

Cambridge Public Library
Board of Library Trustees Minutes
December 7, 2021

The Board of Library Trustees met virtually via Zoom on December 7th at 5:00pm. The following members were present:

- Karen Kosko, Kaija Langley, James Roosevelt, Nancy Woods. Also present: Maria McCauley
- Absent: Janet Axelrod

Public Comment & Minutes

- There was no public comment, but a community member attended to listen in.
- Minutes from the October 5th meeting were approved.

New Business

- **Library Update:** Ms. McCauley updated Trustees about the recent shelter in place situation at the O’Neill Branch/Peabody School campus. She noted there was a recent coordination meeting between the Library and the CPD about communicating more effectively in emergencies and this scenario enabled them to improve their communication practices.
ACTION ITEM: Ms. McCauley to inform Trustees of any related policy changes.
- **Incidents:** Ms. McCauley shared that we have seen less incidents about mask-wearing recently. There has been a general uptick of incidents, which we normally see at this time of year as people transition indoors because of cold weather, possibly also related to friction between patrons who have to share space with one another during the pandemic.
- **Magazines & Newspapers:** Ms. McCauley shared that these are slowly returning to CPL’s circulation.
- **Liberation Libraries Launch:** We are planning the ribbon-cutting ceremony for this important partnership between the City Manager’s Office, Mayor’s Office, My Brother’s Keeper (MBK) Cambridge and the Library. Four mini libraries will be positioned around the city and filled with books celebrating the black & brown experience by black & brown authors. This initiative is funded by the City and the CPL Foundation. MBK will replenish the books until they run out.
- **Recruitment Update:**
 - Trustee vacancies have been posted and will close Dec 13. The CMO is collecting applications and, upon reviewing, the Library will initiate phone screens and interviews with potential candidates. Any new or reappointed members are subject to CMO and City Council approval. If all goes smoothly, we hope to onboard new members in March or April 2022.
 - Library staff recruitment is going well. We have 28 vacancies, down from 35 last month. This includes the 17 new positions to support the branch expansion. In the new year, we hope to extend branch hours to what was offered pre-pandemic, then slowly move forward on the expansion.
- **Boudreau Branch Library:** We hope to be able to reopen this location in the new year, but are awaiting some final approvals before we can confirm when we will be doing so.

- **Central Square Branch:** We have conducted an initial kick-off meeting with the house architect and the City. We will first perform a structural assessment and, as part of that, do a technical mapping of the Library and the parking garage. This will take some time, but we are moving forward on the project.

Program Updates

- Main Library has been busy and buzzing! We are seeing lots of participation in our virtual programs, though there are also some signs of Zoom fatigue. The Library is hosting only a small number of in-person programs and, with COVID case numbers on the rise, we don't expect that to change any time soon. We have also reduced our public meeting spaces to 50 % capacity.
- **Wee Are Every Good Thing:** Children's book author Francie Latour led an intimate discussion around the portrayal of children of color in literature.
- As part of our Native American Heritage Month programming, we hosted **Joan Naviyuk Kane**. A prolific poet, Kane discussed land ownership, motherhood, the indigenous experience, feminism, and the climate crisis.
- **Ravi Shankar**, author of *Correctional: A Memoir*, shared his experience in the American Judicial system and his belief in the need for prison reform. He talked about the impact that incarceration has on people and their families.
- Author **Ashley C. Ford** joined us for an engaging conversation about her memoir, *Somebody's Daughter*. The discussion with moderator Shira Erlichman was insightful and fascinating.
- The **Financial Literacy 101** series, a collaboration with Cambridge Savings Bank, is underway. Participants can build foundational skills in financial management and achieving financial goals. Each workshop had a specific topic including budgeting and saving, managing a checking account, and credit. These sessions have been well-attended. Our final one, on fraud, is scheduled for Dec 14.
- Our **Tech Goes Home** series, teaching basic technology literacy, recently completed. The Director attended the graduation ceremony, where participants presented what they had learned and collected their free laptops!

Upcoming Programs

- **Wellness for Seniors: Let Your Yoga Dance (Virtual)** series, occurs Mondays in December at 11 a.m. Seniors are invited to breathe, stretch and dance! Open to all levels and abilities.
- Returning for the third year, we will host a **holiday performance by Crepusculum** on Thursday, December 9 at 7 p.m. This student-run choir will perform for patrons at the Main Library.
- **CPL Crafts: Visible Mending with Jessie Kilcollins** will take place Thursday, December 16 at 6 p.m. Transform garments into something new with needle and embroidery thread!

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Woods, Secretary