

1 ILSLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
2 REGULAR MEETING
3 JANUARY 10, 2022
4 ELECTRONIC MEETING VIA ZOOM PLATFORM
5
6

7 Board decisions are unanimous unless otherwise noted.
8

9 Present

10 Board members: Joe McVeigh, President; Amy Mincher, Secretary; Andy Hooper, Treasurer; Catherine
11 Nichols

12 Library Director: Dana Hart

13 Public: Steve Gross
14

15 Minutes taken by Saskia Gori-Montanelli.
16

17 **CALL TO ORDER**

18 President Joe McVeigh called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

19 See Board Packet <Board Packet 1.10. 2022.pdf> for agenda and accompanying documents.
20

21 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

22 The minutes of the previous regular meeting were accepted.
23

24 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

25 There were no public comments.
26

27 **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

28 Library Director Dana Hart said that there was not much to highlight from the Director's Report other
29 than the HVAC news, which would come up later in the meeting. Meg Baker asked about staff shortages
30 due to Covid-19, because antigen tests have been difficult to come by.

31 Dana is anticipating difficulty in this area because many staff members may get infected in the same
32 time frame. The current policy is that staff members must bring back a negative Covid-19 test if a close
33 contact of theirs tests positive. One would only need to stay home if they were a *direct* close contact.
34 For example, a child having a close contact should not get in the way of a parent coming to work.

35 Meg added that Vermont schools might stop contact tracing because of differences between Omicron
36 and the previous variants, and wondered if policies might change in regards to the library.

37 Catherine Nichols was surprised by the fact that schools might stop contact tracing, and Meg said that
38 there were a number of shifts coming this week; the assumption is that if Omicron is present in a
39 classroom, every child in the classroom will be exposed.

40 Dana and Steve Gross recently had twin articles in the Addison Independent. The concept of “Building
41 the Library of the Future” is that Dana will choose an area of the library that the public is not aware of
42 and write an article about it, which will be paired with an article written by a patron.

43 Dana said that the community component is impactful, and asked Trustees to think of a patron who
44 might be interested in writing an article.

45

46 **UPDATE ON COVID**

47 Dana stated that the Ilsley Library is requiring masks and patrons have been generally compliant. 2
48 additional air filters have been purchased, which will be placed near the service desks so that the staff
49 has them nearby throughout the day. There is much more that can be done in terms of air filtration, but
50 this is a start.

51

52 **UPDATE ON HOMECARD**

53 President Joe McVeigh explained the *Homecard* system. Individuals can get a free Ilsley Library card if
54 they are a resident of Middlebury or if they are a student in the Middlebury School District. If someone
55 lives outside of Middlebury, they can borrow materials but are required to pay a fee (\$45/year), which is
56 a small but consistent revenue stream for the library. *Homecard* is a consortium that allows people with
57 a library card from a different town to borrow things from another library. However, the items they can
58 borrow are somewhat restricted. Users of *Homecard* are unable to borrow DVDs or books categorized as
59 new materials. The cataloging system is viewed through a new software layer (Aspen) that doesn't
60 inform *Homecard* users that their borrowing privileges are limited.

61 Dana has not found a technical solution for this, but this issue has felt less pressing because she hasn't
62 noticed any *Homecard* patrons using this new catalog feature to request books. Ostensibly, things are
63 moving forward the way they have been. There is an upcoming *Homecard* meeting to deal with this
64 issue, as it is affecting other libraries as well. Dana is worried about losing money as well as the fact that
65 residents who pay taxes may be dispirited to learn that non-Middlebury residents have free access to
66 the collection at no cost.

67 Andy Hooper said that other towns have a higher per capita income than Middlebury as a whole but pay
68 less per resident per year for library services. Although at the previous board meeting some Trustees felt
69 that services should be encouraged, this runs counter to the fiscal concerns of the tax payers. He said
70 that the right answer would be regionalization, but it is a slow road to get there.

71

72

73 **UPDATE ON LIBRARY HVAC**

74 Dana spoke about the endeavor of improving the library’s air quality. The anticipated cost of the HVAC
75 system has gone up significantly to over \$1,000,000. There is a plan to go forward with it, but the cost is
76 much higher than expected. After meeting with an engineer, it has become clear that the building would
77 need to be vacated during construction. It would be possible to avoid this, but it would not be practical,
78 as it would cost more than currently reflected in the \$1,000,000 price tag. Construction will last for
79 about 4 months. Materials could be left in the building but they would need to be covered up. If the
80 library were to relocate to a new site, some materials could be relocated, and staff could page other
81 materials on request.

82 In terms of timing, this would need to be put out to bid in February in order to start construction in the
83 summer of 2022. Supplies have been more expensive because of supply chain issues and labor
84 shortages, but it’s possible that these issues might be worked out if this plan is put on hold. It made
85 sense to move forward with this before the Renovation/Expansion project, but the cost is higher and
86 thus the portion that would be lost in a renovation is higher. Dana proposed that Trustees wait until the
87 Fall to make a decision about proceeding. The IIsley 100 Project Team might have a better idea about
88 whether or not the 1988 building will need to come down. Meg said that this was an excellent
89 description of what is not an easy problem. She and Catherine agreed that postponing the project would
90 be a good idea. Meg suggested an article in the Addison Independent that highlighted this issue.

91

92 **UPDATE ON RENOVATION/EXPANSION WORKING GROUP**

93 Joe spoke about the IIsley 100 Project Team. Two areas that needed to be wrestled with were the
94 structure of the group and the structure of reporting. The working group thought that the IIsley 100
95 Project Team should report to the Selectboard.

96 Dana said that the Building Committee and the IIsley 100 Project Team are not only charged with coming
97 up with the design, but also with getting it built. This is a big undertaking, but it is more set up for
98 success than the previous committee.

99

100 **BOARD COMMENTS AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

101 Joe informed the Trustees that Recording Secretary Saskia Gori-Montanelli will be attending Sarah
102 Lawrence College in the fall of 2022. It was also added that the OWL video conference program will soon
103 be installed in the meeting room, and that the February regular meeting would be moved to February
104 7th, 2022.

105

106 **ADJOURN**

107 President Joe McVeigh adjourned the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

108 The next regularly scheduled meeting will take place on Monday, February 7, at 5 p.m.