

FINAL
Bloomfield Public Library
Board of Trustees
Conference Remote Meeting
<https://youtu.be/ybnjXScYWZY>
June 28 2022 (Special)

Attendance: Elizabeth Lane (*Library Director*), Ava Biffer (*Chairperson*), Leah Farrell (*Vice-Chairperson*), Patrick DeLorenzo, Beverlee Merritt, Maxine Ursery, Christopher Siloac (*Library Staff*), Allison Wilkos (*Library Staff*)

Absent: Todd Cooper

Quorum present? Yes, 5 of 6

A. Biffer called the meeting to order at 7:20 PM.

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

Public Comments – A. Biffer explained that public comments would now be at the beginning of meeting agendas, as a way to give members of the public an opportunity to speak before any actions are taken. There were no public comments.

Discuss and Possibly Take Action on Matters Relating to the Library Building Project – E. Lane said the building committee continues to move very quickly this past month toward cuts to address the project being over by an estimated \$7 million. The board reviewed the space planning timeline, which documented the work of the space planning subcommittee. Building committee members, library staff, and consultants contributed to the work of this subcommittee. The initial recommendation for Prosser to emerge from the subcommittee was a building of 44,940 square feet. E. Lane pointed this out to show how the library compromised greatly on the size of Prosser before the project moved to referendum with a conceptual design of under 30,000 square feet. She also emphasized that the move from conceptual design to schematic design reflects the library’s actual programming needs, based on ongoing input from library staff. Claims that cutting the building size aligns with concept at referendum ignores the work that has been done to bring the concept to reality. E. Lane briefly walked the board through the space planning timeline and showed the way Prosser was scaled down as the subcommittee worked.

At last Wednesday’s building committee meeting, the bond attorney corrected misinformation about adding funds to the project and provided potential remedies. Despite the good news, the building committee voted to cut the square footage at Prosser. Last night, E. Lane presented a Community Investment Fund grant request to the council for \$2-5 million towards the overages. The council was supportive. E. Lane stated that the library is trying to hold true to what the public is expecting, but that the vision is being compromised at the building committee level. She asked for guidance from the library board on how to proceed.

Discussion ensued about the square footage at Prosser at referendum, schematic design (30,169 square feet), and the subsequent building committee cuts. E. Lane said that library staff did work with TSKP on a less drastic square footage reduction, but she referred to that plan as the “best worst case scenario,” and could only support it if no funding options were available. P. DeLorenzo explored lingering questions about the building committee voting to move ahead with cuts, despite the ongoing possibility of saving square footage with CIF funds or a town council appropriation, and what options are available to change this outcome. C. Siloac, P. DeLorenzo, and A. Biffer spoke about other options that they would have liked

the building committee to explore, such as different proposed cuts and add alternates, amended language to the square footage vote, and simply waiting a little longer to seek clarity on funding options.

Ava Biffer reiterated that the letter of intent for the McMahon Wintonbury construction grant that the library board authorized the library to submit was not the submission of a grant application. The letter of intent was sent merely to leave the possibility of a grant submission open. In response to a question from M. Ursery regarding what recourse the library board has in relation to building committee decisions, A. Biffer clarified that the library board has no oversight, and that the town council has ultimate jurisdiction. A. Biffer explored some of the funding options that the town council and the library could pursue. To save square footage from being cut, the board discussed the possibility of putting together their own package of cuts and add alternates that could be presented to the building committee.

MOTION by A. Biffer to enter executive session at 7:55 PM for a personnel matter related to the library director's performance on the library building committee; seconded by B. Merritt and approved.

The library board entered public session at 8:30 PM.

The board discussed the process by which they would compile their feedback to send to the library building committee.

Board Comments – There were no board comments.

MOTION by B. Merritt to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 PM; seconded by P. DeLorenzo and approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Siloac
Technology & Administrative Coordinator