

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
BETHLEHEM PUBLIC LIBRARY (BOARD ROOM)
Monday November 14, 2022

PRESENT: Caroline Brancatella (virtual)
Mark Kissinger
Harmeet Narang (virtual)
Sarah Patterson
Lisa Scoons
Michelle Walsh
Charmaine Wijeyesinghe
Sharon Whiting, library treasurer

Geoffrey Kirkpatrick, director
Kristen Roberts, recording secretary

EXCUSED:

GUESTS: Tanya Choppy, accounts clerk
Chris McGinty, assistant director
Phil Berardi, head of Circulation and Technical Services
Heather Lewis, auditor with Marvin and Co.

President M. Kissinger called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation at this time.

AUDIT PRESENTATION

S. Whiting introduced H. Lewis from Marvin and Co. who discussed the auditors' draft financial statements, which she noted offered an unmodified opinion, the highest level of assurance that an organization can be given. She said the financial statements now have a new line for investments that represents the library's T-bill investments. There's also a new footnote for cash and investments that gives more information about T-bills and other allowed investments.

H. Lewis noted that in the required supplemental information pages of the draft, our proportionate share of the net pension is showing as an asset for the first time since it has been part of the reporting. She also noted that retiree health insurance shows a \$600,000 decrease in liability, but said those are actuarial calculated assumptions that can change from year to year based on a number of factors and do not impact the library's overall financial position.

H. Narang asked if the library could include a note about the pension fund with the audit because it did swing from a liability to an asset. M. Kissinger asked if the library saw any benefit from it showing as an asset. S. Whiting reiterated that it doesn't affect the library's budget, but there were some savings in retirement contributions. G. Kirkpatrick said that the number of people on individual retirement tiers can also affect that amount.

C. Wijeyesinghe asked about the capital projects fund appearing in last year's financial statements. S. Whiting said that it represented the last bit of grant money received for the HVAC project. She noted that if there were to be a new building project, those expenses would appear in that column as well.

On a MOTION by S. Patterson with a SECOND by C. Wijeyesinghe, the board unanimously accepted the draft audit report as presented.

MINUTES

Minutes of the 17 October 2022 board meeting were approved unanimously on a MOTION by M. Walsh with a SECOND by S. Patterson.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Treasurer's update

The board noted S. Whiting's treasurer's report. Additional items:

- S. Whiting said the library's finances were consistent with the prior year at this time.
- The capital expenditures line includes the purchase of the 3D printer, which was paid for using the Krakower Storch Technology Fund.
- M. Kissinger asked if the library still received PEG money. G. Kirkpatrick said PEG money was used to purchase the cameras in the Board and Community rooms for hybrid meetings. PEG money was also used to purchase laptops with video editing software.
- S. Patterson asked for clarification on how the library receives its tax revenue. S. Whiting said the money comes through the school district, with the majority received in October and November after property taxes are due.
- S. Whiting updated the board on the library's T-bill and CD investments and noted that with the higher interest rates, the library stood to earn total interest income of around \$70,000 this year.

On a MOTION by C. Wijeyesinghe with a SECOND by M. Walsh, the board unanimously approved the Financial Statement dated 31 October 2022 (Checks disbursed in October 2022 based on pre-approval \$28,888.53; Checks disbursed in October 2022 relating to payroll \$194,442.90; Checks being submitted for approval \$61,596.94; CapProject Fund/Hand-Drawn Checks \$0; Total: \$284,928.37).

PERSONNEL REPORT

G. Kirkpatrick said the previously approved confidential secretary position had been filled, and the employee would begin the following Monday. He said he was requesting a part-time Librarian 1 position so he could potentially reach more candidates with experience with children.

