

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
BETHLEHEM PUBLIC LIBRARY  
Monday October 9, 2018

PRESENT: Caroline Brancatella  
Mark Kissinger  
Mary Redmond  
Lisa Scoons  
Brian Sweeney

Geoffrey Kirkpatrick, director  
Kristen Roberts, recording secretary

EXCUSED: Joyce Becker  
Harmeet Narang

GUESTS: Tanya Choppy, Accounts Clerk  
Catherine Stollar Peters, Head of Tech Services, Circulation  
Tracey McShane, Personnel Administrator  
Robert Khalife

President M. Redmond called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.

#### PUBLIC PARTICPATION

Robert Khalife introduced himself to the board and said he was interested in the treasurer's position but wanted to attend a board meeting to see what they entailed.

#### MINUTES

Minutes of the 17 September 2018 board meeting were approved unanimously on a MOTION by M. Kissinger with a SECOND by B. Sweeney.

B. Sweeney asked for clarification on whether it was standard practice to abstain from voting on the minutes if a board member was not in attendance at the meeting. G. Kirkpatrick said that board members do vote on the minutes regardless of whether they were present.

#### FINANCIAL REPORT

On a MOTION by B. Sweeney with a SECOND by C. Brancatella, the board unanimously approved the Financial Statement dated 30 September 2018 (Manual Disbursements for September \$69,570.80; Cash Disbursements/Accounts Payable for October \$57,358.46; Trust & Agency Disbursements/Salaries for July \$187,715.95; CapProject Fund/Hand-Drawn Checks for September \$934.40; Total: \$315,579.61).

T. Choppy noted that the auditors have mostly finished their field work and are finalizing their reports, but they haven't brought up any major issues. The auditors are scheduled to attend the November meeting to go over their results with the board.

M. Redmond asked about the \$500 in gifts listed in the financial report. T. Choppy said that it was a yearly memorial gift from two daughters of Nancy Henderson in their mother's name to be used to purchase children's books. M. Redmond asked that future gifts listed in the financial report have some kind of notation indicating them as such.

The board asked about the Ian Bogle memorial play space, and G. Kirkpatrick said it would be ready to be dedicated in the spring, but he is still waiting to hear from the family regarding their choice of wording on the dedication plaque.

T. Choppy said the library has received nearly all of its tax revenue, with \$2.1 million and \$800,000 received within the past week.

#### BANK ACCOUNT RECONCILIATION REPORT

The board noted Bank Reconciliations for September 1-30, 2018.

#### MANUAL INVOICES

None

#### RESOLUTIONS

None

#### PERSONNEL REPORT

The board noted the personnel report. G. Kirkpatrick asked the board to hold off on making any decisions to fill the technology assistant position.

#### PERSONNEL ACTION

On a MOTION by C. Brancatella with a SECOND by M. Kissinger the board unanimously approved holding the soon-to-be vacated technology assistant position pending further evaluation.

The board noted that they had received 12-14 resumes for the part-time treasurer position.

#### DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

- The library is awaiting the official closeout of the HVAC project in order to get the last 10 percent of state construction grant money, as well as the contingency balance from DASNY.
- M. Kissinger asked about musical instruments in the Library of Things. C. Stollar Peters noted that the library currently loans keyboards, ukuleles and electronic drums, along with a number of instruments for children. She said that Albany Public Library is loaning out electric guitars. She also said she was interested in adding small mixing boards that can be hooked up to computers to process analog and digital sounds. M. Kissinger said that it sounds like a good idea.

- L. Scoons asked if the library had considered loaning in-demand software like Photoshop, etc. G. Kirkpatrick said that loaning the software itself comes with licensing problems, but it is likely the library will loan out laptops that have the software installed. These are already available to use in house and include Premiere Elements, Photoshop and podcasting software.
- G. Kirkpatrick said C. Stollar Peters had recently and unsuccessfully pursued some unreturned larger-ticket items through small claims court. He noted that the next step would have been to proceed to civil court and file a lien, or go through a credit agency, which the library is not interested in doing at this time. He noted that most Library of Things items are checked out and returned with no incident. The board said they were still comfortable with the level of risk they assume when loaning out those items, and they agreed that small claims court was a reasonable response to the unreturned items.
- The new ADA self-checkout location is very visible and getting a lot of use. The move has also opened up the full-service ADA desk, which was negatively impacted by the large self-checkout screen, which hindered face-to-face communication.
- G. Kirkpatrick praised the local author book fair coordinated by N. McDonough. He said it was a great way to efficiently serve the local author community. One audience member with macular degeneration was thrilled to meet audiobook narrator and keynote speaker George Guidall. L. Scoons asked if there was some way to coordinate the event with the one hosted by the Writers Institute. G. Kirkpatrick said that if the library knew of that date in time for scheduling purposes, they would.

#### UPPER HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM REPORT

L. Scoons said the board would be meeting the following day. She said that all 17 libraries granted construction money have accepted the funds. G. Kirkpatrick and the rest of the board thanked her for her work on the UHLS board.

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### *BELLS Grant presentation*

G. Kirkpatrick said that as part of an early literacy grant, the board is required to hear a 20-minute early literacy presentation. That presentation is scheduled for the December meeting.

##### *EV charging port grant application*

The library will apply for a grant through NYSERDA and National Grid that would cover the cost of installation for electric car chargers. The type of charging port installed would provide electricity for a fee. The charging stations would be the only ones in the Town of Bethlehem along the Delaware Avenue corridor. G. Kirkpatrick said the library doesn't need to make any immediate decisions about the chargers, but it made sense to throw the application out there to see what happens.

