

Trustees of the M.N. Spear Memorial Library
September 20, 2021, 7:30 pm, on Zoom
Minutes

- Members present: Michele Regan-Ladd, Kate Cell, Tim Logan, Melanie DeSilva, Brad Foster
- Mary Anne Antonellis: Library Director
- Absent – Savanna Ouellette
- Guests: Leslie Luchonok and Jill Marland

Leslie shared his concerns about the scale of the library project and is planning to listen to the meeting.

Mary Anne made an announcement that the meeting is being held via Zoom due to the pandemic.

1. Approve September 13th Minutes.

Michele made a motion to table approving the minutes until the recording can be reviewed to confirm that we talked about “planning to provide”, rather than “needed to provide” a “robust cost estimate.” Tim seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

2. Discussion about project management tool for building program: There’s a master word doc template that Brad is plugging all the required documents into. Mary Anne has created a master document where, she’s tracking everything, which needs formatting and she’ll share it next week. Mary Anne will make a list of the types of rooms/program spaces that we need descriptions of and will share it next week and we can review them together. The Community Room description was written with MBLC staff, who Mary Anne’s been meeting with weekly. The Community Room is a crucial element in our Building Program.

3. Discussion - draft text for Trustee’s Self-Reflection & Visioning Part of Building Program: 8:10 – 8:40. *Related document: Trustee self-reflection-MD edits (Word)*
The goal of the document is to capture the feedback provided by the Trustees with narrative framing.

The following was discussed during the review of the Draft:

- Agreement to remove: the naming of specific people in the Self-Reflection.
- We agreed to express concerns, but not so stridently or with such emotion. The conditions in the library we were describing are self-evident and we don’t need additional descriptors. The language itself should be compelling enough. We’re stuck with the reality of this inadequate building and it’s emotional to think about people becoming infected with covid because of the inadequacy of the building, due to lack of running water and size limitations..
- When referencing the position of the librarian, we discussed, should we say, “The Library” or “The Library Director?” The purpose of this grant is not to show how much we like the current library director, but how she was able to make do with such an inadequate facility.
- An area of excellence of our library is the quantity and quality of services provided. The person who implemented this is the current director, who’s an area of excellence. They need to know that we have a director who can lead us through the construction of a new library. MBLC wants to make sure that we will make the greatest possible use of a

new library and that we have the administrative staff to take this library to the next level. The library won't be an outstanding success without outstanding people.

- Trustees were asked to send Kate feedback on the Trustee Self-Reflection using track changes. Specific items discussed - Does it make sense to include information about Climate Resilience as it relates to emergency support for the community? We should emphasize the need for a building that is flexible and NOT that we're looking to build something that IS an emergency shelter. We should NOT ask the MBLC to start thinking bigger than they may be ready for.
- Other item discussed: What are some *small things* that we can do and ask for that would make our town a more resilient town? We could condense the language on climate resiliency. We discussed wanting a library and not an emergency shelter- and making it appear that we're asking for an emergency shelter could jeopardize the grant. At the same time there's a good chance that we could be looking at a \$multi-trillion federal infrastructure bill that will contain money for climate resilience, so we need to make sure we don't do anything that precludes getting such funding. The key is for us to be ready to pounce on monies that are available. Motion to stop the conversation and send- without discussion- edits off-line. Motion seconded and approved.

4. Review other documents: 8:40 – 9:30 – Mary Anne shared documents she's been working on. Circulation and Programming Parts of Building Program are in good shape, and Online needs work, and Community Meeting room we'll discuss. The question was raised by a Trustee as to whether or not unity of writing style is important to the MBLC; it is not, they realize that this is a community library proposal written by a community of voices.

Question raised - Is the proposed size of the community room large enough? Discussion- We need to design spaces to meet our needs. So, it means creating a space with doors that open to the outdoors and the indoors to create overflow space. We may need a smaller project compared to 10 years ago, but with different design features because of the different ways we now use the library. We need flexibility in the space.

The last plan was very skimpy on staff workspace and this is one aspect we can't be- we need safe, socially distanced workspace- because pandemics are not going away. We need to propose what we need most of the time.

Question raised - Are we locked into the size of this room if we get the grant? The Building Program is a set of instructions to the architect and the square footage is what will be used to create a cost estimate. So, if we want a larger community room, the square footage needs to be removed from somewhere else. We must build a library that can be staffed by one person so the operating costs don't increase. Mary Anne looked at the programming data to guide what the size should be, and from advice from the MBLC, and learning from the process we went through 10 years ago. It was reported that the MBLC is confident that the library director best understands the size needs of the library.

A MBLC resource shared with the Trustees – take a look at the MBLC website. There is an Excel spreadsheet that shares information about the total gross square footage of all the libraries in the state, including by population size, and the gross square footage of all aspects of the libraries, such as community room, children's room etc.

Another question raised - What fits in the space is different from the occupancy. Occupancy is often a meaningless number. Think about what you want in a space. The MBLC staff on this project thinks the proposed community room should be bigger, but Mary Anne thinks that's not a size that will pass. The goal should be good enough and achievable. We need a pavilion for outdoor programming space for additional programming needs.

4. Guests were invited to share questions and concerns - Leslie Luchonok expressed that he appreciated our discussion and our commitment to making this work. His questions are listed below:
 - a. Will there be a summary description of the Building Program released to the public, and what happens between the middle of October and December 2 when the final application is submitted?

Co-Chair stated that this can be discussed at the next meeting. What we can say as our general rules is this- that when we know something we say it and we are thoughtful in how we answer questions.

Documents shared at the meeting:

From MBLC Library Building Program Workbook:

- Trustee and Library Staff Visioning and Self-Reflection
- Circulation and relationship to population and holdings
- Programming and Program Attendance
- Online usage and relationship to population
- Area – Meeting Room Specs

Next meetings: Every Monday night at 7:30pm through October 11.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Melanie DeSilva and Michele Regan-Ladd