



Observer Report

Abbot Public Library Board of Trustees - Monday February 7, 2022
Meeting on Zoom and open to the public. LWVM Observer: Brigitte Lagoutte

Members in attendance: Nancy Arata, Gary Amberik, David Ross, EuRim Chun, John Williams, Ann McGreevy, Kimberly Grad.

Guests: Andrea Bunker, and Lauren Stara, staff members of the MBLC (Mass. Board of Library Commissioners)

1. The Minutes of the January 3rd, 2022 meeting were approved

2. Director's Report

Public service hours of the Library are the following until March 1st..

M and W 9:30 am to 8 pm

F and Sat.: 9:30 am to 5 pm

Sun. 1pm to 5 pm

Closed Tues. and Thurs.

- Masks will be mandated through the end of February and will then the policy will be reviewed.
- The Gallery is reopening and will offer a variety of events.
- Children programs are on.
- Technology update: 12 new computers are needed as well as a WiFi upgrade.
- HotSpot devices have been received and are ready for usage after the approval of usage was accepted by the Board of Trustees.
- Financial report: the library still has problems with the heating system which is not adequate, incurring cost to keep the library open and warm.

Staffing changes were approved by the Fin. Comm. for the '23 fiscal budget, bringing a few positions from part time to full time status, which is badly needed. The budget will need to be approved by Town Meeting in May of 2022.

2 special guests from the MBLC (Mass. Board of Library Commissioners) were present at the meeting: Andrea Bunker and Lauren Stara. They both gave advice to the Trustees about challenges in creating transitional libraries, while renovation or construction is ongoing.

This coming Fall the library will move temporarily to the former Coffin School while the renovations are underway in the library building. This transition might last for 12-18 months until the “new” library is ready in late 2023 or early 2024. The goal is to be tough minded about the choices made in rehabilitating the building for temporary purpose, as all the funding for this transition must come from the renovation budget for the main library. The library must address all the ADA compliance issues and safety issues. The goal is to keep as many services for the public, during this 12-18 month period of time as possible. Public usage space will be kept to one floor. The library will prioritize space needed for children’s programming. Coffin School has no elevator, therefore ramping stairways will be a requirement. Coffin does not have air conditioning, which might prove to be an issue during the summer months.

The staff is working now to determine what portion of the collection to move to Coffin and what to store or remove. Professionals state that no more than 40% of a collection should be transferred. All digital services will continue through the NOBLE network.

The Library Director, working with the Building Renovation Committee, will create a quarterly update for the community and library patrons so the Town knows the progress of the renovation and what is being offered at Coffin.

3. Chairman's Report:

As of July 1st, 2022, Nancy Arata's Trustee term is completed. She will not run again having served 7 years on the Board and accomplished her agenda during that time. The Vice Chair, EuRIm Chun, has also completed her term in July of 2022. Both Trustees hope to remain active for the library. Arata wishes to continue on the Building Renovation Committee as a non-voting public member;

and Chun has indicated that she hopes to continue her work with the Abbot Public Library Foundation for another year.

The Trustees will discuss new leadership of the board during their July meeting. Two new Trustees will be needed. Candidates willing to run for the position will have to gather 100 signatures from citizens in Town in order for their candidacy to be considered. Interested candidates can pull papers from the Town Clerk's office as of March 15, 2022, and a deadline of May 2, 2022 at 5 pm for submitting nominating papers to the Town Clerk. The Town wide Election is held in June and the first meeting of the new Board is in July.

4. Building Renovation Committee report (BRC)

The team of architects and consultants visited the former Coffin School in January. A design for the transitional library is underway.

The final design development for the renovation of the main library will be completed by the end of April, 2022. At that time, once approvals have been received, construction documents will be started. The plan is to be ready to "bid" the project out to a construction company no later than September of 2022. The Building Renovation Committee is now meeting every two weeks to discuss the project and stay updated with progress.

These are public meetings available by ZOOM and posted on the Town website.

5. Friends of the Library updates:

- New officers were chosen: Kathleen Waslov, President, and Betsy Brady, Vice President
- The President is organizing a membership drive, developing a newsletter, expanding the Face Book page, and working with the Library Director on programs.
- There will be 2 books donations weekends and 2 book sales before the temporary move (TBA)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11pm

Next Board of Trustees' meeting: March 7, 2022 at 6:30 pm via Zoom.