

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES
Special Meeting of March 30, 2023
6:15 PM

BOARD MEMBERS

Stanley Bielusiak, Chair

Ilene G. Levine, Vice Chair

Joan Menard, Financial Secretary

Joan-Marie Proulx

Lisa Ann Tufano, Recording Secretary

Town Personnel Director

Denise Beausang

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 6:15 by Mr. Bielusiak.

Old Business

Library Director Search and Introductory Comments

Mr. Bielusiak mentioned that the members of the search committee were Ms. Beausang, Mr. MacInnes, Mr. Walsh, Ms. Garibaldi, Ms. Silva-Brooks, Ms. Proulx and Mr. Bielusiak. Mr. Bielusiak mentioned that all meetings were held via Zoom. Mr. Bielusiak also mentioned that the staff completed a survey. Ms. Beausang mentioned that the most important assets were communication, motivation and good leadership skills.

Interviews of Finalist Candidates at 6:30 PM and 7:30 PM

Ms. St. Pierre mentioned that she attended UMASS Dartmouth followed by Pratt Institute. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned that she has worked at the New York Public Library, Whitman Library, Scituate Public Library and she is currently the director of Acushnet Public Library. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned that she was the Youth Service Director at Whitman and highlighted establishing youth and child programs. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned leaving Whitman for Scituate due to mentorship. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned leaving Scituate for Acushnet due to the opportunity to be the Director. Ms. St. Pierre highlighted moving the Acushnet Public Library to its current location. Ms. Beausang asked about handling an emergency situation and traveling between the two branches. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned no issue traveling between the buildings.

Ms. Menard asked about dealing with an emergency situation. Ms. St. Pierre described a situation where she was called by an alarm company. Ms. Menard asked about protection and preparation for the library. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned that she has sample situations and has instructed her staff to remain calm. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned communication between herself and staff. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned collection maintenance and non-biased purchase material with regards to book banning. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned that Acushnet Library has a request for reconsideration form and the importance of hearing unhappy patrons.

Ms. Proulx asked about staff interactions and management. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned a collaborative, team effort. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned a weekly newsletter for staff and that communication is key. Ms. Proulx asked about community involvement. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned class visits and presence at kindergarten registration.

REC'D
2023 APR 18 AM 10:06
LIBRARY TRUSTEES

Ms. Levine asked about a situation with difficulty with a patron. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned the importance of having a welcoming space. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned the importance of listening. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned a recent change to being fine free at Acushnet Public Library.

Ms. Tufano asked about communication with staff in two different buildings. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned email and the frequent use of Google docs as a way to have information at any time. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned encouraging staff to check email at the start of their shift. Ms. St. Pierre also mentioned that a director is not stationary in an office and being a presence in the building in both locations.

Ms. Beausang asked about the staff turnover in Acushnet. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned that the positions are part-time.

Ms. Levine asked about Ms. St. Pierre's top three priorities. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned meeting all the staff members. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned attendance at a Trustee meeting shortly after starting. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned meeting with the Friends. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned meeting the community. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned gaining information regarding the collection and evaluating the collection. Ms. St. Pierre mentioned working on the strategic plan which will be expiring and needs work quickly.

Ms. St. Pierre asked about potential challenges, such as the budget. Mr. Bielusiak mentioned the town support of the libraries. Ms. St. Pierre asked about potential start date. Mr. Bielusiak mentioned that the goal is as soon as possible.

Ms. Beausang asked about Ms. Casey's interest in the position. Ms. Casey mentioned a new community to grow with and creativity. Ms. Beausang asked about a highlight of Ms. Casey's experience at Plymouth Public Library. Ms. Casey mentioned the COVID closure and the transition back to the public attending the library in person. Ms. Casey mentioned starting a little free pantry in the library for food, household and bathroom supplies. Ms. Beausang asked about a highlight of Ms. Casey's experience in Canterbury. Ms. Casey mentioned how rapidly the library was able to respond to the public's needs during COVID closure. Ms. Beausang asked about reasons for leaving Canterbury Library. Ms. Casey mentioned personal reasons including a dog's death. Ms. Beausang asked about the Subase Library in New London and a highlight as well as the reason for leaving. Ms. Casey mentioned a Subase Comicon weekend event, which attracted families. Ms. Casey mentioned leaving the Subase position in order to pursue her graduate degree. Ms. Beausang asked about the Babcock Library. Ms. Casey mentioned that it was a small community with limited library hours. Ms. Casey mentioned a highlight of being connected with the schools. Ms. Beausang asked about what is important in a job and an employer. Ms. Casey mentioned being hands-on with staff. Ms. Casey mentioned that a supportive town is great. Ms. Beausang asked about reason for leaving Babcock Library. Ms. Casey mentioned that it was part-time. Ms. Beausang asked about Craigin Memorial Library and reason for leaving. Ms. Casey mentioned that it was a part-time position as a fill-in. Ms. Beausang asked about visits to the two branches during emergency situations with the commute. Ms. Casey mentioned relocating for the position.