##### *Staff Development Day and luncheon*

G. Kirkpatrick noted that Staff Development Day training would be held Friday, Dec. 7, from 9-5. The morning would feature mandatory safety training and the State of the Library speech, followed by a communication presentation by Evelyn Neale from the Colonie library. The afternoon would include lunch and some breakout sessions. Trustees are invited to attend some or all of the training and lunch. M. Redmond said it is good opportunity to interact with the staff and in past years, the trustees' presence has been well-received.

M. Redmond said the trustees have traditionally purchased cupcakes for the event, and that she would be happy to coordinate the order again this year.

G. Kirkpatrick said that the cost of the luncheon is typically purchased and expensed, but he requested that the library just use one of the expense credit cards to make the purchase. The board agreed that it was a simpler and more transparent solution.

*Other new business*

G. Kirkpatrick told the board there was an incident in the library on Columbus Day involving a patron looking for some quiet work space and two tutors working with students. Heated words were exchanged and police were called, but it did not escalate beyond that. G. Kirkpatrick commended staff for their swift and appropriate action and noted the library tends to be noisier on vacation days. M. Redmond said there may be a need to review the tutoring in the library policy in the future to add wording about being courteous to others by keeping noise levels down. L. Scoons noted that there are some quiet spaces near the periodical section, but that this is not an academic library so expectations should match the reality of a public library. G. Kirkpatrick said the library is looking at adding additional electrical outlets to the large tables in periodicals to increase the quiet area work space available.

M. Redmond reminded board members that the Halloween parade will take place in the morning and afternoon of the 31<sup>st</sup> and that it is a fun day to drop in and take part in the fun.

## OLD BUSINESS

*Public information report policy*

G. Kirkpatrick met with Cmdr. Adam Hornick of the Bethlehem Police Department and discussed how the police and the school district manage public notification about incidents at the schools. A. Hornick said that school notification is based on the requirement to provide information to students' families, not necessarily the public at large. The conversation was overall productive, and A. Hornick and G. Kirkpatrick were generally on the same page in the belief that it is important to get information to the public in a timely manner. G. Kirkpatrick now has direct contact information for A. Hornick so that there can be a higher level of coordination in any future public notification regarding the library and the police department.

*Board treasurer*

M. Redmond said the library has already received several resumes, and she would like to keep accepting them through Nov. 1. She suggested the board start narrowing down the resumes ASAP and scheduling interviews before the final deadline to get the process started. She said the interview team would likely be made up of her, G. Kirkpatrick, T. McShane and T. Choppy, along with 1 to 2 other board members, if interested. Interviews would likely take place the last week of October.

The board discussed background checks and decided that it was something they would like to pursue with the treasurer position. T. McShane was going to look into some of the options as far as what is checked and what the turnaround time would be. C. Brancatella said it would be good to mention that a job offer is contingent on the check and to decide what information would disqualify a candidate. She also asked whether a personal credit check would be part of the process and said there is a strong argument that it would be material.

M. Redmond said the committee of four would narrow down the candidate pool and iron out the wording for the background check with guidance from the library's lawyer and T. McShane. G. Kirkpatrick also reminded the board that the library has not yet received a final determination from civil service about whether the position does or does not fall under civil service's jurisdiction. C. Brancatella urged the library to keep records of the communication with civil service as the process moves forward to show that the library has worked to communicate and be in compliance.

M. Redmond said the interview committee would narrow down the list of finalists on Oct. 18. If a compelling resume arrives after that, it would still be considered.

#### *Capital Projects/Long Range Plan*

G. Kirkpatrick said the community survey is set to go out with the November/December Footnotes. It is step one in the long-range planning process. The responses, as well as those from the staff, will be collated for the board to review and to help identify the key issues to address.

#### *Fire alarm and security update*

The board discussed how they wanted to proceed with the fire alarm and security plans, as the contractor's estimate plus construction manager costs would put the project, as is, in the \$800,000 range as opposed to the original estimate of around \$250,000. G. Kirkpatrick said he received guidance from M/E that the library could drop some aspects of the original plan but not substantially modify it without going through SED approval again. The library could potentially break the project into different parts and bid them separately. M. Redmond asked if there was some way to get a review of the existing fire alarm system and see where it stands compared to current standards and codes, and see if there might be other options. She also said she is most concerned about the cost of the security system over any other part of the project and wondered if there were ways to trim it. G. Kirkpatrick noted that the library has not made a huge financial investment in the project yet, so board members were not locked into any decisions. He noted that the asbestos abatement in the hallway, which was part of the project scope, will have to be done at some time and is mandatory if they go ahead with the project. M. Redmond said the board was going to have to decide how to move forward. The board decided they would like to bring Beth from M/E in to further discuss the project at a special board meeting. G. Kirkpatrick would poll board members later to see which dates work best for them.

#### *HVAC project update*

There is nothing new to report. G. Kirkpatrick said he expects the project to be finalized by the end of the year.

#### *BCN-TV/studio makerspace update*

Nothing new to report.

#### *Other old business*

No other old business.

### 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**

The board noted that they would be going into executive session, so they offered a public participation opportunity before that.

Robert Khalife said he had been subject to employment-related background checks in the past, and that it is frequently brought up during the interview, when the candidate is asked to give permission for a background check if the process is to move forward. He said that as a candidate, he never had an issue with the process, and the background checks didn't take long.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On a MOTION by C. Brancatella with a SECOND by B. Sweeney the board adjourned to executive session at 8:01pm to discuss the employment performance of a specific individual.

On a MOTION by C. Brancatella with a SECOND by M. Kissinger, the board adjourned executive session at 8:33pm; no action was taken.

On a MOTION by M. Kissinger with a SECOND by L. Scoons, the board adjourned the regular meeting at 8:34pm.

Prepared by  
Kristen Roberts, recording secretary

Cosigned by  
M. Redmond, board president