

FITCHBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES
February 8, 2023

Fitchburg Public Library
610 Main Street, Fitchburg, MA

Trustees present were: Chair Matthew Bruun, Cynthia Jones, Eric Mbunwe, Dennis Pierce and Jim Walsh. Also present were Director Deb Hinkle and Assistant Director Jean Tenander.

PUBLIC COMMENT- There was no public comment.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES of January 11, 2023.

The minutes were approved after the inclusion of the plan to contact the Finnish Center of Saima Park to see if they would like the original sign for the Finnish drugstore once located on Main Street in the city.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Bruun deferred his report to be discussed under the Building Committee report.

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Director Hinkle asked the Trustees to look at the proposed Library closings for 2023 and vote on the changes. The Trustees unanimously voted to approve the provided list.

She also asked that the Trustees read a letter to be signed by the Directors of those public libraries who have received MBLC construction grants and have yet to complete their projects. This obviously includes Fitchburg.

The letter asks for a reserve fund to be created to allow the MBLC to cover the 10% increase in construction costs which have occurred since these projects were initially funded. Some libraries may not be able to continue without further aid.

The Trustees voted to request that Director Hinkle sign the letter in concert with the other libraries in this situation with the proviso that she inform the signatories that Fitchburg does not wish to ask for a referendum. The City Council of Fitchburg has supported our request for a refurbished library and there is not a need to ask again.

Director Hinkle said there was no need to discuss the State Aid to Public Libraries agenda item because it was previously resolved without further voting necessary.

The Director presented the FY24 Operating Budget to the Trustees for examination. The Trustees voted unanimously to accept the draft budget for FY24.

The Director told the Trustees she had discussed the Building Maintenance costs with the Facilities Director in great detail.

The Director announced she will be posting a position for a Circulation Supervisor. As it stands, the Supervisor of Public Services is managing more personnel than comparable positions within the network, and she does not want to lose hardworking and dependable staff members to higher paying positions with less responsibility.

She reminded the Trustees they have to take the Conflict of Interest test this year.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee- The Trustees discussed the trust fund report from First Financial.

Building Committee- Joanne Huse is taking a break from the Board and the Building Committee. Chair Bruun will replace her on the Building Committee.

He said the bids to do the refitting of the temporary space will be due Feb. 14. The work would probably be completed by the beginning of April.

The qualifications for the companies bidding on the main construction should go out in June and work should start in August.

In response to a question about the temporary storage site, Director Hinkle said that the location is yet to be determined. The material put in storage will likely not be accessible.

A discussion followed about when and what to put on our webpage about the building project. The Sentinel will be an important vehicle for informing the public.

Nominating Committee- Cynthia Jones agreed to be both the Secretary and the Treasurer in the absence of Joanne Huse.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
by Jean Tenander
For Cynthia Jones