

FINAL

**LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Kilton Library Community Room OR
Remote Via Microsoft Teams
LebanonNH.gov/Live
March 28, 2023
7:00 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Francis Oscadal (Chair), Emma Wunsch, Kim Rheinlander, Michael Stebbins, Ann Sharfstein, Phil Bush (alternate) (remote), Jeff Damren (alternate), Morgan Swan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Doug Whittlesey (alternate)

STAFF PRESENT: Sean Fleming (Library Director), Amy Lappin (Deputy Director) (remote)

1. CALL TO ORDER – Chair Oscadal called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Chair Oscadal opened the meeting at 7:00PM.

Jeff Damren sat as a voting member.

Chair Oscadal noted that a member of the public had requested to speak to the Board. While the Board allowed this, it was not considered a public comment period.

Aaron Warner explained that he is a health expert and fitness trainer. He also writes for the Vermont Daily Chronicle. Before moving to New Hampshire, he was a program specialist in a house of highly functioning pedophiles. He addressed the Board regarding the recently held Drag Queen Story Hour. The event was apparently well received, however, around the country in other events, hypersexualized drag queens are performing in front of children and getting children to perform in front of them in a way that is inappropriate. It can also be very damaging to the children. Mr. Warner explained that autogynephilia is sexual arousal that men get from dressing up as women. This needs to be considered when hosting a Drag Queen Story Hour. The grooming process begins innocuously and is intended to give an anchor to a child to create an opportunity for people, particularly predators, to advance on children. He has worked closely with pedophiles for two years and understands the nature of this predation. Pedophilia is a deeply ingrained thing, and this type of event may send a signal to every sexual predator within 25 miles. While a Drag Queen Story Hour may seem innocuous to most of adults, it is not that way in the mind of predators. He stated that he assembled a binder with all predators located within 25 miles, for the Library to keep on hand. Out of respect for other taxpayers, who might be concerned with this event, the Library may want to take safety measures into consideration. He stated that he does not want the Library to be naive about this this topic and does not want the Board to be inadvertently complicit in creating dangerous situation.

A. Welcome new board members and recognize reelected members

Chair Oscadal welcomed the new Board member, Kim Rheinlander.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approve the February 28, 2023 minutes

***Mr. Damren MOVED to accept the meeting minutes of February 28, 2022, as amended.
Seconded by Ms. Sharfstein.***

**** The Vote on the MOTION passed (6-0-1).***

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Approve the Treasurer report

Mr. Stebbins explained that, as of February, the Library is approximately \$17,000 under budget. The electricity budget is still approximately \$10,000 overbudget. There has not been much activity in the Special Funds account.

***Mr. Swan MOVED to accept the Financial Report, as presented.
Seconded by Ms. Sharfstein.***

**** The Vote on the MOTION passed (7-0-0).***

B. Officer Elections

Chair Oscadal explained that both he and Mr. Stebbins agreed to continue in their roles as Chair and Treasurer, respectively. He asked if any Board member is interested in becoming the Secretary. This person would sit in for the Chair, if needed. Mr. Swan offered to volunteer in this position.

***Ms. Sharfstein MOVED to accept the slate of officers, as discussed.
Seconded by Mr. Damren***

**** The Vote on the MOTION passed (7-0-0).***

C. Statement on library service to the LGBTQIA community discussion

Chair Oscadal asked the Board to consider if it wants to issue a statement on this discussion, in support of Library staff and Trustees that continue to receive questions and comments. This stems from the previous Drag Queen Story Hour. Staff has spoken on this topic and there is no official request from the staff or Trustees. This is not a policy, but a statement.

Ms. Wunsch stated that she would like the statement to be nuanced because the Library needs to be seen as a place for all people.

Chair Oscadal suggested that Board members rework a draft statement for discussion at the April meeting.

Mr. Bush stated that a statement regarding Drag Queen Story Hour might imply that the program was only for a specific group of people. He suggested leaving out the reference to the event. The Board agreed.

D. Review and approve the Programs Policy

Director Fleming explained that this policy is proposed to indicate a basis on which the Library hosts programs. There is language in the policy requiring a person be a resident or taxpayer of Lebanon to challenge a program.

Chair Oscadal noted that anyone is allowed to attend a Library Board meeting, but no one is guaranteed to be able to speak and address the Board unless a Public Comment period is listed on the agenda. He stated that he would like the policy to include a reference to the Library's mission statement.

The Board discussed other edits to the policy.

***Mr. Damren MOVED to accept the Programs Policy, as amended.
Seconded by Mr. Stebbins.***

**** The Vote on the MOTION passed (7-0-0).***

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None at this time.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Holiday Discussion

Chair Oscadal stated that Library staff is advocating for closing the Library on Indigenous People's Day and Juneteenth. Consensus of the Board seems to be to recognize both of these dates, with a question on how best to implement this.

Mr. Damren stated that he thought the Board was in agreement regarding Juneteenth, as it is a national holiday. There was question regarding incorporating these two holidays, with a potential need to remove two other existing holidays from the list.

Director Fleming stated that his concern is the gap in time given to those new employees versus more senior employees. Deputy Director Lappin stated that she would like to see the two federal holidays acknowledged in the list.

***Ms. Wunsch MOVED to recognize Columbus Day/Indigenous People's Day and Juneteenth and close the Library on those days.
Seconded by Mr. Swan.***

Discussion:

Chair Oscadal stated that the discussion is if the Board wants to recognize these holidays and how to implement that. These holidays could simply be added to the list or swapped for two existing holidays.

**** The Vote on the MOTION passed (7-0-0).***

The Board discussed three options: not swapping any holidays in favor of adding these two days, bringing the total up to 13 holidays; or drop Black Friday, bringing the total to 12 holidays; or swapping the two days with two existing holidays, leaving the total at 11 holidays.

Ms. Wunsch MOVED to remove the Friday after Thanksgiving/Black Friday from the holiday list and open the Library that day.

Seconded by Mr. Stebbins.

**** The Vote on the MOTION passed (4-3-0).***

B. Director's report

Director Fleming stated that the Library is in the middle of a City-wide audit. An existing temporary pandemic measure allowing a signatory to write a check for less than \$1,000 without a second signature could be considered by the Board.

Mr. Damren MOVED to make this measure permanent, to allow check writing up to \$1,000 without a second signature.

Seconded by Ms. Wunsch.

**** The Vote on the MOTION passed (7-0-0).***

Director Fleming stated that the Library went overbudget last year by approximately \$14,000. He reviewed last year's expenses and there were two payouts to part-time employees totaling over \$17,000, due to the Employee Handbook change regarding sick time payout. Speaking with City Manager Mulholland, in 2024, it appears funding will be set aside for unexpected items such as this. The City will find funds from outside the Library's budget to help with these items.

Director Fleming noted that another Drag Queen Story Hour has been scheduled in June. Mr. Damren asked if background checks are required for presenters. Director Fleming stated that these are not required for any Library program, as presenters are not left alone with children.

C. Deputy Director's report

Deputy Director Lappin stated that tomorrow is the second staff-led antiracist book group, discussing the 1619 podcast and book. She invited all interested to join. She noted that COVID-19 tests are available in the Library for free. There is a new children's program occurring on Friday mornings at Kilton, similar to a Music Together program. Staff continues to review Library policies, and rules and regulations.

The Board noted that a recognition of Ms. Weber Valiante's service on the Board was sent out today.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

***Ms. Wunsch MOVED to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by Ms. Sharfstein.***

**** The Vote on the MOTION passed (7-0-0).***

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristan Patenaude
Recording Secretary