

LIBRARY'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING 4/26/01

PRESENT:

David Redgrave, Chair
Stephen Dalton, Trustee
Donald Ford, Trustee
John Meehan, Trustee
Marjorie Hill-Devine, Director
Ann Gutting, Asst. Dir/Ref. Lib
Ellen Nickerson, Children's Librarian
Mr. Di Franza, Guest Speaker

Meeting called to order at 6:45 p.m.

Mr. Redgrave informs the Board that a mistake was made in posting the meeting notice so any votes will have to be reaffirmed at the next meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Meehan requested an answer from the Director regarding the upkeep of planting of flowers and the new tree out in front of the library. Ms. Hill-Devine states that she has addressed this with the 2 janitors and they will take care of it. Mr. Meehan asks Ms. Hill-Devine if she has a reply to a letter he had sent her on 3/24/01. She states that she isn't going to reply to any communication that is overly critical, belligerent and disrespectful to her. Mr. Redgrave informs the Board that he has received a letter from Ms. Hill-Devine stating that she feels the ongoing criticisms she is receiving from Mr. Meehan is a form of harassment. He states that this is a serious complaint and has asked Gina Wilder for advice on what to do. Gina Wilder explained the possibilities and Ms. Hill-Devine has chosen to write a letter to the Selectmen under the Town Code of Conduct and the Board of Selectmen will be following through on this. Mr. Redgrave states that he doesn't want to make any personal comment on this matter and does not want to raise this as a forum for the Board meeting. Mr. Meehan says that as a Trustee he is asking for more information and cannot get the answers. He asks what steps he has to take to get the answers from the questions he has about the Director's Report. Ms. Hill-Devine states that "under the "Code of Conduct" you don't have to be a victim to report harassment, if you see harassment or are around it you are somewhat responsible for reporting it", so that gives some culpability to the Board. Mr. Redgrave states it may or may not but that this subject should be left alone now.

CHILDREN'S SERVICE PLAN:

The Board discusses the "visioning" statement submitted by Ellen Nickerson. Mr. Redgrave inquires about line item#7 winterizing the AC units. She replies that they don't have covers. Mr. Meehan asks about line item #1 if every time it rains are there leaks? She replies not every time but it does leak a lot. Mr. Dalton asks if there is active mold. She states that there must be

because of the smell and that the kids get stuffed up when around the area. Mr. Ford asks if anyone has looked at it. Ms. Nickerson replies no. Mr. Ford asks if it is rain coming down in or the water coming up. Ms. Nickerson replies that she has a feeling that the water is coming in from behind the bookcases and that they can't be moved because they are built into the wall. Mr. Di Franza suggest having Town Health Dept. come look at it before calling in someone because there might be funding to correct the problem. Additional discussion ensued regarding mold.

Mr. Redgrave applauds Ms. Nickerson for a good start on additional programs and services for the Children's Dept.

MR. DI FRANZA:

Mr. Di Franza states that the Library is architecturally assessable to a degree and that another main issue is the mold. He suggest that the Board pursue a dialog with the Handicap Commission regarding overall needs and emphasizes that it isn't only physical, but hidden disabilities that need addressing. Discussion ensued regarding current ADA legislation. Mr. Redgrave suggests that he meet with Ms. Nickerson and Ms. Gutting. Ms. Hill-Devine discussed pending cost proposal for the children's room ramp from LaMarre Construction of Salem, MA. She then asked the Board if they wanted solid or open railings and informed them that the head room is a few inches short of building code. More discussion ensued.

MBLC - JACK MEEHAN:

Mr. Dalton would like to see a time for all members of the Board to look at the Trustee Handbook in an informal meeting to study it and see if something can be learned and adapted to our operation. Mr. Redgrave agrees.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Hill-Devine states that she had gone to a Dept. Heads meeting and Marie Turner said that the Selectmen will recommend that the Library be open only 3 days a week in the coming fiscal year. She states that as the Director she feels some responsibility to let the staff know and that she is really distressed that the Library is being "hung out to dry"; e.g. kept in a state of suspense about matters of great importance. Mr. Redgrave says that he wants to know what the repercussions are for the employees and that he thinks the Union people need 2 weeks notification in advance. Mr. Dalton states that in the event of cuts, the last thing he wants to touch is personnel. Mr. Redgrave agrees strongly.. Discussion ensued.

PERSONNEL BOARD MEETING OF 4/5/01:

Mr. Redgrave states that the Personnel Board had forwarded our letter asking for clarification whose right it is to create positions - Trustees or the Personnel Board - on to Atty. Leonard Greenspan, the Town Labor counsel. Ms. Hill-Devine states that an answer has been received and shows a copy of the letter to the Board. We wish to get the positions of Children's Assistant and Conservation Librarian created if not funded. Mr. Redgrave states that the second attempt to get Asst. Dir. Gutting's 6th month step raise failed. The Personnel Board gave the fact that she started at level "C" as the reason. He also said the Ms. Gutting's next eligibility is July 1 so he will keep hounding the Personnel Board. He also asked them to reconsider the wage scale of the

Director again. They said "not now" due to the town's fiscal crisis but wanted us to know that another salary study was to commence shortly.

REQUEST FROM STATE AID:

Ms. Hill-Devine says that the Library needs \$700 from State Aid to go toward Bldg. Maint. which includes the backup emergency lights battery. An additional \$1200 toward Tech. Services due to the fact that we are purchasing a lot more DVD's, and an additional \$300 for Administration due to the cost of new library cards. Mr. Hazlett motions to accept the figure of \$1750 from State Aid. Mr. Meehan 2nds. Votes need to be reconfirmed at the next meeting per Mr. Redgrave.

OTHER:

Mr. Redgrave informs the Board that Phyllis Greene is moving to an assisted living facility in East Boston and is therefore resigning. He says he wants a presentation for her and to make her an honorary Trustee. He also states that he received a letter from Pam Corrado stating she would like to be considered for the position of Trustee, which would be a 1 year appointment until the end of the term and then she would have to run for the position. He states that Ms. Corrado, the former Library Secretary has been an unstinting volunteer (she was the one who ran the book sale.) Mr. Ford states that no action can take place until Mrs. Greene has resigned in writing and to think of any person for the position and bring it up at the next meeting.

Mr. Meehan called Deshala Dixon of the MBLC regarding the library's State Aid in this period of financial distress. She is mailing information out to him.

Date for next meeting set for Thursday May 17 at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Dalton moves to adjourn. Mr. Ford 2nds. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.