

DRAFT
Bloomfield Public Library
Board of Trustees
Conference Remote Meeting
June 8, 2021

Attendance: Elizabeth Lane (*Library Director*), Ava Biffer (*Chairperson*), Leah Farrell (*Vice-Chairperson*), Todd Cooper, Beverlee Merritt, Maxine Ursery, Penny Pearson (*Friends of the Library Representative*), Christopher Siloac (*Library Staff*), Allison Wilkos (*Library Staff*)

Absent: None

Quorum present? Yes, 5 of 5

A. Biffer called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

Roll Call – A. Biffer performed roll call and noted the absence of T. Cooper. T. Cooper joined the meeting shortly after roll call.

Report from the Friends of the Bloomfield Public

Summer Reading – The Friends are excited to be funding this year’s summer reading for all age levels.

Book Sale Room – The Friends are working on getting volunteers back into book sale room at Prosser on a steady basis. The room is full, so current inventory will need to be sold before donations can be accepted again.

Chairperson’s Report

Ann Leavitt – A. Biffer thanked Ann Leavitt for her service to the library board, as well as for her 40 years of service to the town of Bloomfield.

Virtual Programs – A. Biffer has been attending more of the library’s virtual programs and has found them to be a terrific experience.

Vaccinations – BPL has been hosting vaccination clinics at the McMahon Wintonbury Library.

Director’s Report

Summer Reading and Programming – E. Lane thanked the Friends for their support of this year’s summer reading program. Summer programming will be virtual, though the fall will be a hybrid of virtual and in-person. Programs continue to thrive: in May, BPL held 43 programs and had 1,036 attendees.

Celebrate Bloomfield – Celebrate Bloomfield kicks off on 6/24 and runs through 6/27. The library will present a line dancing event, a storytime at Filley Park, and staff information tables to help promote summer reading, vaccinations, library cards and expanded hours.

Security Issues – There have been some security issues at both locations in the past few weeks, reinforcing the need for more cameras, good visibility, and strong site lines.

Wintonbury Historical Society – Library staff and A. Biffer met with members of the Wintonbury Historical Society on May 20th.

Building Issues – Elevator and HVAC issues continue to occur at Prosser, and there were recent ceiling leaks at McMahon Wintonbury. Public works has been responsive to these issues.

Building Committee – The library building committee has been very active and has generated a lot of interest. To make it easier for the public to find information, the building committee webpage has been added as its own menu option at the top of the library's website.

Quarantining Materials – The library is no longer quarantining materials. E. Lane thanked library circulation staff for cleaning tens of thousands of items during the pandemic.

Circulation – This May's circulation totals were double the amount that the library circulated last May.

Mobile Self-Checkout – The board of Library Connection recently voted to cover the expense of MeeScan, a mobile self-checkout solution, which will be implemented in both locations. This is the type of digital initiative that may appeal to a new subset of users.

Collection Development – BPL staff continues to focus on collection development at both locations. As part of that effort, the staff is reexamining the cataloging process.

Summer Reading – Summer reading kicks off June 21st and runs through August 20th. A marketing blitz is forthcoming.

Presentation to Town Council – The library building committee, along with architects from TSKP, presented to the town council on Monday, June 7th. E. Lane invited everyone to attend the special meeting of the building committee on June 9th.

Social Media in June – The library will focus its June social media feeds on postings inspired by Caribbean Heritage Month and Pride Month. E. Lane spoke about a bias incident at the library, wherein an LGBTQ book was defaced.

Library Newsletter – A. Biffer and L. Farrell have both been featured in the library's digital newsletter. Slots are available on 7/23 and 8/27 for other board members to participate. Interested board members can write 3-4 sentences about any aspect of the library.

All Staff Meetings – The library has robust all staff meetings every week. Building committee chairs Greg Davis and Mark Weisman will join the staff at the upcoming meeting for a building project Q & A.

University of Hartford – E. Lane recently met with Elizabeth Dill, the new director at the Harrison Library at the University of Hartford, to discuss the importance of continuing BPL's partnership with UHart faculty and students. The meeting was put together and attended by Chris Grant, who is on the library building committee and is also the Executive Director of Diversity and Community Engagement at the University of Hartford.

Chamber of Commerce – E. Lane recently attended the Chamber of Commerce's annual meeting. The library helps support all Bloomfield businesses, particularly with technology services.

Social Justice – The library's social justice efforts continue, especially through staff development and expansive programming.

Community Funding Grant – The library recently received a \$4900 grant from the Bloomfield Community Fund, as funded through the Hartford Foundation of Public Giving. The grant is for more outdoor public seating at McMahon Wintonbury. This will allow for outdoor storytimes, as well as provide a place for patrons to use the outdoor wi-fi.

Fiscal Year 2021 – With fiscal year 2021 nearly finished, the staff is lining up purchases to make sure we use the money in time.

Old Business

Orientation Materials for New Library Board of Trustees – Orientation materials for new members will be needed soon. A. Biffer had forwarded materials from state organizations that the board can use to help with trustee orientation. Additionally, the board discussed having an introductory letter that provides basic information about the library board. A. Biffer will draft an introductory letter and send to the rest of the board members for comment.

Potential Housing of Wintonbury Historical Society Documents at BPL – BPL librarian Allison Wilkos, custodian of the library's historical collection and member of the historical society, gave a report on the conclusions reached during the library's recent meeting with members of the historical society, in regards to the potential housing of historical society items in a new Prosser building. Allison's report focused on space needs (roughly 300 linear feet of paper archives), as well as issues such as climate control, security, and staffing. E. Lane said that the next step is for the board to determine if this is a partnership/project worth pursuing in the new building.

The board expressed an interest in the partnership, with a focus on the following: storing of archives in a multi-use yet secure space; using knowledgeable volunteers and interns for staffing to allow for collection accessibility; pursuing other funding options; preservation, climate control, security and public display space. The board decided that it is worth pursuing this idea, within the limitations outlined, and that the next step is to bring the idea to the building committee.

BPL Strategic Plan – The board reviewed a draft of the library's proposed strategic plan. E. Lane said the only substantial item missing from this draft is the literacies of focus. The plan is intended to cover until 2025. A. Wilkos reviewed the four goals, along with the thinking behind them. The board reacted positively to the plan, expressing their satisfaction with how accessible it is. A strategic plan is required to apply for a state construction grant.

New Business

Staff Appreciation – A. Biffer wanted to begin gathering ideas for a staff appreciation event to honor library staff for the outstanding level of service provided during this difficult time. The idea of closing the library early and allowing staff to mingle in a relaxed manner was discussed. A. Biffer will ask again for ideas at a future meeting.

Public Comments – There were no public comments.

MOTION by M. Ursery to accept the minutes of the May 11, 2021 meeting as presented; seconded by T. Cooper and approved unanimously.

MOTION by T. Cooper to adjourn the meeting at 6:41 PM; seconded by M. Ursery and approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Siloac,
Technology & Administrative Coordinator