

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
BETHLEHEM PUBLIC LIBRARY  
Monday August 12, 2019

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

Geoffrey Kirkpatrick, director  
Kristen Roberts, recording secretary

EXCUSED:

GUESTS: Tanya Choppy, accounts clerk  
Tracey McShane, personnel administrator  
Chris McGinty, assistant director

President M. Redmond called the meeting to order at 5:57pm.

PUBLIC PARTICPATION

There was no public participation

MINUTES

Minutes of the 8 July 2019 board meeting were approved unanimously on a MOTION by B. Sweeney with a SECOND by L. Scoons.

FINANCIAL REPORT

On a MOTION by C. Brancatella with a SECOND by H. Narang, the board unanimously approved the Financial Statement dated 31 July 2019 (Manual Disbursements for July \$14,415.28; Cash Disbursements/Accounts Payable for August \$119,957.37; Trust & Agency Disbursements/Salaries for July \$199,424.15; CapProject Fund/Hand-Drawn Checks for July \$0; Total: \$333,796.80).

In his treasurer's report, R. Khalife said his review of the bank recs showed everything was in order. He also noted that the financial report for July includes the \$22,000 received in state aid. He said primary activities in the past month included getting ready for the annual audit that begins at the end of the month, as well as looking at the investment policy and comparing it with best practices among other similar institutions. He said he has made a small revision to the policy to reflect current practices, to be discussed and voted on as an agenda item later in the meeting. He said he expects to make further recommendations for revisions at a future meeting.

R. Khalife asked the board to let him know if they had any feedback on the way the financial information is presented in the packet. H. Narang asked if it would be possible to include some kind of chart or graphic that could potentially reveal any trends that the board might want to take action on. M. Kissinger said it would be useful to have some sort of introduction that notes anything in the packet that is outside the norm. C. Brancatella said an executive summary paragraph would be useful.

M. Redmond said the board would be interested in looking at what was paid out in attorney's fees this calendar year for reviewing contracts and other legal advice. She said it was a good value for the sound advice received by the library in recent months.

#### BANK ACCOUNT RECONCILIATION REPORT

The board noted Bank Reconciliations for July 1-31, 2019.

#### MANUAL INVOICES

None

#### RESOLUTIONS

None

#### PERSONNEL REPORT

G. Kirkpatrick asked the board to allow the library to hire a part-time clerk and a part-time librarian at 19 hours each, instead of the current open full-time library assistant position in order to fill existing service needs.

B. Sweeney asked if the change would have an impact on the budget, and G. Kirkpatrick said the goal was to make it budget neutral, with a slight increase to what would be paid in salary costs offset by the fact that the part-time positions do not have benefits costs associated with them.

The board briefly discussed the civil service process for filling library positions from a list of approved candidates.

T. McShane said that before the board voted, she wanted to note that the report in the board packet misidentified the hourly rate for the part time clerk position, and it should be listed as \$13.75 per hour.

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

- Librarian 1, part-time, permanent, 19 hours/week at \$27.04/hour or per contract
- Library Clerk, part-time permanent, 19 hours/week at \$13.75/hour or per contract

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

- G. Kirkpatrick said that as Summer Reading winds down, he wanted to give kudos to C. Brenner who redesigned how people participated, leading to higher numbers than in recent years and more books being given out to children. People have said they like the new method of tracking their reading.
- M. Walsh asked what it meant when staffers participating in the long-range services discussion said they wanted to see more tech help outside of the library. G. Kirkpatrick said that tech help is a big part of what libraries do these days, but the guidelines are vague as to how to provide those services to people where they are, like getting their Bluetooth set up in their cars so they can hear digital audiobooks, etc. He said there are already a lot of tech questions for staffers when they are out and about as a pop-up library. He noted that the library has held tech help classes offsite in the past. Those outreach programs can be expensive and complicated from a staffing standpoint, and the library is constantly evaluating how to reach the people who wouldn't normally use the library. He said that is one of the reasons behind providing passive services like WiFi in town parks and public areas.
- L. Scoons asked if the library has ever considered using volunteers to provide tech help. G. Kirkpatrick said that was done very successfully in the past with the library's Computer Partners program, which paired volunteers with new computer users, but as technology needs have changed, many patrons are looking for more immediate help.
- Self-check statistics show that usage hovers around 11 percent, which is what C. Stollar Peters had predicted. H. Narang asked if it had reached a point where it would affect how the library staffs the desk. G. Kirkpatrick said that the library has already changed staffing on Wednesday nights, but the self checkout at the library has always been more about providing privacy for patrons who want it.

G. Kirkpatrick told the board about a banking glitch in late July that could have affected payroll. R. Khalife said there was an issue at the bank level, but everyone ended up getting paid on time because G. Kirkpatrick was able to complete a manual transfer to make that happen. M. Redmond commended G. Kirkpatrick for getting to the bottom of the situation before it affected the timeliness of payroll. She said she realized the situation was very stressful for everyone involved. H. Narang asked if the bank had provided an explanation on what happened and why. T. Choppy said she has been in contact with the bank, but is still waiting for a satisfactory explanation. G. Kirkpatrick commended staff for alerting him when their direct deposits didn't look right.

## UPPER HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM REPORT

L. Scoons said the service committee would be meeting this month to talk about the guidelines for applying for state aid money, since an extra \$20 million has been added to the total pool of construction grant money. She said the application window has been pushed back until October.

