Meeting of the Essex Free Library Board of Trustees held on Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Present: Bonnie Doble, Chair
Marie Froeschl
Janet Watts
Mike Yandow
Lorna Swerhone
Iris Banks
Caitlin Corless

Absent: Joan Janzen

1. Call to Order- Meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm.

2. Agenda Changes - There were no additions.

3. Review and approve minutes - Minutes approved. Moved by Marie and seconded by Mike.

4. Announcements - Bonnie advised the Board of her return to Vermont next month.

5. Librarian's report -Caitlin highlighted her monthly report noting her thanks to Victoria for an outstanding job as Acting Director while she was on Maternity leave. Caitlin spoke to the Board about the increasing staffing issues. She indicated that staffing remained challenging and as a result she has had to increasingly depend on substitutions. To that end, she will be meeting with Human Resources to discuss what measures could be taken to improve staffing. She then highlighted the statistics in her report noting that current circulation was comparable to levels pre COVID.

6. New Business

6.1 Elect officers- Bonnie requested this item be tabled to October meeting.

6.2 Budget- The Board reviewed the proposed budget for 2024. Considerable discussion ensued regarding allotments for book allocations. Caitlin also presented the budgets for other libraries of comparable populations that she will use in her discussion with the Budget committee next week.

6.3 Hours- Caitlin noted that given the current staffing situation she was proposing changes the library hours. Currently the library is open M-F from 10-6 and Saturday from 10-2. She proposed changes the hours to M,W,F, 9-5; Tues/Thurs 10-6. After some discussion it was agreed to monitor usage of the library between the hours of 5-6 and discuss at the next meeting.

6.4 Policies - Caitlin addressed the issue of First Amendment auditors photographing and filming in the Library and the actions taken. She confirmed that privacy laws cover the issue as long as no patron is in the library at the time. A number of other Policy issues were identified and it was agreed that Bonnie, Lorna and Caitlin would meet upon Bonnie’s return to draft them for presentation to the Board.

7. Old Business

7.1 COVID guidelines - It was agreed to post a sign that Mask usage would continue to be encouraged in the library.

7.2 501c Update- Marie indicated that there had been a positive response to the venue. This Saturday designated for rehabilitating the library gardens.

7.3 Craft fair - Janet reported that she had received interest from 18 Crafters to date but was working to acquire more through aggressive advertising. Ultimately, she would like to secure close to 40.

8. Adjournment- There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 2011 hours. Moved by Bonnie and seconded by Marie.