

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
BETHLEHEM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Monday May 13, 2019

PRESENT: Joyce Becker
Caroline Brancatella
Mark Kissinger
Harmeet Narang
Mary Redmond
Lisa Scoons
Brian Sweeney
Robert Khalife, treasurer

Geoffrey Kirkpatrick, director
Kristen Roberts, recording secretary

EXCUSED:

GUESTS: Tanya Choppy, Accounts Clerk
Catherine Stollar Peters, Assistant Director
Marc Gronich, trustee candidate
Jeremy Johannesen, president, Friends of Bethlehem Public Library
Jared King
Miguel Samonte, library employee
Regina Bryde-Kalet, trustee candidate

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

BUDGET PRESENTATION

G. Kirkpatrick explained some of the factors that went into the 2019-20 budget. He noted that a budget chart is in the May/June Footnotes and on the library's website, while a more detailed breakdown is also available online in the March 2019 board packet.

He said that salaries and benefits represent about three-quarters of the budget, but there are some expected decreases in state retirement costs to offset negotiated salary increases.

He said the materials line reflects a decrease in children's audiobooks, as that format is no longer in high demand, and an increase in spending on eBooks and Library of Things materials, including museum passes.

The budget also reflects a slight expected increase in operations as the library switches auditors and braces for another expected round of real property tax refunds.

The budget, minus an expected revenue of \$281,162 leaves a levy of \$4.06 million – an increase of 3.31 percent over the previous year. G. Kirkpatrick explained that the number comes in under the New York State property tax cap, which is based on real property values, tax base growth and other factors as calculated by the Office of the New York State Comptroller.

PUBLIC PARTICPATION

M. Gronich said he was unclear how the tax levy increase was calculated and would like a more detailed explanation. He asked the board to consider videotaping the meetings and broadcasting them. He also said he would like to know more about the number of library employees, their titles and their expected salary increases.

J. Johannesen thanked the members of the board who helped out at the Friends Book Bash in April. He said they raised just under \$1,000, and they have plans to do it again in April 2020. He praised the board and the library for the service they provide to the community, as well as their transparency.

J. King said he would like to know what the trustees' long-term vision for the library is.

MINUTES

Minutes of the 11 March 2019 board meeting were approved unanimously as amended on a MOTION by M. Kissinger with a SECOND by J. Becker.

K. Roberts noted she had corrected the wording regarding the First Night discussion to reflect that the board's decision to forgo the event was just for this year.

FINANCIAL REPORT

On a MOTION by M. Kissinger with a SECOND by B. Sweeney, the board unanimously approved the Financial Statement dated 30 April 2019 (Manual Disbursements for April \$45,078.32; Cash Disbursements/Accounts Payable for May \$71,283.98; Trust & Agency Disbursements/Salaries for April \$189,536.10; CapProject Fund/Hand-Drawn Checks for May \$0; Total: \$305,898.40).

TREASURER'S UPDATE

R. Khalife said he reviewed the details of the financial report and that the biggest item this month was the receipt of the balance from the property taxes. He said spending for the year looks to be coming in under budget.

BANK ACCOUNT RECONCILIATION REPORT

The board noted the Bank Reconciliations for April 1-30, 2019.

MANUAL INVOICES

None

RESOLUTIONS

None

PERSONNEL REPORT

G. Kirkpatrick mentioned that the report just indicated titles that had been filled, and there were no new actions requested.

PERSONNEL ACTION

No action requested.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

- M. Redmond said the board wanted to recognize and commend the work of Kevin Coffey and the maintenance department in addressing the drainage issues on the plaza. She encouraged the rest of the board to take a short tour of the fixes, when weather permits. The board is hopeful the work will help alleviate some of the icing issues in the winter.
- The library will be planting some of the Seed Library tomatoes in the raised beds at the Borthwick house in order to harvest the seeds for the following year. It is important to avoid cross-pollination to maintain the purity of the seeds so, in the future, the library may be looking for a few dedicated volunteers to continue the seed lines.
- The Pop-Up Library will allow patrons to check out materials, get a library card or update their card information – all out and about in the community. M. Kissinger asked if there was a process where a community event could request the Pop-Up Library.
- The G3 students at UAlbany will be presenting their reports, which the board will have access to. G. Kirkpatrick said some of the suggestions could be very timely with the board in the process of creating a long-range plan.
- The video piece filmed by Wildwood will be available for the library to broadcast on BCN-TV.
- B. Sweeney asked when the library's last civil service program was offered. G. Kirkpatrick said it was in the fall, but it might be time to schedule another as part of ongoing training. He said he and T. McShane do a lot of one-on-one civil service coaching.

The board noted that the energy use stats reflect increases nearly double the previous year during the heating period, likely reflecting the heating issues in the community rooms. Some energy efficiencies may have been seen by the system tweaks made in the previous month, but they have had little effect on overall comfort of the areas. Energy use during last year's cooling period did see decreases. The board noted they would be discussing this issue further when they looked at the maintenance contract later on in the agenda.

UPPER HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM REPORT

L. Scoons said the board has been selecting award winners and preparing for the annual celebration in June. She said that they would be looking at construction grants shortly, but the UHLS board was hoping the legislature would put more money in the construction budget as it saw heavy cuts this year. G. Kirkpatrick said the library would not be submitting a construction grant application this year.

NEW BUSINESS

Nominating committee

A nominating committee would be selecting the president, vice president and secretary for the coming fiscal year. B. Sweeney, L. Scoons and C. Brancatella volunteered to serve as the committee.

Audit firm selection

R. Khalife recapped the selection process, noting that six firms were invited to bid, and of those six, the finance committee narrowed it down to three solid proposals. They eventually selected Marvin and Company, based on their references and experience with the Guilderland and Saratoga libraries.

