

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
BETHLEHEM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Monday August 13, 2018

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

Geoffrey Kirkpatrick, director
Kristen Roberts, recording secretary

EXCUSED:

GUESTS: Chris McGinty, Head of Public Services
Tracey McShane, Personnel Administrator

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

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation

MINUTES

Minutes of the 8 July 2018 board meeting were approved unanimously on a MOTION by H. Narang with a SECOND by M. Kissinger.

M. Redmond noted that the new agenda includes items highlighted in red that may involve more lengthy discussions.

FINANCIAL REPORT

On a MOTION by B. Sweeney with a SECOND by C. Brancatella, the board unanimously approved the Financial Statement dated 31 July 2018 (Manual Disbursements for July \$68,482.71; Cash Disbursements/Accounts Payable for August \$114,103.42; Trust & Agency Disbursements/Salaries for July \$183,978.97; CapProject Fund/Hand-Drawn Checks for August \$4,310.37; Total: \$370,875.47).

BANK ACCOUNT RECONCILIATION REPORT

The board noted Bank Reconciliations for July 1-31, 2018.

MANUAL INVOICES

None

RESOLUTIONS

None

PERSONNEL REPORT

The board noted the personnel report. G. Kirkpatrick said having vacancies in the page positions is pretty typical this time of year as students head off to college.

PERSONNEL ACTION

On a MOTION by M. Kissinger with a SECOND by L. Scoons, the board unanimously approved a new hire for the following vacancy, pending Civil Service approval:

- Library page, part-time, permanent, 13.85 hours/week at \$10.40/hour or per contract.
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DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

- The security cameras in the library hallways are up and functioning. G. Kirkpatrick said that the presence of an individual in a public building is not a confidential record so a law enforcement request for access to the video is not the same as a request to access an individual's personal records. M. Kissinger asked if the police were aware the cameras were installed. G. Kirkpatrick said he has been talking with the police department and Adam Hornick about the best angles and views. The cameras record high-quality, time-stamped color images with footage being overwritten when it reaches seven days old. G. Kirkpatrick said that that a common comment on the Facebook post about the reported assault involving a young girl at the library was a call for surveillance cameras, and this was a reasonable response to that. M. Kissinger said it would be helpful to identify other areas in the library that might have vulnerabilities that could be addressed. B. Sweeney said he was happy with the installation of the cameras and was glad that patron privacy was being prioritized. The board agreed that the Children's Place emergency exit area would be a good candidate for cameras, especially as the library moves forward with converting the outside area into a play space.
- G. Kirkpatrick praised the library volunteers who fill many roles, and said that one of the big projects currently under way is the scanning of the Tri-Village Directories that are a historical record of the families in the area. H. Narang asked how the library thanks its volunteers. G. Kirkpatrick said there is an end-of-the-year event for the teen volunteers, and T. McShane organizes giveaways and other events for the year-round volunteers. M. Kissinger said that he has heard from parents with teens who volunteer in the summer, and they have mentioned that it is a very well-run program. G. Kirkpatrick said that the program benefits both parties, as the teens provide a service for the library but also get experience working in a structured way. Currently volunteer coordinator duties are shared among different staff members.
- Self-checkout circulation is at 12 percent of the total checkouts, which is above what was predicted. Fifty-nine percent of those checkouts are in the Children's Place. Nearly all of the patron checkouts were successful.
- The library now has "Incredibles" branded library cards available. These are licensed for a limited time, just like the Snoopy cards. G. Kirkpatrick said the custom library card program was a success, but there were some misunderstandings about what was copyrighted and could not be reproduced. L. Scoons asked if the library could potentially partner with an elementary art teacher to have kids create their own library cards.

- In response to a patron inquiry about the library sponsoring Little Free Libraries in town, L. Scoons said it would be a perfect boy scout project. C. Brancatella warned that the free libraries have a lot of exposure and the content is not curated in any way – for better or for worse – and could be co-opted by groups with an agenda.

M. Redmond asked if the board wanted to discuss the reported assault that is currently under investigation any further. H. Narang asked if there had been many patron questions following the release of the statement. G. Kirkpatrick said most of the response happened shortly after it was announced and shared on Facebook, and there was one caller who shared her concerns with C. Stollar Peters.

