

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
BETHLEHEM PUBLIC LIBRARY  
Monday February 13, 2017

PRESENT: Joyce Becker  
Mark Kissinger  
Harmeet Narang  
Mary Redmond  
Paula Rice  
Lisa Scoons  
Brian Sweeney

Geoffrey Kirkpatrick, director  
Kristen Roberts, recording secretary

GUESTS: Tanya Choppy, Accounts Clerk  
Jeremy Johannesen, Executive Director of NYLA  
Chris McGinty, Head of Public Services  
Natalie McDonough, Manager, Programs and Community Outreach  
Gordon Noble, Manager of Information/Readers Advisory  
Tracey McShane, Personnel Administrator  
Alex Muto, library intern  
Andrew Reilly, library patron  
William Wallens, library attorney

President M. Redmond called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

**PUBLIC PARTICPATION**

There wasn't any public participation.

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the 9 January 2017 board meeting were unanimously approved as amended (see below) on a MOTION by J. Becker with a SECOND by B. Sweeney.

M. Redmond asked that the minutes reflect the January discussion that all of the raw data from the employee survey will be available to board members.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

On a MOTION by B. Sweeney with a SECOND by M. Kissinger the board unanimously approved the Financial Statement dated 31 January 2017 (Manual Disbursements for January \$70,346.95; Cash Disbursements/Accounts Payable for February \$77,956.78; Trust & Agency Disbursements/Salaries for January \$164,015.87; CapProject Fund/Hand-Drawn Checks for January \$5,721.60; Total: \$318,041.20).  
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## BANK ACCOUNT RECONCILIATION REPORT

The board noted Bank Reconciliations for January 1-31, 2017.

## RESOLUTIONS

On a MOTION by M. Kissinger with a SECOND by J. Becker, the board unanimously voted to adopt a resolution as amended (see below) naming the Library Board of Trustees as SEQRA lead agency regarding fire alarm and security system upgrades.

M. Redmond asked that language be included in the resolution that names Bethlehem Central School District as the agency responding that it has no objection to the Board being lead agency. H. Narang noted that the final paragraph refers to HVAC improvements and should be changed to “fire alarm and security system upgrades.”

## PERSONNEL REPORT

The board noted the personnel report.

## PERSONNEL ACTION

On a MOTION by J. Becker with a SECOND by L. Scoons, the board unanimously approved new hires for the following vacancies, pending Civil Service approval:

- Library clerk, part-time, permanent, 15 hours/week at \$12.73/hour or per contract
- Library clerk, part-time, permanent, 11.67 hours/week at \$12.73/hour or per contract

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The board noted the director's report. Additional items:

- G. Kirkpatrick noted that the backflow preventer worked marked the completion of a capital project.
- Icing on the plaza has been a very difficult on maintenance staffers, who must chip away at it in small sections. G. Kirkpatrick said that he spoke with someone about getting an estimate to replace the pavers with cement but was told that a waterflow engineer should be consulted first because the icing has to do with the pavers and the pooling of water on the plaza walkway. The board agreed that it was a serious safety and liability issue. M. Redmond said that it should be given board priority within the next 18 months once some of the bigger upcoming projects are well under way. The board discussed getting pricing for several options, including having the walkway heated underneath. H. Narang asked if heated mats might be an option. G. Kirkpatrick said they had been looked at in the past. H. Narang said they could possibly provide a temporary solution.
- G. Kirkpatrick noted that he and C. Stollar Peters have been very happy to have the actual door count data, and the numbers will be useful in analyzing attendance on snow days and more.
- Some of the surveys returned with the WiFi hotspots have suggested the library have more available to borrow. G. Kirkpatrick noted that the 3-to-1 hold ratio on a two-week item is high. The board told

- him to move forward with purchasing 10 more hotspots for patron use and applying them to the holds.
- Still no word on if or when the Better World Books bin will return. L. Scoons suggested that, if it comes back, the bin be placed away from the library return. G. Kirkpatrick noted the difficulty in finding a suitable spot for the bin but said the library would reach out to see if there would be alternative locations, such as the town park.

## UPPER HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM REPORT

L. Scoons noted that Advocacy Day is March 1 and told the board that she or G. Kirkpatrick could provide them with a schedule of events if they were interested in attending.

## NEW BUSINESS

### *2017-18 draft budget*

G. Kirkpatrick distributed a draft of the budget. Additional items:

- The 2.22% overall increase in staff costs represents some uncertainty in health insurance costs because the health insurance contract cycle does not coincide with the library's fiscal year. The number does not include a COLA, which could be a part of union contract negotiations.
- The material line increase of 5.4 percent is meant to keep up with the stated purpose of increasing this line to provide the items that patrons are looking for. H. Narang asked if the library was devoting enough to eBooks, and G. Kirkpatrick noted that more money has been allocated to electronic materials, especially eMagazines. Circulation of eBooks etc. continues to grow. H. Narang noted that an additional benefit of e-materials is that they require fewer staffing costs.
- The proposed budget devotes an additional \$2,500 to special programs to continue larger community-based programs. G. Kirkpatrick said he expects to see decreases in furniture and equipment expenses since many items have already been replaced or can be repaired.
- Revenues continue to drop due to a change in the fines structure. Book sale can handle small increase. There is also a drop of \$5,700 in PILOT revenue as some properties drop off the rolls and become part of the tax base.
- M. Redmond asked for an explanation behind the levy increase of 2.2 percent. G. Kirkpatrick noted that it fell within the 2% tax cap because of adjustments, including PILOT changes.
- The board discussed current contributions rates to employee health insurance plans.
- M. Kissinger asked if the budget lined up with the library's mission and moving it forward. G. Kirkpatrick said it shows how much of what the library does is represented by personnel costs, and the library continues to look at ways to automate some tasks and devote more personnel time to outreach and interfacing with the public without adding additional staff. M. Kissinger asked if the board should be looking ahead and identifying and planning for those efficiencies by setting aside some money in future budgets. H. Narang suggested getting creative about eliminating non-value added tasks.

