

Auburn Public Library Board of Trustees

Tuesday, September 15, 2020

7:30 a.m. ZOOM Meeting

Present: Patricia Gautier, Katie Boss, Liza Dimitri, Nicole Rancourt, Lisa Cesare, Lisa Trafton, Susan Weiss, Doris Bonneau, Michael Malloy, Mamie Anthoine Ney, Director, Haley Warden, Adm. Assistant, Sarah Gillespie, LPL. Excused: Dan Hargreaves and Alfreda Fournier

1. Call to Order/Introductions: The online meeting was called to order at 7:37 a.m.
2. Approval of the August 2020 Board Minutes were passed after a motion by Lisa Cesare and seconded by Mike Malloy.
3. Annual Meeting: Mamie stated that there seems to be an issue with the list of incorporators. Mike Malloy is going to make a form in order to help get a letter out quicker. This letter will explain why the annual meeting will not be happening in person, and will be sent out by Sept. 17th, Thursday, at the latest.
4. Auburn Recreation Department is housing part of their "Auburn Adventure" Child Care program at APL for approximately 80 kids, ranging from K to 6th grade. They will be using the Community Room and the Conference Room 4-5 days per week during the hours school is usually in session. They will only have access to these rooms and will be responsible for all their programming and cleaning. APL and the Rec will have a Memorandum of Understanding regarding rules and regs for renting the space. The Rec Dept has applied for a grant and is waiting to hear back, regarding this grant money. They hope to use outside space on the Library Ave. side, and put up a tent with picnic tables. This will be great for the library because the space will be used and we will be able to collect rent. Also Mamie was excited to become more active with the city and feel like the library is contributing in some way during these very trying times. The initial grant funding will allow them to use the space until the end of December, and there will be insurance coverage from the city primarily, but also from the library.
5. Director's Report: Stated as written.
6. Lewiston Public Library meeting dates:
  - a. October 1: Pat Gautier
  - November 5: Susan Weiss
  - December 3: Lisa Cesare
  - January 7: Nicole Rancourt

7. LPL Meeting report: The LPL was gifted \$248,000+ and they are deciding what to do with this very generous donation. LPL is also discussing eliminating fines due to equity issues. They feel the fines negatively impact lower income people. They currently have \$.10 per day fines on each book after a four day grace period. After a \$5.00 limit the card is frozen. They also send bills for the replacement cost of the materials after a specified time. LPL fines usually generate \$3000 yearly and the money goes into the City of Lewiston's General Fund. The change will impact the joint card agreement they have with us and LPL wants to be open and respectful about how this will affect our library. APL receives \$13,000 to \$15,000 in book fines yearly which is a significant part of our budget. We also receive @ \$10,000 yearly from fines on the audiobooks and DVD's. We are one of the few libraries that charges fines for these. If all fines are stopped that would be close to \$25,000 out of our budget. There is also the Maine State Library's borrowing program that is being piloted that if enacted would eliminate the need for the LPL/APL joint card.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding whether or not to eliminate fines at APL. We currently charge \$.10 per day per book with no grace period and the card is frozen at \$5.00. The patron must pay the accumulated fines down to \$5.00 and return the materials to reinstate the card. Children's books are not fined. 95% of books not returned are children's books. We also charge fines on audiobooks and DVD's. Bills are sent after a specified time. Often it is children who suffer when their parents do not return materials or pay their fines. APL would need to make up the monies we generate from fines if we eliminate them.

Suggestions of what we could do and reactions to the issue:

Put out fine jars that say "Sorry I'm Late" on them to encourage volunteer payment. Send a letter to patrons explaining the change and the need for the jar.

As a non-profit this is a financial concern but our mission is to enrich lives and serve everyone.

Look at articles and ideas from other libraries in Maine and elsewhere.

Survey patrons including demographic information.

APL does not have economic data on accounts so we cannot tell if any one group is impacted more than others.

Katie suggested we increase our budget request from the City by \$25,000 if we decide to eliminate the fines. There is a lot of support for the library on the City Council. City Manager Phil Crowell is looking at ways to address inequity issues in the city. Mamie will send an email to Phil and Katie will talk to him directly about this. We would not be able to eliminate the fines until the next fiscal year starts in July 2021.

We need to respond to LPL as soon as we decide what we are doing.

The CHAT messages indicated: could we get census data for Auburn? People want more information and articles about this issue. Is there a need for a subcommittee of APL and LPL Board members? Can Mamie talk to other libraries to see what they are doing?

8. We moved to an Executive session on a motion from Lisa Cesare and seconded by Nicole Rancourt. Mamie stated that Marty Gagnon is leaving as manager of Adult Services, and Teen Librarian Donna Wallace would like to take that position. Kaley Chase is interested in taking the Teen librarian position. Also Mamie said that there were 2 people from the lending staff out currently, waiting on COVID tests. Another person is on leave. (The tests came back negative.) Mamie has completed the job description for the Director of Engagement and has posted it with the Maine Association for Nonprofits. One person has applied and looks promising, but Mamie is waiting for some more applicants. She hopes to have this position filed within one month.

We also discussed how the Zoom chat should be included in the minutes, and when necessary there will be an attachment including all of the information, websites and ideas discussed in the chat section. At 8:55 am Lisa Cesare made a motion that we move out of the executive session and Susan Weiss seconded it. Susan Weiss reported Mamie's evaluation could be approved at the October meeting. Mamie said that Haley would help her get that all together.

9. Other Business: Mamie wanted to close with the "adoptable cats" that have been hanging out at the library recently. They come from the Greater Androscoggin Humane Society and the cats are actually available for adoption. It seems to be a popular program and can be viewed on Facebook for more information. It was also stated that Cibo is now open from Monday through Friday from 11am to 7pm and he is mainly serving pizza and quesadillas, as the sandwiches were not selling as well.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 am.

Next Meeting: October 20, 2020

Accepted:

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Liza Dimitri, Secretary

Date: \_\_\_\_\_