

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
BETHLEHEM PUBLIC LIBRARY  
Monday September 17, 2018

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

Geoffrey Kirkpatrick, director  
Kristen Roberts, recording secretary

EXCUSED: Brian Sweeney

GUESTS: Tanya Choppy, Accounts Clerk  
Chris McGinty, Head of Public Services  
Tracey McShane, Personnel Administrator  
Catherine Stollar Peters, Head of Tech Services, Circulation  
Craig Tripp, landscape architect with GPI  
Jared King

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

**PUBLIC PARTICPATION**

There was no public participation

**PLAZA PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION**

Craig Tripp, senior landscape architect from GPI, returned to discuss the plaza drainage options presented in a survey he prepared last fall. He told the board that his goal for the evening was to answer any questions and help narrow down the direction they were hoping to go with any plaza improvements. The board had earlier notified him that they were not interested in pursuing the snowmelt option. He said there is an area where the walkway was pitched in such a way that it creates a valley and ponds up during times of precipitation. He also said that the pitch near some of the handicapped spots exceeds 5 percent, and restriping could add additional parking areas. The berm area has a walkway that, while it doesn't fall under ADA guidelines, is very steep from a life-safety and snow removal standpoint. The original proposal recommended the installation of steps to the berm walkway, but board members had been discussing other options, including leveling the berm entirely. J. Becker noted that the berm issue could be broken out as a separate project. G. Kirkpatrick said the library closed the berm walkways during the past winter and plans to do so in the future to avoid any potential hazards.

The board discussed the cost estimates for the different plaza areas discussed in the GPI proposal, which included the berm, handicapped parking and accessible walkway, main entry pedestrian way, and the bus shelter and book drop area.

H. Narang asked about the significance of the bus shelter/book drop area, and C. Tripp said it was mainly about finding an aesthetic stopping point so the plaza doesn't look like a half-finished project. M. Redmond noted that if the board decides to tackle the area around the accessible spaces, which was the costliest proposal of the four, they will have to address all of the pitch and drainage issues to be in ADA compliance. H. Narang asked if there were other landscape options that would help the library get the most use out of the plaza green spaces if they were already going in and making changes. G. Kirkpatrick said people do use the area by the bike racks and chess table, and the library has seen heavy use of the new ADA-compliant picnic table. The board asked C. Tripp what GPI's role would be once they decided the direction they wanted to go in. He said GPI would provide a proposal that outlines in detail what needs to be done from concept through project design and construction. He said the project would likely have to be submitted for SED review, which would add 12-18 months to the timeline. He and G. Kirkpatrick said that the board would be looking at a 2021 or later construction date. H. Narang asked to see some options for getting rid of the berm and to use concrete instead of replacing the walkway pavers. The board agreed to get a list to C. Tripp with their plaza priorities so he could prepare a proposal in line with what they are looking for. C. Tripp concluded his presentation at 6:39pm.

#### MINUTES

Minutes of the 13 August 2018 board meeting were approved unanimously on a MOTION by M. Kissinger with a SECOND by C. Brancatella with the corrections noted below.

M. Redmond noted a typo on the third page and asked that the minutes reflect the board's discussion that First Night participation was contingent on the town providing snow removal that night, if needed.

She said she would also like to remove her name from the Building Committee, which would be discussed later in the agenda.

#### FINANCIAL REPORT

On a MOTION by J. Becker with a SECOND by H. Narang, the board unanimously approved the Financial Statement dated 31 August 2018 (Manual Disbursements for August \$48,190.71; Cash Disbursements/Accounts Payable for September \$78,248.07; Trust & Agency Disbursements/Salaries for July \$186,556.38; CapProject Fund/Hand-Drawn Checks for September \$3,737.60; Total: \$316,732.76).

G. Kirkpatrick told the board that the library has received a check for 90 percent of the New York State construction grant awarded last year.

#### BANK ACCOUNT RECONCILIATION REPORT

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

#### MANUAL INVOICES

None

#### RESOLUTIONS

None

## PERSONNEL REPORT

The board noted the personnel report.

