

Meeting Acushnet Public Library Board of Trustees

December 22, 2020 (Zoom) at 12 p.m.

In attendance: Jennifer Alves, Chair

Dina Brasseur, Library Director

Diane Ferreira

Nancy Francis

Danielle Guillemette

Jeri Howland, Secretary

Stephen Reale

RECEIVED
2021 JAN 28 A 9:51

Secretary's Report

A motion was made by Stephen to accept the secretary's report from December 1, 2020 and was seconded by Nancy. All voted (by roll call) in favor.

Budget Report

At this time, 46.1% of the budget is spent. 72.6% of the operating budget is spent which is appropriate as we are six months into the fiscal year. Nancy moved to accept the budget and Diane seconded. All voted (by roll call) in favor.

Old Business

There are no changes to the reopening plan, aside from a partial remote work plan directive from the Board of Selectmen. As of Monday, December 17, 2020, the library is working with a skeleton crew through at least January 9, 2021. This is to eliminate close contacts throughout Town departments as much as possible, so the staff has been divided into two teams. No services have been cut, but only two or three people are in the building at one time. When not scheduled in the library, staff is working at home to fulfill their weekly hours. Working remotely is a challenge but the staff is committed and coming up with meaningful projects to do at home. Danielle asked to clarify if this is what happened when the building first closed in March. Dina explained the differences.

New Business

The FY21 budget had been cut by 10% and for FY22, the town is calling for a level-funded budget. The budget to be submitted is very close to level funded. It is crucial that the library keep its state certification so it needs to meet the Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR). The MAR is computed using figures from the prior three fiscal years and for FY22 the MAR is \$277,973. We are submitting a budget for \$278,117 which is only .1% higher than last year. We had only a few increases to include the longevity line because employees are staying longer, the SAILS fee and supplies spent on books and other material. Per Town Administration, we did not increase salaries or hourly rates but there will be no impact on current staff members. Increases may be added to salary lines later. Jeri moved to accept the budget and Stephen seconded. All voted (by roll call) in favor.

Fine Free?

No library wants to charge fines but they are in place to encourage timely returns. The town has (previously) agreed to let fine money stay in the library's revolving fund. Anyone who has checked out items before March has received two emails or texts and finally a letter reminding them of overdue items. Only 150 items are still out (down from 800). Today there are 259 overdue items which have been checked out since June and 157 of those were just the last 7 days so some of them may be in quarantine. After a discussion on charging fines (when to resume charging, the need to build up the amount of money in the revolving fund, the differences of opinions among the staff and the board...), it was decided to postpone this decision until the end of February. The Board of Trustees will vote in February and then reevaluate every two months until fines are resumed. Nancy moved to suspend fines until February and then revisit and Diane seconded. All voted (by roll call) in favor.

Director's Report

There is no Director's report. Dina has been busy rearranging the employee's schedules to accommodate the skeleton crew while keeping the same service hours and also discussing and researching fines with the staff and other libraries.

The next Zoom meeting of the Board of Trustees will be Tuesday, January 12, 2020 at noon.

Stephen moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:40 p.m. and Diane seconded. All voted (by roll call) in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeri Howland

RECEIVED

2021 JAN 28 A 9:51