

Goodnow Library
Board of Trustees
Tuesday, Jan 7, 2003
Goodnow Library, Historical/Trustees Room
7:30 p.m.

Minutes

Present: Hans Lopater (chair), Carol Hull, Phyllis Cullinane, Jill Browne, Bob Iulaino, Lily Gordon and Bill Talentino.

1. Call to Order and Minutes (Dec., 2002) the meeting was called to order at 7:35. The minutes were approved. (J. Browne/B. Iuliano)

2. Chair's Report: Hans will report on the meeting with the Conservation Board regarding the dawn redwoods. The redwoods need to be removed by June. Mark Ensign of Conservation said if we cannot find a landscaper interested in removing them alive, he would help. Carol Hull suggested Weston Nurseries.

Hans asked trustees to think of landscapers to contact about the on-going landscape work at Goodnow. We also need to start work on a RFP with two options: maintain existing plants etc. and modify the plantings. We should plan to have the estimates April –May. Perhaps garden clubs would help modify existing plantings.

3. Financial Report (Dec. FY03): nothing significant to report. The supplies budget is low, but Bill is not concerned. Trustees asked about different rate of spending in various Library Materials accounts. Bill will speak to staff about rate of spending in A/V, Fiction and YA.

4. Friends Report: the Friends did not meet in December. They are working with Historical Commission on selling this year's cup plate. It has the image of Janice Rudolph's statue.

5. Director's Report:

a) Library Budget for FY04: nothing new to report.

b) 24/7 Reference: the six participating libraries received training. Bill and Anne Reilly took the training. Krista Moon-Armstrong, part-time Reference Librarian will take it in January. It will be up and running by February. Bill will be working with other libraries on publicity. He e-mailed trustees a copy of the Sudbury Foundation grant proposal.

c) HVAC: still waiting for crane etc for replacing compressor. The maintenance service vendor assured Bill that the warranty covers five years.

d).: Beverages in the Library: Bill recommend that trustees re-evaluate current policy which does not allow food or beverages in the Library – except in the Meeting Room and at times the Children's Program Room. A number of libraries are addressing this issue. Staff members report that the beverage policy is difficult to uphold consistently. Many people come into the Library with a water bottle or other beverage container. Often the Circulation staff and Reference staff don't spot it at the time the user enters. It is not easy to tell someone who is settled into their activity to leave or throw away the beverage. This is particularly true during the hot or cold seasons. Many of those with beverages are in the library for some time, studying or doing research.

There are several key factors to consider. Our existing policy is difficult to enforce. People carry water bottles and coffee containers everywhere today. The staff often misses people coming in with beverages. Under certain circumstances the staff feels uncomfortable enforcing the policy. Book stores encourage people to have a beverage. People have come to expect to be able to enjoy a drink while reading and studying.

Two years ago there was a survey of a hundred libraries on this issue. Those with policies allowing beverages (26) were pleased with the results. Users were appreciative and responsible. Bill e-mailed Minuteman libraries on this matter and received 19 responses. Thirteen libraries allow at least water bottles – eight allow all beverages. Six don't allow beverages. Of the six that do not allow beverages, three admit that the policy is not enforced consistently. Staff looks the other way. Many of the libraries that allow beverages exclude Children's areas and tables or carrels with PC's. Some ask that people to have a top on the container. Except for two libraries with vending machines, libraries do not advertise the policy allowing beverages.

There are definitely pros and cons to this policy, although the trend is toward more flexibility. The owner of our cleaning service is not thrilled with the idea. Bill asked that the trustees would like us to think about allowing drinks in covered containers for adult areas except tables and carrels with PC's and the Historical areas. He would be inclined to exclude the Children's areas. The concern is having hot beverages near children. The policy wouldn't be advertised.

There was a lengthy discussion. The trustees had reservations based on concerns for the impact of the proposal on the facility per se (spills and trash) and the difficulty for staff in applying it consistently. It was decided that the policy would be implemented on a trial basis. Bill will work out the details and pass them on to the staff.

e) Archival Database Grant: Bill will submit a second grant to the Sudbury Foundation for funding to expand the coverage of the database from 1850 to 1900. During this time period several town departments were established, including Goodnow, the railway transportation began, and other key local and national events took place. The funding will be for contracting with Laura Scott Lowell to inventory and index records and prepare copies of documents for scanning. She will also transcribe key documents that are difficult to read in their original handwritten form. Mark Thompson, Maureen Valente and the Town Clerk support this effort.

f) Frame for Historical Map: at the last meeting the trustees had several questions regarding options for protecting the large historical map in the Historical Gallery area. Tom Jewell, director of the Waltham Public Library told Bill that Waltham has two large historical maps and took a different approach with each. Phyllis planned to visit Waltham. Phyllis did not get the chance to assess Waltham's approaches. The issue still needs to be resolved.

g) Annual Report: the annual report was e-mailed to trustees late – Friday, January 3. Several revisions were recommended. They were incorporated. The trustees approved the final draft.

h) Limits on Total Items Borrowed: Minuteman is considering establishing a policy to limit the total number of items an individual can have out to 100 or 150 items. Currently there is no limit. Limiting the total to 100 or less will impact very few people.

There are two individuals with more than 150 items out at this time and seven with more than 100 items. There are more than 640,000 users in the system. There are two reasons for this recommendation. Several libraries have found that the staff time involved in keeping up with renewals and over due items in this situation is significant. Setting a limit will help to contain the amount of staff time invested. It will help to insure that items are available to all. Some people who have a pattern of taking out a large number of items focus on certain subject areas and also renew items to the limit, return them and then take them out again. It only takes one or two borrowers in any library to create a difficult situation if a limit is not in place.

The trustees endorsed setting a limit. They felt that it should be much lower than 150 items –perhaps 25 -50. Bill said that 25 might be low for situations in which a parent checks out all of the families items on one card. He will ask MLN to look at the impact of 50 -75.

i) Speed Read Collection: Bill gave the trustees a brief description of how some other libraries are handling the pressure to provide adequate numbers of high demand new items, particularly fiction. It may be an option we would consider as an alternative to our Rental Collection.

A speed read collection circulates for one-week. There are no renewals or reserves. Fines are higher than other items – there are no fine exemptions for seniors. The goal is quick turn around of high demand items in order to satisfy reserve requests as soon as possible. Our Rental collection has the same policies and goal except that there is a \$1 charge for renting an item and that many people balk at paying the dollar. As a result the items don't circulate as often as we would hope and therefore do not have as significant impact on our reserve lists as we would like. Bill said Jennifer will provide more info for the next meeting.

6. Trustees Report:

a) Fourth Hosmer Painting: at the last meeting the trustees decided to ask the Art Exhibit Committee to make a recommendation about acquiring a fourth Hosmer painting. There was some concern about allocating more space in the Historical Gallery area to another large Hosmer painting. However, the painting was recently removed from the Library and probably will be given a new home.

7. Old Business: Mark Thompson and the Town's Technology Committee have recommended a TV monitor and video/DVD player for the Library. The Library and Friends agreed to acquire a unit some time ago. Bill will pass on the information to the Friends. They may or may not agree to pay the entire cost, since it is somewhat more expensive than originally estimated 2 years ago. The trustees agreed to use Build for the Future funds to make up the difference if necessary.

8. New Business: Lily offered to contact a friend at Skinners about appraising the Library's art collection.

9. Adjournment: the meeting adjourned at 9 p.m. (J. Browne/P. Cullinane)