## PERSONNEL ACTION

There were no personnel actions requested at this time.

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

- Cement has been poured for the Ian Bogle memorial space off the Children's Space. The textured concrete was recommended as the safest option for a fire exit.
- People have really embraced the UHLS library expedition, and BPL has already printed out three gold cards for people who have visited all 36.
- C. Stollar Peters is looking at relocating the self-checkout kiosk currently at the ADA circulation desk to the pillar near the Express shelf. Staff has found that dedicating the low desk to self-checkout has impeded interaction with some customers. The new self-checkout location would also be ADA-compliant.
- Crime victim prevention training set up by C. McGinty provided some valuable insight into how library staff can navigate and provide support through the process of reporting a crime. G. Kirkpatrick said the presenter was very good, and he recommended her program to other libraries in the area.

## UPPER HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM REPORT

L. Scoons said board members had been notified of the amount Upper Hudson was planning to award BPL in construction grant money. She said the committee had many discussions about how to allocated the money, and while the library got the lowest percentage of funding, most people on the UHLS board were happy with the final decision.

## NEW BUSINESS

### *Library smoking law update*

G. Kirkpatrick said there is a bill on the governor's desk that will most likely pass prohibiting smoking within 100 feet of library property. He said the library would put up signs to alert people of the restrictions, but staffers would not be responsible for enforcing them. Whether this covers e-cigarettes or smoking in cars is unclear.

### *Insurance comparison report*

G. Kirkpatrick provided the board with the report from the library's insurance broker. The carrier Utica National is one of the only ones that focus on the peculiarities of library coverage. M. Redmond noted that the quoted price came in under what it was last year. Chubb did provide a quote for just cyber coverage. The board discussed what that might entail but had several questions about what it was actually insuring against and what a claim would look like. With a cost of \$3,000-\$4,000, board members were skeptical about its necessity since BPL does not collect very much identifying information, and patrons' confidential data is stored with the library system in Albany. G. Kirkpatrick also noted that the library broker said the employment liability coverage through the library's D&O is the best out there and should be retained. The board also talked about crisis expense coverage and decided it does not meet the library's needs.

On a MOTION by H. Narang with a SECOND L. Scoons, the board unanimously voted to accept the insurance premium as proposed by Amsure in the amount of \$25,995.

*Director evaluation process/form*

M. Redmond said the board should redo the evaluation form for next year to make the process easier. G. Kirkpatrick reminded the board that staff at the library can use Wordpress to create a form for free with any list of questions and have the responses drop directly into the trustees email. C. Brancatella, L. Scoons and M. Kissinger all volunteered to work up some suggestions for the new form to get the process started.

*Other new business*

Nothing at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

*Board treasurer*

T. McShane had put together a draft of the treasurer job posting for the board to review. She provided a price quote from the Times Union with different advertising options. M. Redmond asked if it was possible to drastically shorten the post and direct potential applicants to the library website for a full version. T. McShane said it would reduce the cost, but she wasn't sure if the new cost would cover posting the ad on Monster and Indeed. The board was also worried about the decreased visibility of a smaller ad and opted to go with the 1/8-page ad for two weeks in the TU. T. McShane noted that, while it is expensive, advertising in the TU tends to bring in the candidates the library is looking for. G. Kirkpatrick said he and T. McShane are still in the process of having the position declared civil service exempt, but the final decision has yet to be made.

The board agreed to run the advertisement the week of September 23 and 30, with a month for people to get their materials in. The anticipated start date would be January.

M. Redmond said that the personnel report for next month should include a line that advertising for the treasurer's position has begun.

*Board committees*

The board reviewed some of the committee proposals from the August meeting and further refined them to include the following people:

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

C. Brancatella asked if G. Kirkpatrick had gotten any information about school district policy on reporting abuse and interacting with law enforcement. He said he hadn't because the response of the school district seems to be mostly dictated by mandatory reporting guidelines. M. Redmond said that maybe they were looking more for a procedure or protocol, which she said the Bethlehem PD indicated there was. G. Kirkpatrick said the incident in July put the library in new territory, and a lot of other libraries are looking to Bethlehem to see how they should handle a similar incident, should it come up.

