

Thomas Crane Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
April 11, 2022 at the Main Library

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:13 a.m. by Ms. Costagliola.

Trustees Present

Diane Costagliola, Arthur Foley, May Mayyasi, Corinne Mitchell, and Peter Tam

Staff Present

Director Megan Allen, Assistant Director Kristy Lockhart, Literacy Program Manager Mary Diggle, Literacy/ESOL Assistant Molly Makrogianis

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Mayyasi moved and Mr. Foley seconded that the March 14, 2022 minutes be approved as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Mitchell moved and Mr. Foley seconded that the April 11, 2022 Treasurer's Report of trust fund income and expenditures be approved as submitted. The motion passed unanimously. There was some discussion about whether or not to use trust funds to support an outside bicycle repair stand and pump for the Main Library; no vote was taken.

Literacy Program Manager's Report

Ms. Diggle described the challenges of providing services over the last two years during the pandemic, and the ways in which she and Ms. Makrogianis sustained the program by helping both volunteers and students learn technology skills so they could teach and learn online. As part of these efforts, 31 students received free Chromebooks, 17 were loaned free hotspots, and 12 signed up for low-cost Internet service through Internet Essentials. Four Tech Goes Home class series have been held virtually, with students completing 15 hours of technology instruction and receiving a free Chromebook at the end. Ms. Makrogianis shared information about this year's Talk Time English conversation program and the way it has been adapted to include online and outdoor sessions in addition to the traditional in-person classes.

Director's Report

Staff

Part-time Senior Library Assistant Cassie Dineen has moved into the full-time position left open by Srirupa Chakraborty's resignation and part-time Senior Library Assistant Susan Yuan has moved into Ms. Dineen's former 30-hour/week position.

Staff Day was held on Friday, April 8—the first one since May of 2019. The day included refresher training related to emergency procedures, a Q&A with officers from the Quincy Police Department, and digital resource roundtables.

Four adult services librarians and the assistant director attended the Public Library Association conference in Portland, Oregon and two children's librarians attended virtually.

Facilities & Technology

Twelve new flip-top portable tables arrived for the Main Library computer classroom and seven similar tables arrived for the North Quincy community meeting room, funded by the TCPL Foundation. In addition, five new tables (funded with State Aid) and seven additional tables (funded by the TCPL Foundation) were delivered for the Main Library teen area to expand seating capacity. In addition, a new mini-activity play table was delivered for the North Quincy Branch early literacy area and the final mobile shelving unit and missing canopy tops were delivered and installed at the branch.

The site-to-site VPN project that has been in process since mid-December is finally complete; this enables the Library's IT staff to troubleshoot technical issues at all locations without having to physically travel there. It also allows the deployment of the public print management system to the branch libraries.

A new outdoor sound system has been received and tested and is ready for the outdoor programming season.

Programs & Services

Systemwide visits jumped 38% from February to March 2022, reflecting both growing attendance at the newly opened North Quincy Branch (48% increase from February to March) as well as significant increases at the Main Library and Wollaston, likely due to the end of the winter Omicron surge. Circulation of physical items also grew by 13% from February to March, representing the highest monthly circulation since the Library reopened in July 2021. These numbers are promising signs that visitors are returning to the buildings.

The number of programs being offered for all ages, and attendance at programs, seems to be tracking about the same—or a bit below—FY2021 so far this year. The way programs are being presented—in-person with reduced capacities for the first few months of the fiscal year, plus some online and some hybrid programs—plus the impact of bad weather and Omicron—will affect these metrics. The higher average attendance at online programs is also a factor: in FY2021 when nearly all programs were virtual, average attendance at children's programs was 66 and at adult/teen programs it was 14. So far this year, average attendance is 32 at children's programs and 9 at adult programs. This reflects both limited capacities at fall programs and some people's reluctance to attend in-person programs due to Covid concerns.

A new print/copy service launched in mid-March, with new machines and vend equipment at the Main Library and North Quincy Branch. The Library resumed charging a per-page fee to cover the cost of providing this popular service. On April 4, the Library began accepting credit cards (as well as cash) in payment. All revenues collected will be deposited in the Library's revolving account and will be used to pay equipment lease fees and monthly fees for maintenance and supplies. Fax services were added at North Quincy; they will be free there as they have been at the Main Library branch for several months.

Eight new volunteer literacy tutors completed the Basic Literacy training and have been matched with students. Nine students completed 15 hours of virtual Tech Goes Home instruction, which also included in-person tech assistance from the literacy staff. The literacy/ESOL staff is also working with some families who recently arrived on the South Shore from Afghanistan, enrolling some in Talk Time classes and providing free hotspots.

Other

The FY2021 Report to the Community has been finalized, thanks again to the graphic design work of librarian Paul Porter. This year's edition will again be digital only and shared on the Library website and directly via email with elected officials and community stakeholders.

Old Business

Investment Committee Report

Ms. Mitchell reported that she is working with CapTrust to transfer account credentials from herself to Mr. Foley as the new treasurer.

Proposed Revision to Exhibit & Display Policy

Ms. Mayyasi moved and Mr. Foley seconded that the Exhibit & Display Policy be approved as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

TCPL Foundation

Ms. Costagliola reported that the Foundation voted to fund some recent furniture purchases for the Library and that their Merrill Lynch advisor will be recommending some investment adjustments based on the current market environment.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:48 a.m. The next scheduled meeting will be held on Monday, May 9, 2022 at the Main Library.

Documents Distributed

- Draft Minutes from the March 14, 2022 Trustees Meeting
- April 11, 2022 Treasurer's Report
- Literacy & Talk Time January 2022 & April 2022 Newsletters
- English Talk Time at the TCPL (FY2022 Highlights)