The board agreed that they did the right thing by getting the news out to the public despite the reluctance on the part of the police department. C. Brancatella asked if the board could create a written policy outlining the library’s response for these types of incidents. She said such a policy could be modeled after what is in place at the school district. The board directed G. Kirkpatrick to locate the school district’s policy and other similar policies for their review.

The board agreed that much confusion between the library and the police department could have been avoided if the two parties could have come together to discuss it. B. Sweeney said the board was looking for guidance from the police regarding the statement so it could be released in a timely manner. Board members said they believe, moving forward, both the police department and the library will have a better understanding of where the other is coming from.

G. Kirkpatrick commended the board for their courage and for taking action in getting the word out to patrons. M. Redmond said recognition should also go out to the library staffers who were first on the scene and responded with compassion, in a way that was focused on making the young child feel more at ease. G. Kirkpatrick said that staff would be taking some of what they learned to create an informal “go pack” to would provide a child comfort in a time of crisis. There is additional crisis response training planned for staffers, and the library was able to schedule a “Personal Safety for Kids” program in early September featuring educators from the Albany County Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center.

UPPER HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM REPORT

L. Scoons said the services committee met recently, and they have begun going over the construction grant applications.

NEW BUSINESS

Board committees

M. Kissinger asked the board how they felt about using committees to get some work done ahead of time and potentially adding a policy review committee, something he and J. Becker had talked about during their work as the nominating committee.

M. Redmond said she was in favor of it. C. Brancatella said it could allow for greater attention to detail, as the regular board meetings are often packed with information. H. Narang said a policy review committee is a good idea because it is often not constructive to have seven people wordsmithing a document at once. He added that for bigger issues like building needs, he likes to have all of the details and would be in favor of a second full board meeting a month

occasionally. B. Sweeney said he was not sure his schedule would allow for two full board meetings a month. J. Becker said that the committee approach may be easier in terms of scheduling. L. Scoons said she has been on some boards where committees work really well, and others where they don't. It depends on how much work the participants are willing to put in or whether they just see it as another meeting a month. She suggested other creative work options, such as a board retreat. The board agreed that it would be ideal to line up members' areas of expertise with the goal the committee is tasked with. They suggested that even though additional board members could attend, voting would not take place at the meeting.

Board members tentatively proposed the following committees and potential members to be discussed further at a later date.

- Finance committee: M. Redmond and board treasurer
- Policy committee: C. Brancatella and M. Kissinger
- Building committee: H. Narang and M. Redmond
- Collections committee: B. Sweeney and TBD
- Personnel committee: C. Brancatella and M. Kissinger (current)
- Nominations committee: As needed

The board discussed bringing in library architect Paul Mays to do an assessment of the space, as well as someone to look at the building's systems (boiler, etc.) to get an idea of what they will need to address in their long-range plan.

Laptop computer purchase

G. Kirkpatrick asked the board to approve the addition of four high-powered laptops to the Makerspace studio to bring the total to 10. The equipment is eligible for PEG money. H. Narang asked how the library maintains security on the public computer. G. Kirkpatrick said the program Deep Freeze essentially resets the desktop every time the computer is restarted. It has been very successful so far in preventing viruses.

On a MOTION by B. Sweeney with a SECOND by H. Narang, the board unanimously approved the purchase of four (4) high-powered Dell laptops for use in the A/V Makerspace at a total cost of \$6,757.56.

Bethlehem First Night participation

G. Kirkpatrick asked the board if the library was interested in participating like they did the year before. H. Narang asked if there were any volunteers from the library. G. Kirkpatrick said it may be difficult to staff it because the library isn't able to offer double time as it is not a holiday. M. Kissinger said that should maybe be part of the next contract discussion. M. Redmond said that if there isn't adequate staffing this year, then the library will have to notify the town that it declines future participation. She also said that the library's participation is contingent on the town providing snow removal that night, if needed.

NYLA annual conference

G. Kirkpatrick noted that the conference would be taking place in Rochester this year.

On a MOTION by M. Kissinger with a SECOND B. Sweeney, the board unanimously approved the cost of sending four staffers to the annual NYLA conference at a proposed cost of \$3,608.

Increase petty cash

As part of the discussion last month, G. Kirkpatrick asked the board to increase the petty cash by \$200 so there would be more five-dollar bills to make change with.

On a MOTION by C. Brancatella with a SECOND J. Becker, the board unanimously approved increase petty cash by \$200 for a total of \$400.

