

DRAFT
Bloomfield Public Library
Board of Trustees
Conference Remote Meeting
July 13, 2021

Attendance: Elizabeth Lane (*Library Director*), Ava Biffer (*Chairperson*), Leah Farrell (*Vice-Chairperson*), Todd Cooper, Maxine Ursery, Penny Pearson (*Friends of the Library Representative*), Sara Ray (*Library Staff*)

Absent: Kathy Haller, Beverlee Merritt

Quorum present? Yes, 4 of 6

A. Biffer called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Roll Call – A. Biffer performed roll call and noted the absence of B. Merritt and K. Haller.

Report from the Friends of the Bloomfield Public

Book Sale Carts – As of June 29, book carts featuring free books are out at both libraries. The decision to offer free books was made to create space in the book sale room, in anticipation of taking donations again. Presently, the Friends are not accepting donations.

Chairperson's Report

Vaccination Clinics – McMahon Wintonbury Library will be hosting two more vaccination clinics this month.

Summer Reading – A. Biffer reminded everyone that summer reading is for all ages, not just children, and that everyone gets a gift – including lunch bags – when they participate.

Director's Report

Dream It, Be It – BPL programming librarian Sara Ray spoke about a shared program with the Avon and West Hartford libraries – Dream It, Be It -- a 3-day virtual camp to empower and inspire teen girls. E. Lane spoke about the importance of collaborations and partnerships such as this program.

Public Arts Commission – Phil Schenck asked E. Lane to be the staff liaison for the public arts commission.

Study Rooms – BPL is about to roll out study room reservations at both locations. There is one dedicated study room/area at each library, as well as two additional semi-private tables at Prosser.

Library Connection (LCI) – Russell Library (Middletown), which features a strong collection and good leadership, is joining the Library Connection consortium. Laura Horn, the executive director of LCI, recently visited both BPL libraries. MeeScan, a self-check solution that works with smartphones, is an example of a new pilot project that BPL and LCI are working on together.

ARPA Funds – BPL received \$3000 in federal ARPA funds. The funds will be used to order study carrels to allow for the addition of more socially-distanced computers.

Town Employees Pay Increase – Every employee of the Town of Bloomfield received 2.3% cost of living increase at the start of the new fiscal year.

New Town Manager – The town council voted to offer the position of town manager to Stanley Hawthorne. BPL librarian Heidi Sacchitella attended the meet and greets for all four candidates and found S. Hawthorne to be the most favorable candidate. Phil Schenck plans to assist with the transition.

End of the Fiscal Year – The library spent nearly all of its appropriation this year. BPL will continue to be fiscally responsible and responsive to Bloomfield residents’ needs, as well as ensure the library offers the best possible services for all residents.

Water Issues at Both Locations – E. Lane recently emailed the board about water issues at both locations, including a leak in the Prosser youth department that was exacerbated by a foundation problem, flood preparation at Prosser in response to Wash Brook, and multiple ceiling leaks at McMahan Wintonbury.

Monthly Statistics – Due to changes to the BPL service model, the library is now counting visits instead of appointments. The library issued 76 new library cards in June, the highest number recorded since BPL started tracking that statistic. E. Lane has made library cards a top priority.

Teen Space – The teen space at Prosser is now complete, especially in terms of new furniture, which is attractive and inviting. The new furniture draws people’s attention, so the staff is working on strategies to keep the teen space for teens.

Summer Reading – The library currently has 130 adults, 118 children, and 29 teens signed up for the summer reading program, which is more than last summer. E. Lane reminded the board that summer reading has something for everyone, including sign-up prizes such as Starbucks coupons and branded lunch bags. E. Lane thanked the Friends for funding summer reading.

Building Committee – The building committee had a public hearing on Monday, and there is a regular meeting scheduled for tomorrow night.

Summer Interns – The library has two summer interns – Jesse at Prosser, Zariela at McMahan -- from Capitol Workforce Partners. The interns are assisting with social media, collection development, and programming.

Social Justice Initiatives – The library celebrated Caribbean Heritage Month, LGBTQ+ Pride Month, and African-American Music Appreciation Month with tailored social media campaigns and programming.

Library Hours – Both locations are now open Wednesdays and Thursdays until 8 PM.

Celebrate Bloomfield – BPL participated in Celebrate Bloomfield. BPL librarian Heidi Sacchitella was on the planning committee. The library had information tables on multiple days, a line-dancing program, a story time, and E. Lane attended the Mayor’s Ball.

Spanish-Language Materials – The library continues to see an uptick of patrons who speak Spanish. The library has Spanish-language materials at both locations.

Summer Reading Choices – E. Lane reiterated that any type of reading – genre, magazines, etc. – is eligible for summer reading, and that the library has a good magazine selection.

Social Justice Book Club – The next social justice book club selection is *Good Talk*, a graphic novel.

Old Business

Orientation Materials for New Library Board of Trustees – A. Biffer sent the board a draft of a welcome letter for new trustees and asked for feedback. A few minor changes to the letter and packet were suggested and adopted. **MOTION by L. Farrell to adopt the new trustee packet**; seconded by M. Ursery and approved unanimously.

Review and Approve BPL Strategic Plan – E. Lane reviewed the edits to the strategic plan since the last board meeting, including the addition of the literacies of focus. E. Lane showed the board how the plan will be presented on the website, as well as an attractive printed version to hand out to the public. The board discussed methods for distributing the strategic plan town wide. T. Cooper raised an issue about the ALICE numbers in the community description, and questioned whether they lack context. E. Lane noted that the numbers were included as a way to stress BPL’s focus on intentional inclusivity that is responsive to community’s needs. The board decided it was best to add an introductory clause at the beginning of the community section to provide a goal-based context for the ALICE numbers. **MOTION by L. Farrell to adopt BPL’s strategic plan, contingent on making the edits recommended by the library board;** seconded by M. Ursery and approved unanimously.

Staff Appreciation – E. Lane proposed a staff away day at the Hill-Stead Museum, which would include a tour, lunch, and a staff activity. The tentative date is September 9; the library would be closed to the public for that day. E. Lane asked that the board appropriate \$1000 towards the staff appreciation day. **MOTION by M. Ursery to spend \$1000 for the staff appreciation day at the Hill-Stead Museum during the week of September 6;** seconded by T. Cooper and passed unanimously.

New Business – There was no new business to discuss.

Public Comments – There were no public comments.

MOTION by M. Ursery to accept the minutes of the June 8, 2021 meeting as presented; seconded by T. Cooper and approved unanimously.

The board discussed the need to amend the motion about staff appreciation day to include language approving the closing of the library for a day. **MOTION by A. Biffer to amend the previous motion to spend \$1000 for the staff appreciation day at the Hillstead Museum during the week of September 6, by adding that the board approves the closing of the library for the day;** seconded by M. Ursery and passed unanimously.

MOTION by L. Farrell to adjourn the meeting at 6:46 PM; seconded by M. Ursery and approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Ray
Adult Services Librarian

Christopher Siloac
Technology & Administrative Coordinator