

Sharon Public Library Board of Trustees  
Regular Session  
June 16, 2021

**Attendance:**

Trustees: Carolyn Weeks, Cheryl Weinstein, Geoff Gerrietts, Wendy MacArthur, Sarah Windman, Cheryl Rosenfeld

Library Staff: Lee Ann Amend (Library Director)

Finance Committee Liaison: Chuck Goodman

Guests: Richard Kramer, Gordon Gladstone

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 by Cheryl Weinstein

Cheryl: The governor's order says we can continue to have Zoom meetings through next April. Tonight's meeting is on Zoom and is not being recorded.

**1. Correspondence from Rich Kramer**

Lee Ann: With our documents we do not discriminate, we collect materials across the board, by ALA rules.

Cheryl: We carry all different newspapers.

Sarah: I believe in free speech, as a major newspaper we should carry the Globe even though I don't agree with its policies.

Cheryl R: The Globe is the paper of record in Mass. And so it should be available in the library.

Carolyn: People go into the library just to read the Globe.

Wendy: I don't think this is about a Globe article; it's about what materials we allow in and make available. We don't discriminate against any political/racial views. We let people determine what they want and don't want to read. It's not our right to remove it.

Richard Kramer: I appreciate what everyone is saying. I'm not advocating for discrimination. This is not the first time the Globe has printed something horrendously antisemitic. A previous cartoon was antisemitic. This new cartoon had no facts to it. It's not about discrimination, this is about outright hate. The Globe is an instrument of hate. It may be too extreme to cancel it permanently. But I think it's way too extreme to take no action ever. Certainly you could suspend subscription for a week or a month. I'm a free speech advocate. This is about standing up and following through on Sharon's No Place For Hate. Doing nothing is irresponsible.

Cheryl R: If we suspend it for a week or two, who will notice? Subscriptions are handled by a separate company so the Globe won't know, and only people who come in to the library looking for it will notice.

Sarah: I'm appalled by rampant antisemitism across the country. Don't think the Boston Globe is going to care one iota if we suspend it.

Wendy: We need to be careful not to talk about politics vs antisemitism, crossing the line.

Richard's concern is with the Boston Globe, not the library. We're not a political institution.

Banning materials, I don't think that's in our purview.

Cheryl R: Banning materials is a dangerous precedent to set. It's a slippery slope; many books are being banned by schools, do we ban those too?

**MOTION by Cheryl W.** not to ban the Boston Globe from the Sharon Public Library. Second: Sarah. Passed unanimously.

## **2.Freeman Property update**

Cheryl W: Meeting last week w/architect, Drayton, John, Gordon, Cheryl, Dick Gelerman. Primary goal was to determine, if the property is purchased, where the building would be placed. (she showed a drawing of the alternate plan, with the goal of moving the building as far from school street as possible.)

Cheryl R: This plan has the driving entrance/exit right in front of the building. People walking to the library will have to cross 2-direction traffic. Dangerous for kids, as no entrance that does not cross this road to the parking area.

Cheryl W: We asked for another meeting with Dick today. A new drawing offers two alternatives: Plan 2 pushes the building closer to N Main St., with more parking in the back and the entrance farther down N Main St., eliminating the driveway in front; Plan 3 keeps the building within zoning limits. Both plans move the building about 20 ft. farther from School St.

Wendy: Why are we entertaining this when we don't have an answer on the Freeman property?

Cheryl W: Dick is trying to build consensus, if neighbors and we agree, he can go to the next step.

Gordon: You need to talk about cost, there are considerable additional site costs if the building is pushed farther away from School St than what is required by zoning, additional parking is added, and the entrance and exit are on Main St. It nearly doubles the size of the site that has to be developed, clearly outside of the available funds in the budget. The current rising costs of materials means it will probably require Town Meeting appropriate more money to the project. The architect has been instructed to finish the documents by the Aug. 1 deadline, by the current plan. All other plans are speculative. The only critical deadline currently is Aug. 1. The next deadline would be July of 2023. The presumption is that if it's only site work/moving the building and nothing changes inside, the MLBC won't care.

Cheryl W: For our suit we have a new judge. He's new to the land court. We could have a decision before we complete all of this.

