

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
BETHLEHEM PUBLIC LIBRARY  
Tuesday November 12, 2019

PRESENT: Caroline Brancatella  
Mark Kissinger  
Mary Redmond  
Lisa Scoons  
Brian Sweeney  
Michelle Walsh  
Robert Khalife, treasurer  
  
Geoffrey Kirkpatrick, director

EXCUSED: Harmeet Narang

GUESTS: Tanya Choppy, accounts clerk  
Catherine Stollar Peters, assistant director  
Tracey McShane, personnel administrator  
Chris McGinty, assistant director  
Catherine Brenner, CSEA Local 6015 president  
Thomas Hosey, auditor, Marvin and Co.

President M. Redmond called the meeting to order at 5:09 pm.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a MOTION by M. Kissinger with a SECOND by M. Walsh, the board adjourned to executive session at 5:10pm to discuss future contract negotiations pursuant to Article Fourteen of the Civil Service Law.

On a MOTION by M. Kissinger with a SECOND by L. Scoons, the board adjourned executive session at 6:05pm.

#### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation at this time.

#### AUDIT PRESENTATION

Library auditor Thomas Hosey of Marvin and Co. reviewed the draft audit report and required communications letter with the board. He noted that the library's financial statements are neutral, consistent and clear, and he offered an unmodified opinion on the library's financial statements and accounting practices and policies. He said the audit of the library conforms to government auditing standards.

T. Hosey answered board questions about how the estimates for post-employment benefits and other liabilities are calculated, and where to find the numbers related to the fund balance. He praised management and staff for being helpful and accommodating during the auditing process.

Marvin and Co. also evaluated IT processes, although that document is not part of the governmental auditing requirements. T. Hosey noted that there were no areas of high concern, and one or two areas of medium concern, but not any that he considered significant. R. Khalife added that G. Kirkpatrick had not had a chance to fully review this report and was not yet ready to discuss it with the board.

M. Redmond said it is an area to look at in the future and discuss whether some changes or additional documentation may be needed.

The board discussed whether there would be a vote on the audit that evening. M. Redmond expressed surprise that the vote would take place the same evening it was presented and had not been aware of that before the meeting.

T. Hosey exited the meeting at 6:55pm.

On a MOTION by M. Kissinger and a SECOND by C. Brancatella, the board voted to accept the audit and required communications drafts as presented by Marvin and Co.

M. Redmond thanked all of the staffers who helped with the audit and said T. Choppy was instrumental in making the transition to a new auditing firm as smooth as it was.

## MINUTES

Minutes of the 15 October 2019 board meeting were approved unanimously on a MOTION by C. Brancatella with a SECOND by M. Kissinger.

Minutes of the 19 October 2019 Long Range Services Committee meeting were approved unanimously on a MOTION by L. Scoons with a SECOND by B. Sweeney.

Minutes of the 8 November 2019 Long Range Services Committee meeting were approved unanimously on a MOTION by M. Kissinger with a SECOND by M. Walsh.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

R. Khalife presented the financial report and explained the cash balances graph he included. He noted nothing unusual in expenditures for the month.

M. Redmond asked if there was a schedule for when PILOT money is received by the library so it could be compared from year to year. T. Choppy said PILOT money generally comes in with the final tax payment from the school district.

On a MOTION by B. Sweeney with a SECOND by M. Walsh, the board unanimously approved the Financial Statement dated 31 October 2019 (Manual Disbursements for October \$45,516.20; Cash Disbursements/Accounts Payable for November \$87,990.44; Trust & Agency Disbursements/Salaries for October \$194,105.29; CapProject Fund/Hand-Drawn Checks for October \$19,803.44; Total: \$347,415.37).

#### BANK ACCOUNT RECONCILIATION REPORT

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

#### MANUAL INVOICES

None

#### RESOLUTIONS

None

#### PERSONNEL REPORT

G. Kirkpatrick noted that there was a lot of internal movement in the past month, and some open positions have finally been filled. He is requesting a temporary part-time Library Clerk because the incumbent still has a hold on the position due to some internal promotions beginning with the provisional appointment of a Senior Clerk, for which there is no active Civil Service list.

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

- Library Clerk, 15 hours/week, part-time temporary, \$13.75/hour or per contract
- Library Page, 11.67 hours/week, part-time permanent, \$11.10/hour

#### DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

- The plaza had its first potential icing issue this morning, but the work done by maintenance to improve drainage has moved a lot of the moisture off the walkway. M. Redmond said she is really interested in seeing if the new drainage system will lead to significantly less pooling and icing this season.
- G. Kirkpatrick reached out to Judy Kehoe at the school district to set up a meeting with the Finance Committee to share information about the bonding process.
- The Friends have donated a bunch of branded umbrellas for people to borrow on the honor system.
- G. Kirkpatrick said the implementation of Kanopy was quicker than expected. The idea is to harvest some data and see how well it is used.

