

Great Neck Library
Policy and Bylaws Committee
Tuesday, February 4, 2020
Main Library

Board Members:

Liman Mimi Hu, Chair (MH)
Weihua Yan (WY)
Josie Pizer (JP)
Barry Smith (BS) absent with prior notice

Library Professionals:

Tracy Van Dyne (TV)
Nicholas Camastro (NC)

Members of the Public:

Marietta DiCamillo (MD)
Rebecca Gilliar (RG)
Naomi Penner (NP)

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Great Neck Library's Policy and Bylaws Committee was called to order by MH at 6:02 PM.

Policy Committee Rules

MH began the meeting by clarifying the rules of the Policy Committee. She shared that she is pushing to have all the recommended revisions to policies prepared and distributed at least a week prior to the set meeting date. This will give everyone ample time to review them and note their comments. The committee agreed. JP asked that hard copies of the documents be sent to her, while all others preferred them emailed.

MH referenced Policy 700-50 (Interloans) and its suggested revisions. She said this is an example of a policy we do not want to have. MH stated that for a good policy to be effective it needs to be both simple and specific to help our patrons, staff and trustees. She believes this policy is too vague. MH said this is where the staff's expertise is needed. She also recommended reviewing policies from other libraries to use as a guideline for our policy writing. NC noted that this particular policy is governed by the Nassau Library System (NLS). RG stated that when you have an institution that is higher up overseeing a function, we have the ability to refine it and make the parameters tighter but we are not able to make them looser. MH said we are operating under New York law but that the job of the committee is to interpret policy and present it in a way that is clear to our patrons. MD questioned how the committee will decide on which portions of the NLS policy should be included or not included in our policy. MH responded that although it is a daunting task it can be done with thorough research and staff input.

Bylaws and Policy Suggestions from Rebekkah Smith Aldrich

MH noted that policy is important because it is what people turn to when they are not happy. She stated that she is proposing this policy overhaul due to recommendations made by Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, coauthor of NYS's Handbook for Library Trustees, after her review of the library's policy manual. MH added that the library's attorney reviewed and agreed with Ms. Aldrich's suggestions. She asked for everyone's feedback on the recommendations. JP suggested reviewing outdated policies first to see if they can be removed from the manual. MH wants to decide on the framework and on when to advance these changes to the Board. WY recommended dividing the review into sections. MH said that she would like to take a more holistic approach to the manual review. RG suggested the committee walk through the entire

manual together. NC shared that when he was promoted to Circulation Manager, he and Tracy went over all the circulation policies contained in the manual. He said that although it was a lengthy process, it worked. NC continued that the committee should follow suit and start their review at the beginning of the manual and make changes as they go along. WY concurred and suggested picking a specific section for the committee to review before the next meeting. JP agreed and recommended starting with section 2. MH stated that she will work with Library Administration and email the committee with the assigned section of the manual. MD cautioned against conducting committee business via email since they must abide by Open Meetings Law. MH established that there will be no business discussed or decisions made via email.

Revise Section #700-50: Interloans

MH stated that this policy is not ready to be moved forward and wants to discuss it in more detail at the next policy meeting.

Discussion: Section #200-10: Conduct of Meetings – Revisions Proposed

MH stated that this is an important policy that should not be rushed through and wants to bring it back to the next policy meeting.

Remove Sections #300-15: Responsibilities of the Assistant Director and #300-20: Responsibilities of the Business Manager

TV asked for the committee's decision regarding the removal of these sections from the policy manual. MH responded that she is uncomfortable moving this to the Board without further discussion. She would like to know the history as to why they were included in the first place. MD shared that the job descriptions were put in the manual because there is no other place to retain them. JP stated that it is very important for trustees to know what staff's job responsibilities are. She continued that if they are removed then a trustee manual should be created with the job descriptions included. MH stated the reason they should be removed is that it is not the Trustee's job to determine the Assistant Director's or Business Manager's job duties, but rather that of the Director. RG said that the Director's job is to appoint people in these positions but it is up to the Board to decide on their responsibilities. JP and MD agreed. MH disagreed and deferred this discussion to the next policy meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.

Submitted by Gina Chase

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Action Items

Mimi Hu

1. Work with Library Administration and email committee with an assigned section of Policy Manual to review prior to the next committee meeting.