

TOWN OF SPRINGFIELD
LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MONDAY, JUNE 1, 2020
6:30 pm

The Library Board of Trustees of the Town of Springfield is hereby notified to attend a SPECIAL MEETING on Monday, June 1, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

This meeting will be held through Zoom Web Conferencing.

To attend the meeting use the links or numbers below: Join Zoom Meeting
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+16468769923,,84745014035#,,1#,484416# US (New York)

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APPROVED MINUTES

1. Call to order – Present: pattrice jones, chair, Jen Dechen, vice-chair, Margery Reurick, Anna Boarini secretary, Gregory Supernovich.
Also present: Sue Dowdell, Library Director
Kristin Durand and Ralph Jacobs were not present.

2. Public Comments - no public comments

3. Springfield Library Pandemic Policy – (draft policy in italics with discussion after each section)

I: Purpose To establish the protocol to be used in the event of a pandemic. If there is a pandemic, the library may be required to operate on limited staffing or take unique measures to help slow the spread of the illness, including service restrictions, limited hours of operation, or possible closure by order of local public health officials. Recovery from a pandemic may be slow, as compared to a natural disaster or other physical crises. It is important to ensure that the core business activities of the library can be maintained for several weeks or more with limited staff and reduced hours due to a pandemic.

*II: Definitions **Pandemic Plan** A pandemic plan differs from a general emergency preparedness policy or procedure. With an emergency preparedness policy, there is an assumption that staff will return to the building or begin rebuilding, almost immediately after the event or crisis (such as after a fire or storm, or if there is a utility shortage). Recovery from a pandemic may be slow and limited staff, services, and hours may be necessary for an extended period of time.*

Pandemic A pandemic is the worldwide spread of a new disease. (World Health Organization <https://www.who.int>)

Appropriate Staffing Level For the purposes of this policy, Appropriate Staffing Level refers to the minimum number of qualified staff necessary to provide service safely and efficiently, as determined by the Library Director or his/her designee.

patrice asked in the definition section when the town would consider an event a pandemic. Sue said an event would be considered a pandemic when the World Health Organization declared one.

III: Library Closure

Public Health Mandate:

The Springfield Town Library will close due to pandemic in the event of a mandated order or recommendation for closure issued by public health or government officials on the local, county, or state level.

Discretionary Service Level Changes:

At the discretion of the Library Director, the Library may close, reduce its operating hours, or limit services temporarily in the event that there is not sufficient staff to maintain appropriate staffing levels or if unable to maintain adequate social distancing for health and safety.

In the event of closure or reduction in operating hours, the Library Director or designee will maintain communication with staff, the Library Board of Trustees, and the Town Manager.

In section III, Margery raised the question about what services and what would be available during a pandemic closure/reduced services. The board chose to add discretionary to services, to cover the standing services, but also new ones like phone a story or curbside pickup. Additionally, in discussing the health and safety procedures, the board discussed adding masks into the policy. Anna asked if this was something we could bring to the select board - to see if they would make masks a requirement for the library or municipal buildings.

While the governor has said libraries can reopen, Sue said the town and library staff prefer to stick with curbside pickup, at least until the emergency order is lifted. Once the policy is in place, Margie wanted to know if this would help decide when to reopen, or if it was something the town manager or select board decided. Sue said the decision to reopen is between the town manager, library director and trustees, which is fine by the select board. The library cannot open for at least three weeks - the length of time for the permanent partitions to be out in place at the circulation desk. Sue said appointment visits to the library could start in July, but she said she is also taking guidance from the state librarian, who said libraries do not have to open just because the governor said they could.

IV: Staffing

Minimum staffing level for a temporary period of time is defined as two healthy employees available to be present at the library during all open hours with a maximum 8-hour workday and 40-hour workweek per full-time employee, and no more than 25-hour workweek per part-time employee. An inability to maintain this temporary minimal level or a necessity to maintain this temporary minimal level for more than two consecutive days will result in reduced hours or closing the library.

In providing service safely and efficiently, the following actions may be taken at the discretion of the Library Director or designee.