Gordon: A vote tonight would be just that if this new plan (proposed by Drayton A2 or A3) is the one that ultimately goes forward, we would agree with it.

**MOTION by** Cheryl W to inform Dick Gelerman that the Trustees agree that on the plans for the new library, the building can be located. as shown in either in Plan 2 or Plan 3. Second: Carolyn. Passed unanimously.

### **Minutes:**

**MOTION by** Sarah to accept the minutes of the June meeting as amended. Second: Carolyn. Passed unanimously.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

Wendy: Eastern \$546.37, includes withdrawal for staff gift card purchase of \$425; Century \$1,940.49

### **Budget:**

Cheryl W: Legal invoices should cost less going forward. Everything looks good on the budget.

### **Friends:**

Book bins, book sale; they are trying to get sponsors for their events.

### **Director's Report:**

See Report. In addition:

- As of Labor Day, MBLC requirements are back to pre-Covid requirements, vaccinations or not. Anyone not vaccinated will be required to wear a mask, but we cannot ask them if they are vaccinated.
- In the new library, we would like a dedicated custodian. Possibly in the current building for FY23, by moving the position into the Library budget, not DPW.

**MOTION** by Sarah, to authorize a \$720 expenditure, not to exceed \$800, to pay Gary Kemp out of state aid for the Library Book Sale. Second: Geoff. Passed Unanimously

**MOTION** by Sarah, that Sharon Public Library be fine-free, eliminating fines for overdue materials, with the exception of lost or replacement items, items belonging to other libraries, Library of Things materials and other items catalogued as equipment. Second: Carolyn. Passed unanimously.

- Library of Things now has 3 mandolins, 3 ukuleles and 1 banjo. These will give people the opportunity to try something new before buying. Same with the sewing machines.

### **Correspondence:**

Update on Joe Chambers. Cheryl W is working with Dick Gelerman. Joe said the AG told him he'd have to call the criminal complaint division. He is adamant that the Trustees/library in 2018 spent money for the Foundation to hold a training session in September 2018. It was a free session by a volunteer to train the Foundation in fundraising.

### **Items that came up within 48 hours of meeting/after agenda posted:**

**1.Our meetings:** Moving forward, in-person or Zoom? Option to be in person with a laptop on Zoom for members and attendees who prefer to remain remote. Sarah volunteered to steer the laptop to whoever is speaking so those on Zoom can see.

Roll call: all but one Trustee would meet in person. Anyone who can't physically attend can Zoom in. Cheryl to confirm with town how we will meet in July.

### **2.Request from Wendy to update the Outdoor Display Policy:**

See Wendy's proposal.

Discussion:

Wendy: The current policy is that no displays are allowed outside the library. We should leave it open so can discuss if something comes up that we'd like to see displayed outside the library. Recently LGBTQ+ came to us for a lawn sign. Our policy was a blanket no. It could be for One Book, One town; Sharon Day or other community events.

Cheryl W: So this is a change to current policy, making it so that the Foundation and Friends can display outside, and anyone else can request, with permission at the discretion of the Trustees. Some history: the Friends asked Lee Ann to email something that actually was from Sustainable Sharon. It's not our place to put out other organizations' info. We used to put out a sandwich board for the Friends of Conservation. So we eliminated all.

New policy would include the 4 criteria in Wendy's proposal, taken from Boston Public Library's policy.

LeeAnn: Any outdoor displays have to comply with the rules and regulations for municipal property. It's also a historic property, so displays can be questioned by the Historic Commission. Also, add that the library not responsible for the cost of displays.

Cheryl W to mark up the current policy for a vote at the July meeting.

**MOTION** by Wendy that the Library follow the actions of the Town Hall and the Sharon Public Schools and display a lawn sign to support Pride Month, until the end of June. Second: Cheryl W. Passed unanimously.

**3.Pandemic Relief:** Discussion of staff's handling of pandemic.

**MOTION** by Sarah to adjourn. Second: Geoff. Passed unanimously.  
Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

**Action Items Summary (new items):**

- Cheryl W./Wendy to look into consolidating bank accounts
- Cheryl W. to amend outdoor display policy
- Cheryl W. to confirm that July meeting can be in person with optional zoom

**Next meeting** - July 28, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Rosenfeld