**Place:** Zoom Online

**Date:** September 1, 2021

**Attending:** Stephen Cary, Tim Moriarty, Meghan Lunghi, Matthew Reilly,

**Absent:** Krysta Fyntrilakis, Clodo Concepcion,

David Maynard

**Staff:**  Molly Fogarty, Library Director

Jean Canosa Albano, Assistant Director

Raemarie Walker, Library Business Manager

Jamillah Vernon, Community Relations Coordinator

**Call to order:** Meeting called to order at 5:31 p.m.

**­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Approval of Minutes from the June 2  Library Commission Meetings | Minutes not approved due to lack of quorum. Will be included in the October 6, 2021 agenda. |  |
| **2. Programming Policy Revision presented by Sarah Hodge-Wetherbe** | As a part of the anti-racism committee work, the group has been re-examining library policies and revising them to address diversity, equity and inclusion.  Ms. Hodge-Wetherbe provides an overview of the changes to the Library Programming Policy.  Current policy is wordy & redundant. Many revisions were made in order to make the policy more readable and clearer for the staff and public. The current Program Policy was confusing, harder to read and dated. The goal is to make the document read as more “plain language” and to reflect our current strategic priorities.  Commissioner Moriarty suggests using tracked changes when policy revisions are presented to the Commission for their approval so that the Commissioners could see the exact revisions as compared to the current policy. Ms. Hodge –Wetherbe and Ms. Canosa will follow up .  The next policies that will be looked at are the Computer Usage Policy and the Students in the Library during School Hours Policy.  Commissioner Cary asks if other departments have seen the document or just the Committee working on it. Ms. Hodge-Wetherbe states that the Anti-Racism committee is a system-wide committee so there is a good amount of perspective involved.  Policy will be voted on at the October 6 Commission meeting |  |
| **3. Commission Committee Reports** |  |  |
| **4. Chairman’s Report** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Commissioner Cary reminded the Commission that there is a Promised  Realized Capital Campaign event at the East Forest Park Library on  Thursday, September 9 at 10:00 am. The White Family will be  Announcing their donation to the Campaign in honor of their parents,  William and Patricia White. All Commissioners are invited.  Mayor Sarno will be attending.  Commissioner Cary discussed the status of eliminating overdue fines  which the Commission Voted to recommend at their December 19,  2019 meeting.  He will be following up with the City Finance team with updated  information concerning the trends in Libraries across the country and  specifically in Massachusetts to eliminate overdue fines since they are  punitive and impact low-income Springfield residents the most.  It is equity of access issue and reflects the our current strategic  priorities.  Commissioner Moriarty adds that the amount of staff time and the  anecdotal evidence, along with statistics may  be enough to help change the policy and eliminate overdue fines for  Springfield.  Director Fogarty suggests that the Commissioners revisit the original  vote to follow up with an endorsement of that vote at this meeting.  Commissioner Cary says he would entertain a motion to revisit the vote  about elimination of fines as well as confirming the electronic vote.  Commissioners decide there is no need to re-vote but will note the  previous minutes that reflects the earlier discussions. |  | |  |
| **5. Director’s Report** | All of the Branch Libraries reopened on July 6th for limited hours and outdoor programming. Curbside pick-up of library materials and take and make activity bags continued. Virtual programs continued as well. Patrons can use computers and browse for library materials. Staff provide reference and computer use assistance. . The Central Library and all of the eight branches will resume their regular schedules starting September 7. We are planning to resume indoor programming after October 4th. There was a directive from Health department to hold off on community room usage by the public. . The Health department will revisit the decision in December.  Masks are now mandated throughout all Municipal buildings regardless of vaccination status. Staff were instructed to hand out masks to those in need but not to engage in confrontation from anyone objecting to wear a mask. We will follow up if Managers report that they have patrons who refuse to wear a mask with the City Human Resources Department and with Helen Caulton-Harris.  Commissioner Cary asked if there was signage regarding mandatory mask wearing to support staff.  Director Fogarty says that Ms. Vernon created signage with the stronger language that went out immediately to all locations and are posted.  Masks are required for all library staff, city employees and vendors as well as patrons.  Commissioner Moriarty asks about the policy for breakrooms and when staff eat lunch. Director Fogarty says staff are usually eating at their desks and having scattered breaks where people are more than 6 ft. apart while eating.  Commissioner Moriarty asked if the Library has considered being a vaccination center either in the buildings or in the parking lots. Commissioner Moriarty states that there are Baystate Medical Center mobile vaccination buses now that can do it from the parking lots. Director Fogarty says that Helen Caulton-Harris and Pat Sullivan visited several of our branches that have community rooms and decided they weren’t large enough to accommodate vaccine clinics. Commissioner Moriarty and Director Fogarty will follow up on the potential of mobile vaccines in library parking lots.  The MBLC received about $3million in ARPA funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and surveyed public libraries in Massachusetts to prioritize the use of that funding. The majority of Libraries responded that Mobile Hotspots for circulating to the Public was a top priority. The MBLC has contracted with T-Mobile to provide the Hotspots. The Springfield City Library requested the maximum which was 200 Hotspots... They are currently in cataloging getting ready to go out. T-Mobile will provide tech support for patrons. MBLC also worked with Gateway communities in places like Springfield that have been hit hard by COVID to discuss an open grant process. The maximum we could apply for was $50,000. The library requested $50,000 to purchase an outreach van which will be used for loaning library materials, wireless access and programing at a variety of locations throughout Springfield. A Financial order has been submitted and will be voted on by the City Council at their meeting on September 13. The van will be customized, wrapped with a Library sign being designed by TSM and include a ramp/lift in the specifications. A CDL license is not required to drive the van. . Hoping to receive it by late fall, early winter and ready to go out by Spring.  