Ms. Tufano asked about communication with staff given the two locations. Ms. Casey mentioned staff preference such as email, phone call or text message. Ms. Casey mentioned communication emails weekly.

Ms. Levine asked about a difficult situation with a patron. Ms. Casey mentioned some difficulty with teenagers and implementing progressive suspensions. Ms. Casey mentioned situations with patrons that require a police phone call and the importance of being sympathetic. Ms. Levine asked about Ms. Casey's top three priorities if offered the position. Ms. Casey mentioned increasing North Branch Library's hours. Ms. Casey mentioned filing the empty position. Ms. Casey mentioned advertising the North Branch Library. Ms. Casey mentioned developing relationships with staff as a priority.

Ms. Proulx asked about staff management. Ms. Casey mentioned accepting criticism. Ms. Casey also mentioned community partners and finding out the needs of the community partners and placing resources where the community needs them. Ms. Proulx asked about interactions with staff. Ms. Casey mentioned a preference for in-person and email.

Ms. Menard asked about the definition of community partners. Ms. Casey mentioned the public schools as well as the senior living facilities and groups like No Place for Hate, Sustainable Plymouth, Rotary Clubs and Lions Club. Ms. Menard asked about strategies to get to know the staff in Plymouth. Ms. Casey mentioned difficulty as masks were still required. Ms. Casey mentioned staff meetings. Ms. Casey mentioned anonymous surveys at the start of her career in Plymouth as the strategic plan was expiring. Ms. Menard asked about the pressures of outside factors such as objections to programming and material. Ms. Casey mentioned a Drag Queen Story Hour at the start of her career in Plymouth. Ms. Casey mentioned counter-advertising and positivity as well as reliance on the Plymouth Pride Group. Ms. Casey mentioned that as far as book challenges, there are packets, a script and how to complain about a material or a program. Ms. Menard asked about active shooter training. Ms. Casey mentioned that the police department has been contacted about a possible training. Ms. Menard asked about a positive and negative reflection. Ms. Casey mentioned a recent Pokemon activity, which attracted a child who had not attended the library in years. Ms. Casey described a group of teens and sexual activity in the bathroom at the library.

Ms. Beausang asked how soon Ms. Casey could start if the job was offered. Ms. Casey mentioned three weeks notice to Plymouth.

Ms. Proulx asked if Plymouth Library has a Friends group. Ms. Casey mentioned that Plymouth does not have a Friends group, but the Trustees are also the Library Foundation.

Ms. Casey asked about the environment for employees in Dartmouth. Ms. Beausang mentioned that Dartmouth is great about communication, feedback and support. Ms. Proulx mentioned the longevity of staff and its encouragement. Ms. Proulx also mentioned a monthly Director meeting for all the town directors. Mr. Bielusiak mentioned the town's support. Ms. Casey asked about a top priority for a change or improvement. Ms. Proulx mentioned publicity. Ms. Menard mentioned the strategic plan. Mr. Bielusiak mentioned that the Acting Director, who also maintains the collection, is retiring in June. Ms. Beausang mentioned that according to the staff survey that communication was a priority for staff as well as a good, motivating leader who understands the technical aspects of the job.

Mr. Bielusiak called a recess until 8:30 PM.

Deliberations

Ms. Proulx mentioned that both candidates had good answers. Mr. Bielusiak mentioned that both were very close in their initial scoring. Ms. Menard mentioned advocating in favor of Ms. St. Pierre, because of her education, concern expressed for the staff, preparation of staff in the

event of an external issue, her deliberate answers to questions and the importance of policies. Mr. Bielusiak mentioned Ms. St. Pierre's experience as director and supervisory.

Voting

Ms. Proulx motioned to hire Dina St. Pierre as the Library Director based on a successful negotiation of compensation and benefits with the Town of Dartmouth. It was seconded by Ms. Levine. All were in favor. Motion passes.

Other Business

Ms. Proulx mentioned sending to MBLC that Ms. Sitarz is the Acting Director at this time. Ms. Menard asked about documentation for MBLC for the retirement of Ms. Antunes. Mr. Bielusiak will contact MBLC.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ms. Menard at 8:34 pm. It was seconded by Ms. Proulx. All were in favor. Motion passes.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Ann Tufano, Recording Secretary

Next meeting April 11, 2023 at 5:00 pm