

James Blackstone Memorial Library
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Wednesday, June 3, 2020 6:00 p.m.
Minutes

Because the Library building is closed to the public, the meeting was conducted remotely via Zoom.

Trustees (Present): Maryann Amore, Sandra Baldwin, Liz Ferguson, Polly Fitz, Ed Kirk, Mary-Rita Killelea, Janice Kochanowski, Beth Law, Rick Mahoney, Pat Sanders, Adam Spilka, Frank Twohill, and Gina Wells

Trustees (Absent): Norman Dahl, Heather Nolin, and Jeff Vailette

Guests: Michelle Blank, Don Gentile, Cheryl Kaiden, Matt Roth, Jack Thompson, and Eloise Owens, Yale SOM Fellow

Staff: Karen Jensen, Library Director, Katy McNicol, Associate Librarian for Development & Outreach

Polly Fitz called the meeting to order at: 6:00 PM.

1. **Introduction of New Trustees** – Governance Chair Sandra Baldwin introduced the five wonderful people who will be joining the board in July: Don Gentile, Matt Roth, Jack Thompson, Cheryl Kaiden, and Michelle Blank. These individuals bring strong credentials, unique sets of skills, and leadership potential to the Board of Trustees.
2. **Public Comments** – none
3. **Additions to the Agenda** – none
4. **Approval of Minutes (May)** – Maryann Amore made a motion to approve the minutes; Ed Kirk seconded the motion and all voted in favor.
5. **Director's Report** – Karen Jensen had sent a report in advance. Karen received an anonymous donation from a patron via frisbee thrown to her across the parking lot. Contactless pickup service began on May 20, 2020 and is going well. The governor has identified public libraries as being able to open as of June 20, 2020. Staff is researching best practices and procuring PPE in preparation. Youth Services have prepared summer reading online and a video has been created to kick off the program; it can be viewed on the library's YouTube Channel, through our website. A full schedule of adult summer programs has also been prepared. The annual goal setting process will be taking place this month; staff has experienced many challenges in the pandemic and has a renewed appreciation for one another and for patrons.
6. **Friends of the Library Report** – Karen reported that the Friends have been meeting. It is unlikely their book sale will be held in September. They have a large supply of books; storage is an issue. They are ramping up their Amazon sales. Karen thanked them for sponsoring a professional development scholarship in support of Jenna Anthony, who is studying to complete her Master's degree in Library and Information Science.
7. **Treasurer's Report** – Rick Mahoney presented his final report as Treasurer. Rick noted there remain unspent funds in the budget and credited the sound management of the library's finances. In May, the RTM voted to maintain the current level of Town funding for JBML at a 0% increase and asked the library to allocate any unspent funds from FY'20 toward the FY'21 budget. Rick noted that he was unclear how this will affect our endowment. Rick reported that the Finance Committee met earlier this week to discuss the budget; the Committee will meet with the First Selectman and Finance Director for guidance on using funds from the library's investment accounts in FY '21.

8. Committee Reports—

Finance Committee—Three donations totaling \$36,000 were recently made to the JBML and Rick reported that the Committee recommends reserving the funds for strategic planning. The Library's most recent plan was created in 2012 and has been completed. Rick made a motion to adopt the following motion. Maryann Amore seconded the motion.

RESOLVED, that the James Blackstone Memorial Library will reserve \$36,000 from donations received in May 2020 to fund a new strategic and long-term planning process and any related initiatives.

Liz Ferguson questioned why we need to earmark the monies from the donation today, as times are uncertain. Rick noted that we will be able to re-designate the money if we choose. All voted in favor of the motion with the exception of Liz Ferguson, who was opposed.

Rick asked Frank Twohill of the RTM Education Committee if the surplus of \$55,000 can be spent on furniture, fixtures, and equipment (F, F & E). Frank reported the surplus can be spent on F, F & E. Rick made a motion proposing that JBML spends \$55,000 from the surplus towards F, F & E. Ed Kirk seconded the motion and all voted in favor. Ed asked Rick the status of RFPs for the auditor and financial advisor. Rick reported that the auditor had been appointed by Trustees at the February meeting. Given the pandemic and resulting market volatility, the Finance Committee decided to table the RFPs for a financial advisor until a more appropriate time.

Governance Committee—Sandy Baldwin made a motion to reappoint Trustee Maryann Amore for the term ending June 30, 2023. Adam Spilka seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Sandra thanked her committee and wished Pat Sanders luck as the new governance chair. Pat reported on the results of the board's recent self-assessment survey.

Project Planning Committee—Update on Roof Repair – Karen reported that the building committee and Downes Construction met to discuss how the roof was constructed. Polly Fitz suggested Karen send out a brief memo regarding the findings and recommendations of the Building Committee.

Development Committee—Road Race Update – Beth Law informed the board that runners can register for the race, but they still need more guidance from the state. The Shred It event had been postponed to October. The Development Committee will meet next month to discuss possible virtual fundraisers. Katy McNicol reported that Big Y nominated JBML to benefit from its shopping bag promotion for the month of June, which is great PR for JBML.

- 9. Library Director Annual Review** — Polly excused new trustees and others to a zoom break out room while Executive Session was held. At the end of the session, the meeting re-convened. The library director was given a favorable performance review with the opportunity to discuss board members' comments with the secretary at a later date.
- 10. Next regular meeting – July 8, 2020**—Location TBD. Pat Sanders made a motion to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded by Ed Kirk and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Gina Wells, Secretary

Note: Minutes are unofficial until approved by the Trustees.