Fletcher Free Library
LIBRARY BOARD of COMMISSIONERS
Wednesday, May 22, 7:45 am
Fletcher Free Library
Local History Room
Minutes

Present: Gale Batsimm, Jonathan Chapple-Sokol, Emily Copeland, Mary Danko, Vivian Halladay, Melissa Hutson, Grace Maley, Cate MacLachlan.

Approval of minutes from April 19: no quorum, will be approved at July meeting.

Approval of agenda: no quorum, will be approved at July meeting.

Public Forum: Nick Tatakis in attendance as part of exploratory process of joining commission. Attention was drawn to city council meeting, 5/23, at 6 pm.

Collection Policy: Will be back on agenda for July as there is not a quorum today.

Friends of FFL Report: First outdoor book sale of year will be held June 8-9. The Friends' book sales have grown to a level incurring sales tax. The Capital Campaign will become part of the Friends' report each meeting. The Capital Campaign Committee has been discussing banking and MoU with the City. Looking for an attorney to work on this. This will be an amendment to the MoU, the Capital Campaign is already mentioned in the current MoU. Campaign is still in planning stage. Structure is in development and the group is working on branding and marketing materials. It is important to show donors that boards have 100 percent participation. Friends and Commission will be approached for support. 150th birthday party was a great start, seeing people work as a committee to celebrate the heritage of library and ensure its future.

Director's Report: The Library Commission met with the Mayor in response to a letter sent to the Mayor. Mayor Emma Mulvaney-Stanek articulated the budget needs and responded to the Library Commission letter's specific ways to respond to issues of addiction and houselessness. Seven Days article followed the meeting. The Mayor also met with staff. Since the meeting there have been two results: 1) regular safety and security meetings--Mary and Emer attended an information gathering meeting with other departments; 2) The Mayor is scheduling regular meetings at the library, gathering different people--that will be happening through July. Both the staff and Commission reacted positively to the meetings and had opportunity to ask questions. The Mayor said she is waiting to hear about Overdose Prevention Sites and Burlington has made it clear that our hand is raised, but that it will take a while, likely one year or more. There is concern that the Governor will veto and it will need an override. There has been an increased presence of police and two arrests have been made at the Library. There was also an issue with trailers in the parking lot behind the Library and they were moved. Budget presentation from Library is on City website. City was looking at $13M gap and the Mayor only had a few weeks to close gap. Library receives a half cent splinter tax for collection. 78 percent of budget is staff. Friends provide all revenue through donations for programs and professional development. Security is a fixed cost we can't control. NNE cost is lease and utilities. Three staff rotate to NNE Branch and are included in total staff cost, not separated for NNE.

Library is limited where to cut other than cutting staff or closing NNE Branch. We did increase fees for out-of-Burlington library cards. Getting carpets cleaned once per year instead of twice. Two sets of staff have done Lean training to create more efficient staff, this is paid for by Friends. Library was not part of efficiency study. The City conducted a fee study and an efficiency study for staffing. Friends have grown and provided significant support. It will be a tough year, Library reduced overtime. We have one staff leaving who will be heading to library school, but it is unknown what will happen to that position. Mayor has said she will focus on next year's budget right away. It is the Mayor's budget and City votes on it. Some of $13M gap has been filled with ARPA money, one-time funds. The wording Mayor uses is right-sized to serve our community. Vivian noted that Mayor realized without Library functioning as it is now, with available restrooms and indoor space, it will affect the City. The Library is listed by Church Street Businesses as having a public restroom downtown and fills other needs for the unhoused. New VT Digger article about where are cooling centers included a photo of FFL.

Our youth liaisons to the Library Commission: Vivian is graduating and Grace will continue on. Amy met with Sam Doherty, he will be welcomed as the new student commissioner beginning in July. Vivian will be attending July meeting as her last meeting.

The Commission had intended to move to executive session but lacked quorum.

Adjournment. Next meeting: July 17, 2024 at 7:45 am