated that the Board will work on the current performance evaluation and the Board will make the decision as to whether they want to collaborate on goals or continue on as previously established, at that time the Board will ask Cab to submit his goals to the Board and there will be a discussion.

Cab and the Board discussed the situation regarding the Circulation team concept that was proposed by the Head of Circulation. She would like to cut her hours. She and another senior member of the circulation department have presented two scenarios: one having the two senior members of the circulation team be Co-heads with the other two new members reporting to them; having a four member team reporting directly to Cab. Compensation discussion followed due to the reduction in hours and stepping down from the Head of Circulation position if that is the scenario that is implemented.

In addition, job descriptions were presented to Cab for the Co-head scenario, each Co-head description being slightly different. Catherine suggested that having one job description was more appropriate since two people would be sharing the same position, and compensated accordingly.

It was recommended by the Board that Cab go back to the Head of Circulation and obtain a more accurate idea of what exactly is being proposed; if she will be willing to work her normal hours until the additional members of the team are hired; and what specific adjustments she is expecting relative to compensation regarding this reorganization.

At 11:53 a.m. a motion was made by Catherine Willis to move to a Non-Public Meeting, seconded by Jennifer Kiarsis; Ayes 5, Opposed 0, Abstentions 0.

The Board entered back into Public Meeting at 1:40 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be on Tuesday, September 9, 2014. At that time, the Board will begin discussions regarding the budget. In addition, Luann Blair will have a NH like-library salary comparison compiled for review.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Jennifer Kiarsis to adjourn at 1:45 pm. Seconded by Jane Query; Ayes 5, Opposed 0, Abstentions 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Martin Swiderski
Minute Taker