

Chelmsford Public Library Trustee Minutes

May 26, 2021

Present: Library Director, Becky Herrmann, David Braslau, Jillian Kenny, Maggie Marshall
Adam Schertzer, Jane Sander, Phakdey Yous

Absent: Katy Wood Van Dyne

I. Meeting called to order by Adam at 7:04 p.m.

II. Sharing of Public Comments – None

III. Covid-19/ Safety Updates

- A. Becky received a Covid-19 Town of Chelmsford Work Procedure Memo from the Town yesterday.
1. It outlines Governor Baker's mandates for Covid-19 effective May 29, 2021.
 2. It also states that the Town of Chelmsford will return to its pre-Covid cleaning schedule and the CARES Act funding for the Covid cleaning will cease.
 3. In addition, Town departments no longer are required to complete contact tracing
- B. Becky discussed the proposed service expansion plan which was emailed to the Trustees prior to this meeting for review.
1. Becky said that there will no longer be a time limit while visiting the Children's Room.
 - a. There will be signage reminding patrons that children 12 and under are not vaccinated and advising patrons to keep their visits short.
 - b. Staff in the Children's Room will continue to wear masks and there will be signage strongly encouraging patrons to wear a mask in the Children's Room, in order to protect this vulnerable population, although they are no longer required.
 - c. Becky spoke with Sue Rosa, Town Public Health Director and Paul Cohen, Town Manager about patrons wearing masks in the Children's Room. They both agreed that we should strongly encourage it but noted that we cannot require it.
 2. There will also be signage indicating that patrons who have not been vaccinated are advised to wear a mask and remain socially distant.
 - a. Masks will be available on tables for patrons to use.
 3. There will no longer be a time limit while visiting the Library but there will be a 2 hour time limit for computer and study room usage.
 - a. Becky commented that Mike Harradon, the Facilities and Technology Manager will be preparing computers in case there is a larger demand for them, so that the computers can be set up and ready for use when we need them.
 4. Becky mentioned that the Library will discontinue using the greeter desk since contact tracing will no longer be required.
 5. Becky added that Jeff Hartman, Marketing and Community Relations Specialist, is continuing to create new signage for the Library.
 6. The Library will remove stanchions and directional arrows. Plexiglas will remain. The circular signs to encourage social distancing will be reviewed and some will be removed if they are not necessary or are in awkward locations.
 7. The water bubblers will be turned back on.
 8. The additional Covid-19 cleaning wipe-around will be reduced from four times per day to twice per day. We will continue to clean the Library in the evening by spraying the Library with Virex.
 9. Reference staff will no longer be responsible for cleaning keyboards and mice.

- a. Cleaning wipes will be available near the computers and it will be the patron's choice whether to clean the keyboard and mouse before use.
10. Governor Baker has lifted the State of Emergency effective June 15, 2021. The optional work from home day for staff will end on June 12, 2021. Many staff members are fully vaccinated and have already discontinued the work from home day.
11. The courtyard will be available for patron and staff use. During the pandemic, the courtyard was reserved for only staff use, mainly so that staff could spread out and remain 6 ft. apart when removing their masks to eat.
12. The Trustees discussed the timetable for allowing patrons to reserve the Conference Room and the McCarthy Meeting Room.
 - a. The Trustees decided that we will not begin allowing patrons to reserve the McCarthy Meeting Room and the Conference Room until at least after Independence Day.
 - 1) Becky said that this is helpful because it gives the staff time to work out the details and develop an internal policy for reservations. Additionally, the McCarthy Meeting Room is currently a location that the Library is storing furniture that is not being used.
13. Maggie recommended using the divider in the McCarthy Meeting room and putting the storage on one side so that the other side of the room could be used.
 - a. Becky said that this was an idea we could explore and suggested adding some comfy chairs to the other side of the room, which would be 6 ft. apart that patrons could use.
14. Becky said that we are looking into different options of locations within the Library that we could put additional seating, as needed, for patrons to use, such as the large print room.
 - a. Maggie agreed that it was a good idea to put out more seating and said it is important to have a place for people to catch their breath.
 - b. Becky did not recommend putting chairs in the room containing the new books because it does not leave enough space for patrons to browse.
 - c. David questioned whether the Trustees and Library were justified in being more stringent on our service expansion when all Covid restrictions are being lifted with the exception of some advisories surrounding the use of face coverings in certain locations.
 - 1) Becky commented that the Board of Trustees set Library policies and that they can make decisions that are different than the rest of the Town.
 - 2) Becky added that the Board of Trustees for some local libraries have voted to require masks. There are some libraries within our Consortium that are just opening now for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic.
 - a) David commented that it makes sense to be cautious if a Library is just reopening now for the first time since the pandemic started but cautioned that it is harder in our case to justify having limits.
15. Adam questioned how the Library staff is feeling about all of the upcoming changes.
 - a. Becky commented that the Library staff are having a meeting tomorrow morning to discuss the outcomes of this meeting and the upcoming changes. Becky added that many staff members will opt to wear a mask and feel more secure knowing that the Plexiglas is not being removed.
16. Becky commented that she wants staff to feel comfortable if they decide to continue wearing a mask. Becky will create some sort of script for staff to use if they are being heckled about continuing to wear a mask after the mandate has been removed.
 - a. Jillian recommended having signage encouraging people who choose to continue wearing a mask to feel comfortable.