- *Increased health/safety measures for staff (e.g., wearing of gloves, wiping down work areas, etc.);*
- *Restricted access to areas in the library (e.g., limiting or eliminating computer access, closing floors or unmonitored areas for safety);*
- *Social distancing practices in public areas;*
- *Reduction of open hours;*
- *Cancellation of all programs, special events, and meeting room reservations;*
- *Reallocation of employee responsibilities and shift/schedule changes to provide coverage during open hours;*
- *Closure of the library.*

If the Library is open, employees are expected to report to work on time as scheduled, excluding any excused absences following the established Personnel policy. In the event of a closure, employees shall be compensated for their regularly scheduled hours.

If the Library is closed or hours reduced, healthy employees may be assigned work-at-home tasks to be completed in their compensated hours. When appropriate, work tools (e.g., laptops, supplies, etc.) will be checked out to employees by the Library Director or designee for work-at-home assignments

In section IV, Sue said the leadership team at the library asked to change the required work hours to 32 -40, to reflect the permanent staff hours. Additionally, they asked that masks be added to one of the requirements for coming into the library. Margie asked about limiting the amount of people in the library at one time. Sue discussed how clarifying permanent versus temporary staff - union versus nonunion - helps keep the amount of people lower. The staff has been spread out and working in separate areas of the library. Greg asked if anyone is working remotely. Sue said some of the library employees - including the director - have been working remotely on projects that can be done so. However, the town government employees chose not to work remotely. Greg wanted to clarify that library employees would be assigned remote work, to signal to the taxpayers that the staff is continuing to work. Sue said that due to the union contract, the town has to find another place for an employee to work, if they are unable to work remotely from home and cannot work in the community.

V: Communication

In the event of closure necessitated by pandemic, effective communication about any reduction in services or open hours must be announced in a timely manner. Library staff

should follow the normal procedure used for any unexpected closure/program cancellation, which includes posting on Front Porch Forum, social media, and the library website. No comments or changes about section V.

VI: Prioritization of Services Priority will be given to the following essential services:

- *Information services for the public, both in-person and online;*
- *Payroll;*
- *Accounts Payable;*
- *Facility Maintenance.*

In the case of reduced staffing or reduced hours of operation, the Library Director or designee will prioritize service-related tasks and assign the daily work plan to staff.

Sue said the community support services were added, as well as working in different departments as needed.

VI: Re-Opening Procedures

The Springfield Town Library will resume services incrementally, providing the mandated order or recommendation for closure issued by public health or government officials on the local, county, or state level is lifted. The Library Director, in consultation with staff, the town manager, and the library trustees, has the authority to phase-in services that are deemed safe for staff and the public.

Greg asked to add a sentence about the library director considering the advice of multiple departments, including the Vermont Department of Public Health when reopening the library. He wanted multiple departments named specifically. Patrice mentioned that sometimes state departments change names or merge with another. Anna asked if this was to be an evergreen policy, or if it was for this specific pandemic event. Instead, the phrase in consultation with state agencies, as well as the selectboard, trustees and town manager, was added to the policy.

Patrice said that while this policy would not go through the usual round of multiple readings, she was comfortable asking the board to vote, given the emergency nature. However, it was also agreed to go back over the policy in the future, to give it the same thought and time the other policies receive. Before the board could vote on adopting the pandemic policy, Greg raised a concern that the tone of the policy seemed to be mostly concerned with employees - he wanted to make sure the policy also stated that while the health and safety of the employees is important, so is the libraries mission to serve the public. Patrice reminded Greg this is not a public statement, rather a policy, but Greg continued to voice his concerns that the public was not mentioned. Margie agreed that adding something about serving the public would be important, because it is the mission of the library. The board decided to add "to establish the protocol to be used to preserve the health and safety of the public and the staff, in accordance with the libraries mission" to the policy, to include the public.

Patrice called for a vote. Anna motioned to approve the pandemic policy, Greg seconded the policy. The policy was adopted unanimously.

