

Nottingham Facilities Assessment Committee Meeting

April 13, 2023 – Location: Blaisdell Memorial Library

Meeting Minutes

APPROVED April 17th 2023

In attendance: Gary Anderson, Chair; Barbara Draper; Charlotte Fyfe; Jennifer Phillips, Blaisdell Library Trustee, President; Dan Bunker, Blaisdell Library Head of Circulation

Absent: Eric Danis, Secretary; Paul Dallaire

The meeting was called to order by Gary promptly at 4:45, inside the Blaisdell Memorial Library.

The first order of business was to accept the Minutes of the March meeting, which was done unanimously.

The Library's Director was not present, as she had resigned for a better paying position in Barrington two weeks ago. The Director's position is expected to remain unfilled for several months, as Nottingham does not offer a salary/benefit package comparable to neighboring towns. Library hours have been adjusted to correspond with the reduction in staffing.

Jennifer Phillips, President of the Blaisdell Board of Trustees and Dan Bunker, Head of Circulation, led us on a tour around the outside of the building. They noted that the original building dates to c.1974, with the rear addition added in 2000. The building recently had gutters installed to reduce exterior water damage. The gutters had never been replaced after the roof was repaired some years ago. Work on overhanging, dead trees is taking place later this week to further protect the exterior. Leveling of the lifted front walkway blocks has been scheduled. Engineering for a new parking lot will be contracted due to unsafe entry and exit conditions onto NH Rte 152, as well as drainage and pothole issues. Several minor maintenance issues were noted on the exterior, including loose siding, deteriorated trim and the lack of a maintenance person to clean gutters, fix lighting, keep exits clear, etc. The handicapped ramp is deteriorating and will need to be replaced before long - it leads to a door which is not ADA compliant. The front entrance is scheduled to be replaced. It has never been ADA compliant, as required by law.

The interior has been well cared for. Both children's and adult programming have greatly increased offerings and participation since the Covid lockdowns, despite staffing shortages. A new elevator is scheduled for completion - the rug will need to be replaced in the next couple of years - Jen suggests using rug "tiles" for easy replacement. The electrical panel serving the outside lighting is malfunctioning, there are minor plumbing and venting issues, and they currently use bottled water - at some expense and inconvenience - although the exact issue with potability or safety of the water is unknown. Gary suggested a water analysis.

As with every other department we've visited in Nottingham, Jen and Dan expressed frustration with the lack of a cost-effective, efficient mechanism for spending taxpayer dollars to correct minor problems before they become more expensive problems, let alone become issues of safety or legal liability.

Another problem is the confusion around the title and lot lines of the Library. Jen's understanding of NH State Law is that towns are mandated to provide adequate funding for public libraries. She believes the Town may actually own the land and Library building, but the Trustees have "full purview" over the building and grounds.

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Who owns what? Who is responsible for what? She believes it may be advantageous to have a memorandum of understanding between the Town and Library (this was mentioned at the Historical Society meeting, as well).

We were also reminded that the Library currently receives free IT and accounting services - professional services donated by residents. These free services will, in all likelihood, will not be available forever and we should be prepared for that eventuality.

Gary moved that we adjourn the meeting at 5:40, which was seconded by Barbara.

The next meeting of the Nottingham Facilities Assessment Committee will take place on Monday, April 17, 2023 at 4:45 pm in the BOS offices.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Charlotte M. Fyfe, alternate for Eric Danis, Secretary