The library also submitted an FCC/Emergency Connectivity grant for 100 Chromebooks that will be available for loans to our patrons.  Commissioner Moriarty asks how hotspots work without subscriptions. The MBLC are paying the data cost for a year at the value of over $100,000. The hotspots will be loaned to library card users over 18 and data can be turned off if they are not returned, deeming them useless.  The library received $10,000 for the At The Table LSTA Grant. This grant was written by Chelsea Bell, one of our Reference Librarians She was inspired by the Charlie Cart which is a mobile kitchen that comes with a curriculum and safe serve certification for staff. There are many programs planned for families, teens & adults to explore different food recipes and to tie into different cookbook book clubs and gardening programs. It is Federal funding that came through MBLC that will begin in October.  The other grant we are being considered for is the Community Preservation Act to create an outdoor reading and programming space for East Springfield Branch Library. It is in final stages of approval. If approved, we will hire a landscape architect for the design of the space... The site will need to be prepared and will include plantings, a new fence, furniture, and a performance area.  Raemarie Walker submitted the FY22 ARIS report to the MBLC report last Friday. This report includes statistics pertaining to staffing, education levels, use metrics and other questions. The ARIS report must be submitted in order for the Library to be eligible to apply for State Aid to Public Libraries funding  The following statistics were highlighted at the meeting:   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | FY21 | FY20 | | Circulation | 297,966 | 402,631 | | Programs | 475 | 3,591 | | Program Attendance | 3,577 | 36,714 | | Reference | 29,728 | 80,556 | | Website Hits | 8,647,322 | 6,066,357 | | Wireless use | 5,365 | 19.155 | | Registered Borrowers | 63,029 | 72,573 |   For FY21 we had 0 visitors and 0 uses of our public computers. In FY20, we had 471,669 visitors and 111, 800 computer uses. The Libraries closed on March 16, 2020 and didn’t reopen until July 6, 2021 due to the pandemic.  Ms. Walker will be working on the State Aid Financial Reports and Compliance form which is due on October 1.  Commissioner Moriarty reminds everyone that the Library Commission has discussed an Annual Report for the Library that would be available online and in print. Ms. Fogarty states that she will follow up.  Security for the Branches has resumed on July 6. Security for Central Library will begin on September 7.  IT- all computers were updated to Windows 10. Mary Frederick, our Manager of Information Technology has a replacement schedule for all public and staff computers. We have been able to accelerate the schedule by identifying funding in our FY21 budget that was not used such as Security and Substitute Librarians since we were closed to the public for the entire year.  State Aid funding was used for the computer upgrades. State Aid was also used for furniture for the new Teen Room, Furniture for the Forest Park Community Room signage and graphics for the Central Library and Forest Park. Since we were closed to the public for FY21, Security funds were used to purchase outdoor security cameras for our Branches as well as a new delivery lift to replace the one at the Central Library.  The Springfield Library Foundation received a $400,000 endowment from the Mary Brogan Trust restricted for use at the Central Library Reference Department. |  |
| **6. New/ Other Business-** | Commissioner Moriarty has follow up questions about the Summer Reading program updates and air handling/ air conditioning at the Central Library...  Director Fogarty clarifies that they are air purifiers at the Central Library that won’t be needed once there is central air conditioning. The library has submitted its request for ARPA funding to the Finance Department for air conditioning and a variety of other Library capital requests including new phone systems.  Commissioner Moriarty asks if The Library needs a letter of support or to show up at the meetings and Director Fogarty says a letter will suffice at this point since there aren’t any meetings that she is aware of that have been scheduled for City Departments as of this date.  Commissioner Moriarty moves for the Commission to draft a letter.  Commissioner Reilly seconds motion. Commissioner Cary asks for a volunteer to draft the letter. Director Fogarty will send lists of priorities.  Commissioner Lunghi says she will start the first draft.  Roll Call vote: Commissioner Moriarty, Commissioner Cary, Commissioner Reilly, Commissioner Lunghi- YES. No objections. Passed.  Summer Reading ended August 14th and we hosted the final event Saturday, August 14th at the East Forest Park Branch.  Over 200 people attended the program. This was the first year the Beanstack app was used. It tracked reading for all summer reading registrants on their devices including cell phones. Quite a few reviews came in and the app made it easier for them to be written. There was a raffle for a Nintendo Switch Lite package.  The Beanstack app can be used year round for different reading challenges.  Take & Make bags were very popular in lieu of in person programming.  Bags requested outweighed the number estimated multiple times throughout the summer.  There was a Summer Reading kickoff from the MBLC held at East Forest Park with Mascots from The Bruins and The Springfield Thunderbirds with cameo appearances from Senator Eric Lesser and Mayor Sarno  Chrissy Howard Reading Success by 4th Grade Manager secured 30,000 books for the community and has distributed about 22,000 so far. Commissioner Lunghi gives her kudos for being out on the hottest days of the summer getting people books. Director Fogarty says Ms. Howard is on a mission to get everyone books and commends Ms. Howard for all of her efforts.  Fresh Paint Springfield mural on Mason Square Building was completed over the summer and it’s beautiful.  Commissioner Cary says that the artists loved the library staff and had wonderful things to say.  Commissioner Moriarty says that Western Mass is expected to welcome a significant number of Afghani refugees and recommends the Library reestablish connections with local resettlement organizations to offer tours and other services to them. If needed his Department at Baystate Health could provide interpreters if the resettlement agency could not. |  |
| **7. Executive Session** | Not Needed |  |
| **8. Adjournment** | **6:59 PM** |

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

, *Secretary*