

Enfield Public Library Trustees  
DRAFT MINUTES  
December 18, 2020 5:00pm Via Zoom

Present: Dominic Albanese (Trustee); Shirley Green (Trustee); Francine Lozeau (Trustee); Melissa Hutson (Town Librarian); Mark Johnson (Public).

Dominic opened the meeting at 5:00 PM reading the standard COVID-19 Statement.

1. Library & Koha Software Upgrade Updates:

Melissa provided an update on the Library generally and the new Koha system go-live. The Library continues to provide porch pick-up for patrons and other services as they are able. At this time, the Trustees and Librarian agree that the Library needs to remain closed for the foreseeable future. We will continue to discuss reopening in the months ahead and will reopen as soon as it is safe for patrons and staff. The Koha Library System went live on Monday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. Melissa encountered a few small and one major problem all of which were fixed by the vendor the same day. Melissa commented on how responsive the vendor has been dealing with issues. She has received only positive feedback from patrons on the new system and while there are features that still need to be turned on and tweaked, so far, everyone has been pleased with the go-live. The Trustees complemented Melissa on this important achievement as it will provide a better experience for our patrons and more efficient running of the library. The entire package came in on budget (\$8,100) as expected.

2. COVID-19 Stipends for the Library Staff:

The Former Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth, just prior to leaving for his new job in CT provided a one-time COVID-19 stipend to Town Employees. State law empowers the Trustees of the Library with all personnel decisions and so we are taking the issue up. Dominic explained that in talking with the Town he learned that Ryan provided COVID-19 stipends based on his perception of the amount of face-to-face time an employee had with the public over the last several months. Conversation ensued that included the Librarian, the Trustees and Mark Johnson as a member of the public. A few key points:

- It was agreed that there have been two primary points of contact for the Library staff and the public – the returning and handling of books and incidental contact that the staff had with others in the building, extra cleaning of bathrooms, picking up packages and interacting with staff in Town offices. With the Library closed there wasn't the same amount of face-to-face contact that other town employees encountered;
- The Trustees felt that the concept and implementation of this stipend by the former town manager was poor and not well thought-out. It was not a transparent process and did not seek the input of the elected officials accountable to the public beforehand. And while we do not support the process there is a desire to treat the Library Staff like other Town Employees whenever possible;
- Concerns expressed included – lack of transparency and the random (i.e. there wasn't a formula that we could apply) nature of the amounts. The Library staff had little direct face-to-face contact with the public. And from what the Trustees have seen, the general reaction of the public to these stipends has not been overly positive.
- The Trustees explained repeatedly, that the lack of enthusiasm for these stipends was in no way related to any negative feelings about the performance of the staff. To the contrary, we are pleased with the way Melissa and Kate have worked through the pandemic.

- There was consensus that any Stipend would be for the two full time staff only as we paid the part-time staff, as budgeted, from March into July regardless of the number of hours worked.
- We discussed not providing stipends through the budget and instead providing a monetary bonus from Trustee funds. It was ultimately decided that was inappropriate and we should either follow what was done for the Town employees or decide not to.

Dominic Moved, Shirley 2<sup>nd</sup> a one-time \$600 bonus for Melissa and Kate. After much discussion, outlined above and a roll-call vote was taken:

- Dominic: Yes
- Francine: No
- Shirley: Yes

The motion passes 2 to 1 and Dominic will write the Town asking for the stipends to be added to Kate and Melissa's checks as soon as possible. Melissa will share with Kate our discussions and the outcome.

3. Facilities Update Letter to Library Donors and the Public:

Mark Johnson provided an updated letter to be sent out to the new library donors updating them on the latest decisions around the new library. Minor adjustments were made to the text and Dominic & Mark will work to get it in the mail in the next week. Melissa will pull down from the Library web page the stand-alone building materials and replace it with the outside view of the renovated/expanded Whitney Hall and the library floor plan which will be provided by Mark. The letter will be posted to the web after it goes in the mail. In the new year, we will reach out to the Selectmen to determine what the overall communication plan is and how we fit into that.

With no more business Shirley Moved, Francine seconded that we close the meeting at 5:50PM. Roll-call vote:

- Francine: Yes
- Shirley: Yes
- Dominic: Yes

Respectfully Submitted,

Dominic Albanese  
Trustee