

Bedford Public Library System  
Board of Trustees meeting Minutes  
Bedford Central Library  
June 14, 2022

Mrs. Palmer called the meeting to order at 5:06pm

Board members present: Pamela Palmer, Anna Stevens, Hope Cupit, Natalie Martin, Kathryn Lewis

Board members monitoring electronically: Deborah Bahouth

Board members absent: Randy Cox

Staff present: Jenny Novalis

Mrs. Palmer asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Mrs. Martin motioned, Mrs. Stevens seconded, all agreed.

Mrs. Palmer asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting. Mrs. Martin motioned, Mrs. Lewis seconded, all agreed.

No public comments

Mrs. Palmer asked the other members to review the proposed list of meeting dates for the FY23 Library Board of Trustees meetings. There was no discussion. Mrs. Palmer asked for a motion to approve the FY23 meeting calendar. Mrs. Lewis motioned to approve the calendar as presented, Mrs. Martin seconded, all agreed.

The Board reviewed the ‘elimination of library late fees’ white paper. Over the past month, Mrs. Novalis and Mrs. Martin met several times to discuss this matter and developed several options that the Board may want to consider. The Board discussed the current overdue process and Mrs. Martin noted that an incongruous amount of staff time is being devoted to the collection and management of these fines. Mrs. Lewis noted that overdue fines have been steadily decreasing over the last few years and are such a small portion of the library’s revenue. Mrs. Novalis added that the debt collection agency, Unique Management, is not showing a great ROI, in fact there were two months last year where the Library paid out more in Unique Management fees than was collected by the agency. A brief discussion ensued to review what options are available and when the action would take place. Mrs. Palmer asked if there was any more discussion, and would someone like to present a motion. Mrs. Lewis motioned to eliminate overdue fines on all juvenile and all adult materials, with the exception of 14 day items and specialty items on September 1. Mrs. Stevens seconded, all agreed. The Board directed Mrs. Novalis to edit the draft Circulation policy to reflect these actions. Mrs. Novalis noted that the Lost or Damaged Materials policy does not require a change, at this time.

Mrs. Novalis presented a draft FY23 operating budget with the reduced overdue fine income. She noted that the budget is very similar to the one presented last month, a few of the expense

lines had been reduced to balance the small decrease in fine revenue, among those were the programming supplies lines and the conference/education lines; both of which the various Friends of the Library groups already support financially and the computer improvements and furniture lines which can be supplemented with the IT fund account and state aid funds. Plus the Board had already planned to increase the cost of printing due to market rate increases for paper and toner, so there is a little more revenue expected due to that change. Mrs. Novalis also reported that income from passport acceptance facility fees in FY22 was 400% higher than expected and while the FY23 income estimate for that fee are not expected to reach the same almost \$15,000; it is still expected to remain high. A discussion ensued. Mrs. Cupit motioned to accept the FY23 operating budget as presented, Mrs. Stevens seconded, all agreed.

Mrs. Novalis presented the financial reports. Mrs. Palmer asked for a motion to accept the financial reports. Mrs. Stevens motioned, Mrs. Cupit seconded, all agreed.

#### Board member comments

Mrs Lewis commented: It is important to reiterate to people that funding for the purchase of books comes from the state, not local funds. She also noted that the Board would love to have more members of the public at their meetings and hear what they have to say

Mrs. Cupit commented: She is very satisfied with the books that are available on Hoopla and the selection that the library has.

Mrs. Palmer commented: That the library is designed to serve a wide variety of people and people don't always understand all that a public library does. She noted that staff need to be patient with patrons and help them understand all the resources that are actually available to them. Also, patrons can fill out a form if there is an item they don't feel is appropriate for the section it is in.

Mrs. Lewis added: It is also important to remind people what a public library's purpose is and focus on what a library does for the community, all of the community.

Mrs. Cupit and Mrs. Stevens concurred, it's purpose is to serve everybody.

No new business.

Mrs. Palmer asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Cupit motioned to adjourn, Mrs. Stevens seconded, all agreed.

The meeting adjourned at 6:14pm.