

Great Neck Library
Policy and Bylaws Committee
Monday, October 12, 2020
Via Webex

Board Members:

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

Library Professionals:

George Trepp (GT)
Nicholas Camastro (NC)

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Great Neck Library's Policy and Bylaws Committee was called to order by MH at 9:38 AM.

MH reminded the committee that this policy overhaul began back in 2019 when previous board president, Rebecca Miller, enlisted the assistance of outside professionals to review the existing policy manual. She noted that the policies from Section 200 were discussed and moved forward to a second reading by the Board at its meeting. She stated that most of the policies are in regard to the responsibilities of the Trustees.

Current Policy Discussion

Review Section 100 of Policy Manual

MH recommended that the entire Section 100 be removed from the policy manual and that its content be included as part of trustee training. She added that current trustee training focuses on conflict of interests which is important but there should be much more information included.

JP feels that it is better to have more information rather than less in the policy manual. She opined that our patrons should be well informed. MH acknowledged JP's concerns but stated that removing these policies will not eliminate the transparency of information we offer to our patrons and that they are abiding to all the rules stated in the NYS Trustee Manual. She said that this information will be better placed on our website not in our policy manual. WY suggested that rather than just copying the law we simply acknowledge that the library follows the FOIL and Open Meeting Laws of NYS and reference it in the policy manual. GT also suggested adopting Open Meeting Law and Freedom of Information policy by reference. He added that law supersedes policy so there is no need to recreate what already exists. GT also suggested not stipulating the number of meetings necessary to adopt a policy change rather just vote on it when everyone is ready. BS agreed with referencing the law rather than include it in its entirety. WY said that three reads may not be necessary but that the board and public must be given ample time to review recommended policy changes before they are voted on by the board. MH accepted everyone's feedback but reiterated her belief that the problem is that if you adopt these two laws you are implying that you are not adopting any other laws.

The committee decided to bring Section 100: Legal Responsibilities back to the next policy meeting for further discussion.

Review Section 900 of Policy Manual

MH announced that for this meeting they are going to strike out all of the standing committees that imply board interference. After a brief discussion the committee agreed to move the removal of Section 900-60/Standing Committees, 900-70/Temporary Committees and 900-75/Ad Hoc Advisory Committee to Acquire Materials (Books) to the Board for a first read.

MH asked the committee to review the library's current programming policies to see how effective they are and if they are even needed in the manual. NC stated that Donna Litke, Head of Programming, should be consulted on these policies. He added that the professionals the library has in place do a great job in responding to what the community wants in regards to programming and that the policies should be removed from the manual. GT noted that, in general, programming should be left up to the professionals as long as it adheres to the mission of the library. BS concurred with GT in that programming should be left up to the professionals. He noted, though, that as elected members of the community the board has a responsibility to provide input on programming but that it should be done at board meetings. BS also agrees with promoting community feedback on our website. WY agreed to leave programming up to the professionals.

Review Section 200 of Policy Manual

The committee agreed to move the removal of sections 200-65/Distribution of Board Correspondence and 200-70/Email forward to the Board for a first read.

The committee agreed to move the revisions of sections 200-20/Responsibilities of Trustees, 200-40/Board Committees and 200-50/Committee Meetings of the Board forward to the Board for a second read.

Circulation Policy Discussion

NC stated that the collection agency rule has been in effect since 2009 and he has been managing it on his own with no policy. He feels this should really be addressed. He noted that this also links with the fact that the trustees are considering eliminating all late fees. NC added that Tracy Van Dyne had authorized him and James Pagano to begin cleaning up the database by deleting records older than six years old. He said this is being done without a written policy and he feels that one needs to exist. The committee agreed with NC and asked that he meet with GT to create and/or update the policies as needed.

Meeting adjourned at 10:33 AM.

Submitted by Gina Chase

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Action Items

George Trepp

1. Place removal of Section #900-60: Standing Committees on the next BoT agenda for first read.
2. Place removal of Section #900-70: Temporary Committees on the next BoT agenda for first read.
3. Place removal of Section #900-75: Ad Hoc Advisory Committee to Acquire Materials on the next BoT agenda for first read.
4. Place removal of Section #200-65: Board Correspondence on the next BoT agenda for first read.
5. Place removal of Section #200-70: Email on the next BoT agenda for first read.
6. Place revision of Section #200-20: Responsibilities of Trustees on the next BoT agenda for a second read.
7. Place revision of Section #200-40: Board Committees on the next BoT agenda for a second read.
8. Place revision of Section #200-50: Committee Meeting of the Board on the next BoT agenda for a second read.

Nick Camastro/George Trepp

1. Update circulation policies and bring them to the next meeting for committee review and discussion.