Other new business

None was discussed at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

Board treasurer

The board reviewed the separation of financial tasks outlined in the board packet. G. Kirkpatrick said T. McShane has reached out to Civil Service to begin the process of having the position classified as exempt under the advice of the library attorney because that employee would also be a sitting officer of the board. Because that position would be exempt, the board has more leeway in defining the duties, benefits and pay structure.

G. Kirkpatrick said he envisions the treasurer position to be approximately 15 hours a week, with those hours worked as needed and not necessarily a set schedule. M. Redmond suggested the board ask applicants for salary requirements and speak with other libraries that employ similar positions to see what a baseline salary should look like. The board agreed they are ready to move forward with advertising for a part-time treasurer with at least 10 years of experience who could work flexible hours. T. McShane said the library has the most success advertising for employment in the Times Union.

Capital Projects/Long Range Plan

The board discussed the unaudited surplus projections in the board packet and discussed what they might have available for projects by June 2019. They noted that the estimate from Gilbane for the fire alarm and security project came in significantly higher than the engineer's estimate, and that would have to be factored in to the planning. H. Narang asked where the major expense from that project would be and if there was a breakdown from the contractor. G. Kirkpatrick said they did, and that their last estimate for the HVAC project was right on the money. The fire alarm and security project includes removal of the asbestos ceiling in the hallway and its replacement along with LED light installation. A card-swipe security system and parking lot cameras would be installed, and the entire fire alarm system would be replaced and brought up to date. M. Redmond said the board needed to decide soon whether they wanted to move forward with the project whether or not they receive any grant money, in light of the new projected costs. She added that she wouldn't feel comfortable signing any contract until the audited financial numbers are in.

The board briefly discussed additional building projects that have been on their radar, including boiler replacement, plaza regrading, parking lot repaving, and a new design for the parking lot island. They decided to break some smaller projects off the capital projects plan so that they could be

dealt with out of the operating budget. Those include a new sound system for the community room, book drop replacement and installation of additional emergency exit doors. G. Kirkpatrick said he would look into the costs of those items and bring the number back to the board.

B. Sweeney asked if there had been any further discussion about having an emergency generator at the library to assist in the wake of a disaster. G. Kirkpatrick said he has been speaking with the town and Jack Brennan about ways the library can assist as first recoverers, and noted that Town Hall has a generator, and maybe it would be more useful to provide internet access there since the building would already be up and running. M. Redmond said that it would be a good topic to revisit in the future.

On a MOTION by B. Sweeney with a SECOND by C. Brancatella the board unanimously approved the Assurances for the State Aid for Library Construction Program, signed by board president M. Redmond on August 13, 2018.

Fire alarm and security update

Discussed above.

HVAC project update

The punchlist items are continuing to be checked off, but there is some concern that every air handler that was installed has had some issue, which should not be the case with brand-new equipment. Johnson Controls has been diligent about making the fixes at no additional cost, but M. Redmond suggested that it might be prudent to speak with an attorney to find out what information the library should be collecting in the event that a lawsuit must be filed. C. Brancatella said the library would be looking for an attorney with litigation experience.

Community survey

K. Roberts reported that she has finished her course on survey preparation for libraries. The goal is to have something published in the November/December Footnotes, where there could potentially be additional pages. The survey would run in print and online. She said she would have something for the board to review at the October meeting. M. Redmond asked if it could be ready a week earlier so the board could review it electronically before the regular meeting.

BCN-TV update

The one-button studio is nearly ready to go. Electronic uploading of shows is really working well. The library will do some early testing of the studio with Rabbi Nachman Simon to make sure everything is working well before it is widely launched. G. Kirkpatrick pointed out the digital display over the community bulletin board that is just the PSA feed from BCN-TV. Signage around the display encourages nonprofits to submit their events for display.

Other old business

None was discussed.

FUTURE BUSINESS

Director evaluation

Was not discussed at this time

Background checks

No further discussion.

Plaza feasibility

No further discussion.

Policy updates/schedule

Was not discussed at this time.

Resource sharing

Was not discussed at this time.

Fines and fees

Was not discussed at this time.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

On a MOTION by J. Becker with a SECOND by B. Sweeney, the board adjourned the regular meeting at 8:21pm.

Prepared by
Kristen Roberts, recording secretary

Cosigned by
M. Redmond, board president