4. Discussion regarding phased reopening plans

Sue updated the board on the reopening phases. Currently, the library is in phase one of reopening and moving into phase two. There are still no patrons or volunteers and all state signage has been placed. Staff is still remote, but there is curbside pickup, along with interlibrary loans as of 5/19. As of 5/30, the library started Saturday curbside pickup and on 6/8, patron holds will resume. Sue said that curbside pickup will be extended into the evenings on 6/15 and regular hours will start again, with temporary employees coming in for evening shifts. Sue and Michelle, the children's librarian, are looking into alternate outdoor spaces for events. As of right now, there are still no onsite events, but some virtual.

In discussing the rest of the reopening phases, the issue of masks came up again. Sue said the staff would like to have masks required to be work in the library, once it reopens. Sue said there are some major concerns, even with the partition being put in place. She said that the association libraries are requiring masks, that municipal libraries can make that requirement. For example, Sue said Burlington has required masks in the library, but Burlington city has required masks. Patrice asked if it would be helpful for her as the chair to speak with Walter Martone, chair of the select board about making masks a requirement for the library. The board agreed and wanted patrice to have that discussion with the selectboard chair and the town manager.

5. Adjournment

Patrice called for a motion to adjourn the emergency meeting. Greg made the motion, Margie seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted,
Anna Boarini
Secretary

(Adopted/Approved Pandemic Policy follows)

SPRINGFIELD TOWN LIBRARY PANDEMIC POLICY

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Discretionary Service Level Changes At the discretion of the Library Director, the Library may close, reduce its operating hours, or limit services temporarily in the event that there is not sufficient staff to maintain appropriate staffing levels or if unable to maintain adequate health and safety procedures (e.g., social distancing, masks, etc.).

In the event of closure or reduction in operating hours, the Library Director or designee will maintain communication with staff, Library Board of Trustees, and the Town Manager.

IV: Staffing Minimum staffing level for a temporary period of time is defined as two healthy employees available to be present at the library during all open hours with a maximum 8-hour workday and 32 to 40-hour workweek per full-time employee, and no more than 25-hour workweek per part-time employee. An inability to maintain this temporary minimal level or a necessity to maintain this temporary minimal level for more than two consecutive days will result in reduced hours or closing the library.

In providing service safely and efficiently, the following actions may be taken at the discretion of the Library Director or designee.

- Increased health/safety measures for staff (e.g., wearing of gloves and/or masks, wiping down work areas, etc.);
- Restricted access to areas in the library (e.g., limiting or eliminating computer access, closing floors or unmonitored areas for safety);
- Limiting the number of people in the building;
- Social distancing practices in public areas;
- Reduction of open hours;
- Cancellation of all programs, special events, and meeting room reservations;
- Reallocation of employee responsibilities and shift/schedule changes to provide coverage during open hours;
- Closure of the library.

If the Library is open, permanent employees are expected to report to work on time as scheduled, excluding any excused absences following the established AFSCME contract. In the event of closure, permanent employees shall be compensated for their regularly scheduled hours.

If the Library is closed or hours reduced and if the Selectboard activates the remote working policy, healthy permanent employees shall be assigned work-at-home tasks to be completed in their compensated hours. When appropriate, work tools (e.g., laptops, supplies, etc.) will be checked out to employees by the Library Director or designee for work-at-home assignments.

V: Communication In the event of a closure necessitated by pandemic, effective communication about any reduction in services or open hours must be announced in a timely manner. Library staff should follow the normal procedure used for any unexpected closure/program cancellation, which includes posting on Front Porch Forum, social media, and the library website.

VI: Prioritization of Services Priority will be given to the following essential services:

- Information services for the public, both in-person and online;
- Payroll;
- Accounts Payable;
- Facility Maintenance;
- Community Support services, where needed.

In the case of reduced staffing or reduced hours of operation, the Library Director or designee will prioritize service-related tasks and assign the daily work plan to staff.

VI: Re-Opening Procedures

The Springfield Town Library will resume services incrementally, providing the mandated order or recommendation for closure issued by public health or government officials on the local, county, or state level is revised or lifted.

The Library Director, in consultation with staff, the town manager, and the library trustees, and considering information from relevant state agencies (e.g., Department of Health, Department of Libraries, etc.) has the authority to re-establish existing or implement new services as needed that are deemed safe for staff and the public.

Emergency Approval granted June 1, 2020.