17. The Trustees discussed the Library's hours and decided to continue to close at 8:30 p.m. Monday – Thursday and 5:00 p.m. Friday – Saturday.
 - a. Danny Lykansion, Head of Reference pulled together data for the number of patrons visiting the Library May 10, 2021 – May 25, 2021 after 8:00 p.m. The numbers were extremely low. Additionally, the number of patrons visiting the Library, prior to Covid, between 5:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturdays was extremely low.
 - b. Becky commented that closing at 8:30 p.m. accommodates the building cleaning and staff are able to adjust their schedules so it does not impact their weekly hours.
 - c. Maggie agreed with keeping the hours the same and added that if you can't come and get your item because the Library isn't open, then you could just come by the next day.
 - d. Becky added that the Library couldn't close earlier, such as 8:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday because it would be inconvenient for programs beginning at 7:00 p.m. that could take longer than an hour.
18. Becky commented that we will not begin considering having in-person programming at the Main Library or at MacKay until September, but will consider allowing meetings.
- C. Becky reported that Paul Cohen, Town Manager contacted her to discuss plans for MacKay Library after receiving the Town Work Procedure email from Sue Rosa.
 1. Paul Cohen offered to use the Town's newly awarded American Rescue Plan funds to purchase air purifiers for the MacKay Library.
 - a. Becky asked Mike Harradon, Facilities and Technology Manager to estimate the number of air purifiers that would need to be purchased for MacKay based on the square footage.
- D. Becky recommended considering closing the upstairs floor of MacKay due to the suffocating heat experienced upstairs and the fact that the air purifiers would be running all day and it may not be cost-effective using all of that electricity for the very few patrons who browse upstairs.
 1. David commented that the upstairs and downstairs are no different since there is no building-wide HVAC system at MacKay Library. There is no mechanical means of air circulation.
 2. David researched current guidance on operating buildings without an HVAC system that incorporates outside air flow. David said the general guidance is to use HEPA filter air purifiers and to open the windows for natural air circulation.
 3. David added that if MacKay is open then it needs to be fully open and we should allow patrons to go upstairs if they choose or if not, but it might be more prudent to consider keeping MacKay closed because there is no adequate HVAC system.
 4. After further discussion about MacKay, David recommended deferring the decision to open MacKay until September because it does not have a system with mechanical ventilation and it would be too humid for staff and patrons having the windows open all of the time during the summer months.
 5. Becky commented that during the Age-Friendly Meeting this month, Paul Cohen said that the American Rescue funds could be used to deal with long-term solutions for issues regarding social equity.
 - a. Becky added that making the building safer and easier to access could be considered socially equitable.
 - b. David said that the Library should encourage the Town to apply to use the American Rescue funds for an engineering design and full HVAC system for MacKay.
 - 1) Becky will speak with Paul Cohen about the decision to delay the opening of MacKay and the possibility of using those funds for an HVAC system at MacKay.

c. Maggie added that it is important that we still have a big presence at MacKay Library and said we should make sure we have Pop-Up Library visits and storytimes at MacKay so the neighborhood can feel our physical presence there.

1) Becky added that in addition to the storytimes and the Pop-Up Library visits, that Jessica FitzHanso, Head of Reader Services, is currently exploring adding some outdoor concerts at MacKay possibly for the month of August.

IV. The Trustees discussed the Pop-Up Library visits and patron attendance

A. David questioned whether we had statistics for the number of people showing up to visit the Pop-Up Library.

1. Becky commented that she did not have the statistics with her but that the attendance at some Senior Housing locations has been less than anticipated.
2. Becky said that the Library Staff will continue to reach out to the staff at the Senior Housing locations to explain services offered, plan for visits, and to find out what we could bring for their residents. Becky also recommended possibly bringing the Senior Memory Kits/SPARK collection items to senior locations.
3. Becky said that the staff is constantly reviewing and will continue to meet to discuss what has and has not worked for the Pop-Up Library.
4. There is a lot of effort currently being put into marketing for the Pop-Up Library.

V. Kindness Rocks Signage request

A. The Kindness Rocks group reached out to Becky and Adam in regards to displaying a sign about the rock garden above it.

1. The group would like to create a 24 in. x 12 in. sign to attach to one of the poles underneath the Library's zig zag sign.
2. The Trustees discussed the different options for the sign since there was concern about attaching it to the zig zag sign.
 - a. Phakdey recommended having a flat sign on the ground and putting the rocks around it.
 - 1) Adam liked the idea of having the sign on the ground and suggested angling it up so it looked more natural.
3. David recommended approving a 12 in. x 12 in. sign stating that a smaller sized sign would be more appropriate. Jill agreed with the suggested sign size.
4. Adam will contact the group to let them know that the Trustees had a specific size and location for the sign that they would approve.
5. Becky added that it is important to think about the materials that they use for the sign to make sure it is something that lasts.

VI. Adjournment

A. Maggie motioned to adjourn and the meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa McCarthy

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