G. Kirkpatrick filed the budget numbers with the state comptroller electronically at 6:57pm.

On a MOTION by B. Sweeney with a second by P. Rice, the board unanimously approved the 2017-18 draft budget as written for public presentation. The budget proposes a levy of \$3,828,270, an increase of 2.07% or \$77,713.

M. Redmond asked if would be possible for someone, such as an intern, to go through past energy bills to identify whether surcharges contributed to some of the costs from earlier. G. Kirkpatrick reminded the board that the G3 student would be working with the library this spring, and that is something they would likely be looking at.

#### *Community Foundation*

G. Kirkpatrick said he had been in touch with the Community Foundation and was told the library could request a return of the deposit money, which would then be taken to their board. The board asked G. Kirkpatrick to move forward with a request for the disbursement of the deposit. If the money is returned, M. Redmond said she would like to see it devoted to library programming.

#### *Construction manager RFP*

The board reviewed the draft RFP for a construction manager. M. Redmond noted that the library has already received a proposal from the dormitory authority. The goal of the RFP is to see who the interested parties are so the board can go about selecting a construction manager that fits their needs for the upcoming HVAC work. The RFP will be posted in The Spotlight and sent directly to other parties that have expressed an interest. G. Kirkpatrick reminded the board that hiring a construction manager falls under professional services, like accountants etc., and an RFP is not a bid document.

B. Sweeney asked for some clarification as to what “at risk” meant in the document. G. Kirkpatrick said an at risk construction manager is paid a lump sum and disperses it to contractors, whereas the library is looking for a construction manager who will advise the board, but payments would be authorized through the trustees.

M. Redmond asked that the RFP indicate that it is the library’s goal to start construction in fall 2017. The board indicated that it would like to get the RFP out for at least 3 weeks beginning as soon as possible so that they have an idea of what the proposals look like by the March board meeting and be able to make a decision by the April meeting. G. Kirkpatrick said that seemed like a reasonable timeline.

#### *New York State Annual Report*

The board reviewed the New York State annual report numbers.

On a MOTION by M. Kissinger and a SECOND by H. Narang, the board unanimously voted to accept the information in the annual state report as accurate for filing.

*Staff continuing education*

On a MOTION by J. Becker with a SECOND by L. Scoons, the board voted unanimously to approve travel and registration expenses in the amount of \$2,642 for Gordon Noble and Chris McGinty to attend Book Expo America in New York City.

*Other new business*

None

OLD BUSINESS

*Survey update*

L. Scoons said the board needs to decide how long the survey would be available. M. Redmond said she would like it distributed in time to have the information available to discuss at the March meeting. G. Kirkpatrick said that there needs to be a paper copy of the URL for staffers who do not have an email account. M. Kissinger and B. Sweeney were noted as the director's evaluation committee and were directed to use the survey information to enhance their evaluation.

*HVAC project update*

There won't be much movement until the construction manager is hired. Once a bid for the project has taken place, the library can submit its information for the state construction grants. M. Redmond asked for a return of the breakdown of costs for the HVAC and fire/safety projects.

*Fire alarm and security project update*

This is now ready to submit to SED for approval.

*Other old business*

None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

C. McGinty introduced to Alex Muto is a librarian intern, as well as a full-time clerk in the circulation department.

A. Reilly said he enjoyed reading the reports included in this month's board packet. He also noted the number and increase in programming and asked how that was possible. G. Kirkpatrick noted that N. McDonough was hired specifically to increase the number and quality of library programs. He also noted that the budget for programs was increased by \$2,500 in the draft proposal and The Friends of Library also pay for many others.

J. Johannesen encouraged everyone to attend some or all of Advocacy Day on March 1. He said the executive budget this year cuts \$4 million in library aid, which would represent a significant loss to institutions statewide. He directed trustees to [nyla.org/advocacy](http://nyla.org/advocacy) for more tools.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On a MOTION by P. Rice with a second by M. Kissinger, the board adjourned to executive session at 7:35pm to discuss future contract negotiations pursuant to Article Fourteen of the Civil Service Law, and, separately, the employment history of a particular individual.

On a MOTION by J. Becker with a second by H. Narang, the board adjourned executive session at 8:59pm; no action was taken.

On a MOTION by H. Narang with a second by P. Rice, the board adjourned the regular meeting at 9pm.

Prepared by  
Kristen Roberts, recording secretary

Cosigned by  
M. Redmond, board president