### *Capital Projects/Long Range Plan*

The board agreed that developing a new long-range plan before 2019 would not be feasible. They said that extending it another year would allow them to get a new treasurer in place and collect data from an upcoming community survey.

On a MOTION by J. Becker and a SECOND by M. Kissinger, the board voted unanimously to extend the current long-range plan through the end of 2019.

### *Fire alarm and security update*

The board noted the two parts of the project include the electrical component, which is the lion's share of the Gilbane estimate, and the asbestos abatement, which would be done by a general contractor specializing in asbestos abatement. Board members said the approximately \$100,000 in miscellaneous costs seemed high.

G. Kirkpatrick shared some of the history regarding capital projects at the library. He said that a \$12.5 million bond for infrastructure and overall upgrades went down 3-to-1 in 2003-04. The board at the time came out with a new bond proposal of \$1.3 million, which covered cosmetic upgrades like new furniture and carpeting in the public space. However, building system upgrades, like HVAC, electrical, plumbing, etc. were deferred. What the current board is now dealing with are all of the facility projects that had been put on hold over the years but now have to be dealt with.

The board discussed whether all of the components of the fire alarm and security system need to be a part of the overall project, and if they were to hold off on one or more aspects, would they have to go through SED approval again. M. Redmond suggested G. Kirkpatrick talk to Tim McGrath at DASNY to see if he has dealt with a similar situation. The board agreed to talk in detail at the next meeting about how the project design and costs break down.

The board discussed the process for bonding and whether that would be a viable option for upcoming projects. M. Redmond said bonding seemed more appropriate for larger scale projects.

### *HVAC project update*

An estimator from Crisafulli told G. Kirkpatrick that the library's boiler is not in danger of catastrophic failure. If something were to go wrong, the parts to fix it are easily accessible and affordable.

H. Narang asked where the conversation with Johnson Controls was at regarding the faulty HVAC units. There is a proposal for extended service to the system, and DASNY is currently reviewing it. Kevin Coffey has been collecting all of the documentation about the unit failures and repairs. M. Redmond said the library would be following up with attorneys well-versed in contract negotiation and litigation to see what the options were.

### *Community survey*

A community survey about library services will be part of a four-page Friends supplement to the November/December Footnotes. The annual appeal will also be part of the issue. In addition to Footnotes, the survey will be available in-house and online. The hope is to get some responses from light library users and non-users. M. Redmond said there should also be an in-house large display. The board opted to accept responses through November 30.

*BCN-TV/studio makerspace update*

G. Kirkpatrick said all of the components are at the library, but studio construction needs to be completed. Representatives from other libraries will tour the studio in October. Bethlehem is pioneering the one-button recording technology locally, and other libraries are interested in learning more.

*Other old business*

Nothing at this time.

FUTURE BUSINESS

*Background checks*

No further discussion.

*Plaza feasibility*

No further discussion.

*Policy updates/schedule*

A list of policies and when they were last updated was provided in the board packet. The board said it would be a good way to help them figure out which ones need to be reviewed and in what order.

*Resource sharing*

Was not discussed at this time.

*Fines and fees*

G. Kirkpatrick noted the Brunswick Library recently went fine free. Albany Public Library is also reviewing whether it would be feasible for them. L. Scoons said that the UHLS e-commerce option would be available in October, allowing patrons to pay their fines online.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a MOTION by M. Kissinger with a SECOND by C. Brancatella, the board adjourned to executive session at 8:32pm to discuss the employment performance of a specific individual.

On a MOTION by H. Narang with a SECOND by M. Kissinger, the board adjourned executive session at 8:52pm; no action was taken.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A patron approached the board during executive session and was asked to come back in a few minutes. Upon leaving executive session, the board waited for the patron to come back, and G. Kirkpatrick searched for him in the library, but he did not return.

On a MOTION by J. Becker with a SECOND by H. Narang, the board adjourned the regular meeting at 8:57pm.

Prepared by  
Kristen Roberts, recording secretary

Cosigned by  
M. Redmond, board president