## NEW BUSINESS

*NYLA conference attendance/continuing education*

NYLA has relaunched its leadership program, and the library would like to support Librarian II C. Brenner's attendance at this continuing education opportunity. She has already applied and has been accepted. She has also received a scholarship from Upper Hudson for half the total cost of \$995. The program runs for an entire year.

On a MOTION by L. Scoons with a SECOND by M. Kissinger, the board unanimously approved spending \$497.50 for C. Brenner to participate in NYLA's Developing Leader Program.

G. Kirkpatrick said the library would like to send a group of staffers to the NYLA conference in Saratoga Springs in mid-November. The location in Saratoga makes it cheaper to attend as there are no overnight costs associated.

On a MOTION by C. Brancatella with a SECOND by M. Walsh, the board unanimously approved the proposed NYLA conference attendance costs of an estimated \$3,392.

*Collections committee report*

B. Sweeney said he, M. Kissinger and H. Narang met July 22 with G. Kirkpatrick to further discuss some ideas generated over email. Most of the conversation centered on genre fiction and DVDs. He said the group discussed ways to make sure patrons were able to pursue additional works by newly discovered authors, as older titles that were generally available at other libraries in the Upper Hudson system may not be so available as weeding practices change. The primary roadblock for providing access is a lack of space. The group explored whether there may be storage possibilities offsite or spaces within the library like the second floor or bookshelves in the community rooms. The library is already opening up more space by using bottom shelves. G. Kirkpatrick said he spoke with Tim Burke at Upper Hudson and was told there might be some space available there. The committee will continue trying to brainstorm some creative ways to expand that collection, and it is a topic that is likely to come up as architect P. Mays begins looking at the library's space needs. The committee also discussed the DVD collection and its acquisition policies. In recent years, the library has taken a new approach to buying and weeding the collection that has ended the decline in DVD circulation. The committee discussed how the library could continue to meet that demand and still create opportunities for people to discover classic/independent/foreign films.

*Investment policy*

On a MOTION by M. Kissinger with a SECOND B. Sweeney, the board unanimously adopted a revision to the Investment Policy as presented.

R. Khalife said he had made a small change to the investment policy to reflect how the library's deposits are currently collateralized with TD Bank through a standby letter of credit. This type of collateral is permitted in the guidelines for government banking, but was not included in the investment policy when last revised. R. Khalife said the finance committee is investigating additional revisions to the policy but recommended adopting the current revision in order to clarify the practice.

*Contract negotiation team*

G. Kirkpatrick noted that contract negotiations would be coming up and asked board members to think about if they would like to sit in on the discussions, which would most likely take place during daytime work hours. He said ideally the discussion would start at the end of the calendar year but really get going in late winter/early spring.

*Other new business*

G. Kirkpatrick said that K. Roberts would not be available for the November meeting but will transcribe the minutes from a video recording when she returns. T. Choppy has volunteered to record the motions and seconds live.

OLD BUSINESS

*Committee memberships*

On a MOTION by C. Brancatella with a SECOND H. Narang, the board unanimously approved the following committee memberships with the understanding that M. Walsh can join one or more at a future date:

Building committee: H. Narang

Finance committee: M. Redmond, R. Khalife (meeting with G. Kirkpatrick and T. Choppy)

Personnel committee: M. Kissinger, C. Brancatella

Policy committee: C. Brancatella, M. Kissinger, L. Scoons

Collection committee: B. Sweeney, M. Kissinger, H. Narang

The nominating committee will be populated as needed after election time.

G. Kirkpatrick remind the board that if there are more than four of them at a given meeting, it is a quorum and subject to open meeting laws.

M. Redmond reminded the board that there is a lot of work coming up in the next few months with the Long Range Planning process and contract negotiations.

*HVAC update*

*Anticipated project timeline*

The final revisions of the HVAC design have been delivered to DASNY by the engineers, and Wilkins was expected to provide a cost for the work by the end of the week. The library has some money remaining with DASNY that can go toward the project, and depending on what the difference is, the board may need to hold a special meeting to authorize G. Kirkpatrick to spend the additional funds so as not to delay the project. It is hoped that fixes to the system can be completed before October when the heating season kicks into full gear.

*Holidays and closings*

G. Kirkpatrick presented a revised holiday schedule that has the library closed Friday, July 3, to accommodate the contractual holiday for staff. M. Redmond noted that it is the first weekend of summer and staffers may get some complaints.

On a MOTION by C. Brancatella with a SECOND by M. Kissinger, the board unanimously approved the 2020 holidays and closings schedule as amended with the library closing Friday, July 3, 2020.

*Other old business*

P. Mays will be at the library Aug. 20 to begin preliminary discussions about space needs for the Long Range Planning process.

## FUTURE BUSINESS

### *Background checks*

No further discussion at this time.

### *Plaza feasibility*

No further discussion at this time.

### *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

There was no public participation.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a MOTION by H. Narang with a SECOND by M. Kissinger, the board adjourned to executive session at 7:58pm to discuss future contract negotiations pursuant to Article Fourteen of the Civil Service Law.

On a MOTION by B. Sweeney with a SECOND by L. Scoons, the board adjourned executive session at 8:12pm.

## ADJOURNMENT

On a MOTION by M. Kissinger with a SECOND by H. Narang, the board adjourned the regular meeting at 8:13pm.

Prepared by  
Kristen Roberts, recording secretary

Cosigned by  
M. Redmond, board president