R. Khalife said that following the board vote, he would be getting in touch with the firms he has been in communication with.

On a MOTION by H. Narang with a SECOND by B. Sweeney, the board voted unanimously to accept the \$15,075 per year bid from Marvin and Company for auditing services for the next two years.

Scanning proposal

In her role as records manager, C. Stollar Peter has assessed the scale and scope of records that need to be removed from the boiler room, and she reached out to NYSID for a proposal to digitize them. The digitized records would be easily accessible and searchable. At issue are the payroll records, which need to be kept in perpetuity, and the fiscal records, which need to be kept for six years. The \$10,748 scanning service would represent a one-time cost as the library now produces these documents digitally.

C. Stollar Peters also investigated off-site storage at a minimum cost of \$1,200 per year, not including the cost to access the files when needed.

C. Brancatella asked how often the library needed to access the files, and T. Choppy said it averages about 6 times a year.

B. Sweeney asked where the digitized files would be stored. G. Kirkpatrick said a copy would remain in-house, with additional copies stored at Upper Hudson and on the cloud.

M. Kissinger said the scanning quote amounted to a lot of money for the service, and he was not comfortable with the costs.

On a MOTION by H. Narang with a SECOND by C. Brancatella the board voted to approve the \$10,748 proposal from NYSID for record scanning services for the library's fiscal and payroll records, with M. Kissinger opposed.

UHLS annual celebration

G. Kirkpatrick reminded the trustees that the dinner was June 12 and to let him know if they were interested in attending.

Studio Makerspace ceiling proposal

The library received a bid to install an acoustical ceiling in the studio makerspace to cut down on ambient HVAC noise and provide LED light. The costs would be covered by PEG funds. G. Kirkpatrick said the library would get an assurance from the town that they will cover the costs before entering into a contract for the work.

On a MOTION by M. Kissinger with a SECOND by L. Scoons, the board voted unanimously to approve the \$9,468 bid from Dake Construction to install an acoustical ceiling in the studio, contingent on the town reimbursing the costs with PEG money.

Contract attorney discussion

M. Redmond noted that at C. Brancatella's suggestion, the library had attorney Madeline Kauffman of Nolan Heller Kauffman review the proposed HVAC maintenance contract. She suggested the library consider adding more board-sanctioned attorneys to the official authorization list and asked how they might go about selecting them. C. Brancatella noted that experience and word of mouth are often critical factors.

The board agreed that there is a need to easily and quickly reach out to a lawyer for contract review, including the upcoming one with Butler Rowland and Mays for planning and design services.

They suggested that they include additional pre-approved attorneys with a broader range of specialties to the authorization list they approve at the beginning of the fiscal year, and they agreed it would be prudent to add Nolan Heller Kauffman to the existing list, effective immediately.

On a MOTION by B. Sweeney and a SECOND by J. Becker, the board unanimously agreed to add Nolan Heller Kauffman to the authorizations for the remainder of the 2018-19 fiscal year.

Budget vote and trustee election – Tuesday, May 21

The vote will take place at the high school from 7 a.m.-9 p.m.

Other new business

None

OLD BUSINESS

Long range capital plan proposal

G. Kirkpatrick had sent along the board comments about the proposal that were brought up at the previous meeting and said that P. Mays was generally responsive to timeline and deliverable requests, but was looking further into the board suggestions regarding the indemnification clause. The revised proposal was not ready for review, but G. Kirkpatrick said that he should be able to get it to the board with plenty of time to look at it before the June meeting. M. Redmond said that the board is moving forward with the long-range plan, but they don't want to rush through important steps. G. Kirkpatrick said that he, C. McGinty and C. Stollar Peters were working on the long-range service plan.

HVAC update

The board prepared to review the maintenance contract proposal from Trane. G. Kirkpatrick said the library was currently without one, and while the system is still new, it is time to start with scheduled maintenance to protect the library's investment.

M. Redmond said she believed the next step would be to sit down with M/E Engineering to talk about the areas of the design that are not meeting the library's expectations and what steps are needed to address them.

C. Brancatella suggested creating a record by drafting a reservation of rights letter before the warranty expires noting the issues with the system the library has identified and sending it to the involved parties.

M. Redmond noted that the maintenance contract should be addressed separately from the issue with the engineering design. The quote from Trane is for service of the controls and the hardware.

The board agreed to enter into a maintenance contract with Trane. They also asked G. Kirkpatrick to move forward with setting up a meeting ASAP with M/E to discuss the design issues with the system. H. Narang asked to sit in on that meeting.

On a MOTION by C. Brancatella with a SECOND by M. Kissinger, the board voted unanimously to accept the three-year maintenance contract proposal from Trane in the amount of approximately \$17,500/year.

Other old business

None at this time.

FUTURE BUSINESS

Background checks

No further discussion at this time.

Plaza feasibility

Discussed earlier.

Policy updates/schedule

No further discussion at this time.

Resource sharing

No further discussion at this time.

Fines and fees

No further discussion at this time.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

M. Gronich thanked K. Roberts for putting up the video of the Meet the Candidates event. He asked to speak with someone further about the budget. G. Kirkpatrick said he would be available to discuss it with him.

M. Samonte told the board he works as a library page and thanked them for looking into the temperature issue as it was something he noticed over the winter.

J. Becker asked if there was some kind of signage that could be added to the library's Delaware Avenue sign to indicate that the parking lot is off Borthwick. She said she has noticed many people confused by their GPS directing them to the Delaware Avenue entrance.

ADJOURNMENT

On a MOTION by J. Becker with a SECOND by B. Sweeney, the board adjourned the regular meeting at 8:10pm.

Prepared by
Kristen Roberts, recording secretary

Cosigned by
M. Redmond, board president