

Lewiston Public Library Board Meeting  
December 3, 2020  
Minutes

In attendance: Dan Jenkins, Abdifatah Afrah, Sarah Gillespie, Barbara Benjamin-McManus, Elizabeth Clifford, Ted Walworth, Darby Ray

Other: Marcela Peres (Library Director), Lisa Cesare (Auburn Public Library)

Touching base: What is bringing you light during these dark times?

Unanimous approval of the November minutes.

Library Director's report: Overview of highlights by Marcela

- We are applying for an extension on the NEH grant through April. This option was previously unavailable, but opened up due to the continued pandemic conditions. Good news!
- Due to the pandemic spike, decided not to move forward with the browsing phase-in for now.
- Lois Lowry virtual author visit is coming up — exciting! This is a silver lining of COVID since we would normally not be able to afford her.
- Barbara moved to approve the report, and Elizabeth seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Library Fines Committee update

- A subset of our board met with staff from Portland Public Library and APL colleagues to learn about Portland's decision to eliminate fines—their rationale and process.
- Both LPL and APL want to make this change, but it poses a more dramatic financial challenge to APL than to us. They are leaning toward making the change when we do it, for continuity's sake, but they have to figure out how to bridge the financial gap, which is significant enough that the board probably can't add the amount to their annual fundraising load.
- Marcela asked the board to formalize our decision on this matter, as well as advise her on the timing.
  - Discussed the possibility of eliminating fines as of July 1, 2021.
  - Discussed the possibility of declaring amnesty for people who currently have overdue fines in excess of \$5 (the point at which an account is not in good standing), *not* replacement costs, on their account. Agreed to delay this particular decision until a future meeting. Marcela will research the feasibility.
  - Darby made a motion, and Ted seconded it, to eliminate fines as of July 1, 2021. Unanimously approved. Marcela will begin exploring this with City staff because it will require Council approval. Marcela suggests that a formal letter of support from the Board will be helpful when the time comes.

#### Library Objectives discussion

- Dan made a motion to approve the objectives as presented by library staff, with Ted seconding. Unanimously approved.

#### Endowment Budget discussion

- We are being asked to authorize the full budget because in September we decided to wait to do that until we could watch the pandemic play out a little longer.
- Discussed staff professional development and foreign language acquisitions.
- Barbara made a motion to approve the budget, with Dan seconding. Unanimously approved.

#### Holiday Closings schedule

- LPL generally follows the City's calendar, with a few exceptions.
- Darby made a motion to approve the Holiday Closings calendar as submitted, and Ted seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

#### Nominating Committee (Barbara presented on behalf of the committee)

- Sarah has agreed to continue as Chair, assuming she is reappointed by the mayor. To that question, the mayor reports that he plans to reconfirm Sarah, as well as any others whose term is up and who wish to reapply. (Hint, hint, Abdifatah!)
- Dan has agreed to serve as Secretary.
- There is some interest among board members to learn more about Robert's rules of order.
- Dan made a motion to elect Sarah as Chair. Everyone eagerly seconded. Unanimously approved.
- Sarah made a motion to elect Dan as Secretary. Darby seconded. Dan abstained, but everyone else voted him in!

#### Auburn Public Library report (Lisa Cesare)

- Moved back to curbside pickup this week in response to the COVID spike.
- Are considering a different fundraising campaign than the online auction of the past several years.
- Are searching for a Development Director.
- Doing well, all things considered.

Abdifatah volunteered to attend the APL meeting in January. Elizabeth volunteered for February. Thank you!

Friends of the Library meeting is this Tuesday at 6pm, featuring Victoria Hugo-Vidal.

What we're reading:

Ted recommends *Enter the Ardvark* by Jessica Anthony (Bates faculty member).

Barbara recommends *Hitler's First 100 Days* by Peter Fritzsche.

Darby recommends Tana French's *Faithful Place* (crime mystery).

Happy holidays, all.

Dan moved to adjourn. Darby seconded. Unanimously approved.

Next meeting: January 7, 2021