#### UPPER HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM REPORT

L. Scoons said the UHLAN discussion is ongoing and the libraries are not happy with the current proposal. She also noted that the governor has signed legislation for a construction grant guideline change to allow funding up to 90 percent for economically distressed libraries. She asked about the issues with the courier service experienced across the Upper Hudson system. G. Kirkpatrick said Bethlehem used the library van to fill in the gaps when the courier system fell

apart. A new courier is now on board and things are back up and running.

B. Sweeney asked if there was ever any discussion about uniting the Upper Hudson system with other nearby library systems to expand access to collections. G. Kirkpatrick said that is something that is occasionally talked about, but there are a lot of strong feelings on both sides of the issue.

## NEW BUSINESS

### *Investment Policy*

R. Khalife provided an overview of the proposed changes to the Investment Policy as outlined in a PowerPoint presentation he prepared for the board. He noted that investment by governmental entities is dictated by municipal law. He said that the Investment Policy must be reviewed annually and voted on even if there are no changes to it. It should include permitted investments and procedures on investment and collateral, as well as security agreements. OSC recommends having one board-designated person responsible for handling the policy to increase accountability.

He noted that in drafting the policy revisions, he reviewed best practices with other governmental entities.

M. Redmond said there may be some unexpected outcomes as the changes are rolled out, but this is an important first step in testing the water.

On a MOTION by C. Brancatella with a SECOND by B. Sweeney, the board unanimously adopted the drafted changes to the library's Investment Policy as presented.

The board thanked R. Khalife for the work he has put into drafting the policy.

G. Kirkpatrick said that in addition to passing the policy, an amended version of the 2019-20 authorizations is needed to allow for electronic wire transfers among financial institutions.

On a MOTION by M. Walsh with a SECOND by L. Scoons, the board unanimously approved board authorizations for 2019-20 as amended.

### *Staff Development Day (Friday, Dec. 6) – Library closed*

Everyone is invited. Library architect P. Mays will be there for lunch and an afternoon presentation. M. Walsh will organize dessert for the staff.

B. Sweeney reminded the board that P. Mays will be available to meet with trustees one-on-one that day.

### *NYS retirement invoice*

On a MOTION by M. Kissinger with a second by B. Sweeney, the board unanimously authorized prepayment of the NYS Retirement System annual invoice for 2020, in the amount of \$283,977.

### *Friends of the Library*

The Friends are thinking about changing how and what they fund at the library, and moving

away from programming (A Little Sunday Music, Evenings on the Green, etc.) and toward multi-year fundraising for bigger projects. The board is encouraged to identify in the long-range plan projects that might be suitable for this kind of fundraising and to communicate that with the Friends. This is in the preliminary stage and part of a bigger reorganization taking place.

The largest thing previously funded by the Friends was the digitization of The Spotlight. They were also the beginning supporters of the museum passes.

*NYLA annual conference*

Some staff will be attending. G. Kirkpatrick will present a program on Civil Service.

*Other new business*

No other new business at this time.

## OLD BUSINESS

*Contract negotiation team*

L. Scoons and C. Brancatella will be representing the board during negotiations.

*Long-range plan steering committee – status report*

*Long-range plan charrette – Tuesday, Nov. 19*

G. Kirkpatrick provided a draft of the staff and trustees' input on the services portion of the long-range plan. Space needs came out as the top priority among both groups. B. Sweeney said something that struck him during the discussion was the excitement among many of the board members for language learning.

B. Sweeney said the most recent capital plan meeting covered a timeline for the information-gathering process. He noted that the public brainstorming meeting is 6-8 in the Community Room on Nov. 19. The board discussed some of the logistics of facilitating the discussion. B. Sweeney said the goal is to get 40-50 people. If there are fewer, there may be a need for a second session. M. Walsh asked if that would be necessary if the library continues to solicit public opinion after the meeting through the poster and dot exercise. Other board members wondered whether multiple meetings would even bring different stakeholders to the table.

B. Sweeney noted that stakeholders meetings with P. Mays will take place Dec. 3. G. Kirkpatrick said invitations to those meetings are in the works. The committee meeting will take place Dec. 13 at 8am. A January 8 We Heard You meeting is also scheduled.

P. Mays has proposed a couple of library field trips to examine some libraries his firm has recently worked with – Crandall and Glens Falls or a trio of Lower Hudson libraries. M. Walsh said she was interested in visiting the Lower Hudson libraries. G. Kirkpatrick said arrangements can be made for both visits. M. Redmond said another data element to the planning process would be projected expenses, and she will be working with R. Khalife to provide projections based on a variety of assumptions.

*HVAC update*

G. Kirkpatrick said construction could be starting by mid-November.

*UHLAN*

The agreement from last month has not been finalized. A new version is expected by next month.

L. Scoons said the automatic 2% increase received a lot of pushback.

*Other old business*

M. Redmond reminded the board that the main topics at the December meeting would be the long-range planning discussion with P. Mays and UHLAN contract.

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 at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

On a MOTION by B. Sweeney with a SECOND by M. Walsh, the board adjourned the regular meeting at 8:40pm.

Prepared by  
Kristen Roberts, recording secretary

Cosigned by  
M. Redmond, board president