

Waltham Public Library

Waltham, Massachusetts

Trustees' Meeting

Tuesday, November 10, 2009

The November 2009 Trustees' Meeting of the Waltham Public Library was called to order by Rev. Mawhinney at 6:05 p.m. in the Trustees' Room of the Library.

Present: Rev. William Mawhinney, Ms. Joan Garniss, Ms. Marie McKenzie, Ms. Maureen Taddeo, Mr. Alan Humbert, Mr. Steven Mann; Ms. Kate Tranquada, Library Director

Minutes: The Minutes of the October 2009 Trustees' Meeting were presented. One typing error was noted and the report was amended. Mr. Humbert moved to approve the Minutes as amended. Mr. Mann seconded the motion and the Trustees voted unanimously to accept the minutes as amended.

Financial Report: The current Financial Report was presented by Ms. Tranquada and discussed. Full time spending is up because of the need for overtime each week to cover Saturdays. Specific mention was made of the positive performance of the custodial staff and Gary Smith's leadership. A motion was made by Ms. Garniss and seconded by Ms. Taddeo to place the Financial Report on file, and the Trustees voted to place the report on file.

Ms. Tranquada worked with the Auditor's Office to prepare the Petition for Waiver of the FY2010 Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR) for certification by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. Annual state certification is necessary to qualify for State Aid to Public Libraries and reciprocal borrowing privileges statewide. To meet the MAR, the library's total appropriated municipal income must equal the average of the past three fiscal years, plus 2.5%. The library's municipal appropriation for FY2010 does not meet this threshold.

Circulation and Use Statistics: Ms. Tranquada shared several documents related to circulation. Two compared statistics between 08 and 09 and another gave an historical perspective from 2002 to the present. Clarification was given related to the terms "holds" and "patron placed renewals." "Holds" are a perfect example of service delivered by library staff. Concerns were voiced over the increased fee for parking violations and the negative effect that might have on library patronage. It was noted, however, that the traffic pattern in the library has remained relatively stable at an average of 100 patrons per hour since counters were installed in February 2009. Ms. Tranquada noted that the subscriptions and databases are listed on the website and that many patrons are using the library's computers and WIFI access. There was a request made to include, in future circulation statistics reports, the number of subscribers to the monthly newsletter and information about library meeting room use.

Library Operations:

The repair of the front steps has been completed.

Ms. Tranquada will contact the Handicapped Commission about the possibility of reducing cold weather hazards on the sidewalks at the rear of the building, and installing a walkway from Spring Street to the door of the Library.

The work has started on installing additional lighting in the staff parking lot.

Ms. Tranquada has begun conversations with various individuals related to installing security cameras and buzzer/intercom systems. Perhaps some funding might be available through the Friends of the Library.

Ms. Tranquada reported on the most recent staff meeting where topics of information/discussion were: budget updates, flu prevention, use of laptops, and e-book subscriptions.

Preservation Survey and Action Plan:

Funding from a Library Services and Technology Act grant paid for a Preservation Survey, with a particular focus on the Waltham Room. Conducted by preservation specialist Ms. Millie O'Connell, the survey was a prerequisite for LSTA funding to digitize the collection of Waltham newspapers, some of which date to the 1800s. Ms. Tranquada shared a draft of the Preservation Action Plan of FY10 and FY11. Key goals are: 1)prevent damage to the collections caused by building and environmental conditions, 2)prevent damage to collections caused by theft, vandalism, and carelessness, 3)prevent damage to the collections caused by storage problems and excessive handling, 4)decrease waiting time at microfilm machines, and 5)decrease difficulty searching for and printing information in Waltham newspapers. There was discussion around one of the suggested action steps of "deaccessioning valuable items with no specific meaning to Waltham and to use that income to support preservation efforts." Some of these items might include letters or paintings in the safe. Mr. Humbert noted that such a plan would first involve identifying ownership of the asset, noting either a)the Library or b)the City as the owner with the Library as just the storage spot. Trustees were asked to review the action plan and identify priorities among the action steps for the December meeting.

Long Range Planning: FY11 Action Plan

Various objectives and activities, in this long range plan (FY 09, 10, 11) were identified as delayed, partial progress, and imminent. Budget constraints limit staff time available for collection development. Mr. Mann was interested in the feasibility of directors in the network focusing on building specific collections based on local interest or need. Ms. Tranquada reported that past efforts along these lines have not been fruitful, because the network's public libraries are all of necessity collecting the same popular materials. Specialization by local language group and local history does take place. For instance, there is a large Russian language collection in Brookline, reflecting the large population of Russian speakers living in that town.

New Business

The Friends of the Library will purchase 4 additional laptops.

The Friends of the Library will purchase some video games to be used in a supervised program using student volunteers from Brandeis, Bentley and/or interns from Simmons. The video games (and board games) will be used as a hook to get different students into the Library and acquaint them with all the programs, services and books available.

Representatives from the Minuteman Library Network have formed a Standards Working Group aimed at ensuring consistency across the network related to such items as length of borrowing, fines, length of and frequency of renewals, length of time on hold, etc. While the work of this group is ongoing and controversial, Ms. Tranquada is anticipating future proposals from the network requiring decisions from the Trustees regarding changes from current Waltham practices, such as increases in fines and in hold shelf time.

Update on Announcements:

See agenda for upcoming events.

The Friends of the Library will have a team at the Partnership for Youth Spelling Bee.

The Evening with Poe was a success! There were approximately 150 attendees, some in costumes. About \$1000 was made. There were 72 raffle items, thanks to the tireless work of Vanessa Hargrove.

Adjournment: Mr. Humbert moved, Mr. Mann seconded, and the Trustees voted to adjourn the November meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Submitted by Marie J. McKenzie, Secretary/Clerk