On a MOTION by L. Scoons with a SECOND by S. Patterson, the board unanimously approved new hires/changes for the following positions:

- Librarian I, part-time, permanent, 20 hours/week, \$28.41/hour or per contract

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

- Outreach events are becoming more popular, and participating in events like Trunk or Treat are a great way to expose people to the library who might not have otherwise had that interaction.
- G. Kirkpatrick said his focus this fall and winter is to increase early literacy programs for children. G. Kirkpatrick said that it was a relatively small collection focused on a pretty narrow age range, so that percentage is fairly typical.
- G. Kirkpatrick said that circulation is very near pre-pandemic levels, but door count continues to lag. M. Walsh said this was concerning to her and asked why there was so little foot traffic. G. Kirkpatrick said there has been a dip in program attendance and meeting attendance, as well as after-school tutoring. He said the library continues to keep an eye on those numbers to determine if they might bounce back or are the new normal. He said that is a reason why outreach is so important, so that the library isn't just waiting for potential users to come on their own. M. Kissinger asked if there was a way to get library welcome packets into more hands.
- M. Kissinger asked whether there were still people who would just come to the library to hang out and socialize. G. Kirkpatrick said those numbers are still down. C. Brancatella noted that some parents might also be staying away out of concern about RSV infections, which are spreading rampantly among toddlers.
- G. Kirkpatrick said that he's received some feedback about the building and would be compiling it for board review as more come in. He said generally the responses have been positive.

UHLS REPORT

L. Scoons said Upper Hudson had a short meeting approving the 2023 budget and would not be meeting in December. M. Walsh asked if there was a plan for an in-person annual event. L. Scoons said it hasn't been discussed yet, but she imagines there will be some hybrid component at least.

NEW BUSINESS

Building committee

G. Kirkpatrick said that a building walkthrough had been done by the architects and an engineer, and it was interesting to get the engineer's perspective. M. Walsh asked if the architects were still planning on delivering a report by Dec. 2. G. Kirkpatrick said that as far as he's heard, that date is still a go.

Contract negotiation engagement letter and attorney authorization

G. Kirkpatrick said that two changes have been made to the version of the engagement letter for additional attorneys in the packet. 1.) The attorneys will alert the library in writing if there are any fee changes. 2.) There will not be a late penalty.

On a MOTION by C. Brancatella with a SECOND by C. Wijeyesinghe, the board unanimously accepted the terms in the engagement letter from Bond, Schoneneck and King with the above revisions outlining the lawyers' hourly rates for work related to collective bargaining and negotiations. They also approved adding Bond, Schoneneck and King to their list of authorized attorneys.

Collection Development and Maintenance Policy

The updated policy has been reviewed by the policy committee and contains suggestions made by staffers who had undergone continuing education about challenges to the collection. Much of what was removed from the original version included extraneous and unnecessary details. C. Wijeyesinghe noted that some highlighted text had made it into the draft and should be struck from the final version. S. Patterson said number the policy was not necessary as there was only one item listed.

On a MOTION by C. Wijeyesinghe with a SECOND by L. Scoons, the board unanimously voted to accept the updates made to the library's Collection Development and Maintenance Policy as presented.

NYS&L Retirement System invoice

G. Kirkpatrick said that the invoice offers a small discount if it is paid before Dec. 15. S. Whiting noted that the amount is also about \$5,000 less than what was budgeted for.

On a MOTION by M. Walsh with a SECOND by S. Patterson, the board voted unanimously to approve pre-payment of the NYS&L Retirement System invoice in the amount of \$232,558.

Hildene museum pass invoice

G. Kirkpatrick said the pass renewal came in after the bill schedule was prepared but he was requesting an off-cycle check to keep it from expiring.

On a MOTION by M. Kissinger and a SECOND by M. Walsh, the board voted unanimously to approve an off-cycle payment of \$200 to the Hildene Museum to renew two passes for the coming year.

Other new business

There was no other new business at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

Snowplow contract

G. Kirkpatrick said the previous snow contractor had given the library a great deal. The library received eight different quotes, and most of them were at least double the cost of the previous contractor. He said the library decided on Young Landscapes LLC who were responsive and quoted the lowest amount to cover salting and plowing of the lot. The maintenance department clears the sidewalks. The flat-fee contract, which the board had voted to allow G. Kirkpatrick to enter in to, is in the amount of \$12,500.

Personnel committee - report

C. Wijeyesinghe said the evaluation process is proceeding, and the committee will meet to determine how to get trustee input. G. Kirkpatrick's goals are ready to share. M. Kissinger thanked everyone for filling out the questionnaire.

Other old business

The board discussed providing dessert for Staff Development Day, and asked G. Kirkpatrick to send out a reminder as it got closer.

FUTURE BUSINESS

There was no future business at this time.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

ADJOURNMENT

On a MOTION by C. Wijeyesinghe with a SECOND by L. Scoons, the board adjourned the regular meeting at 7:16pm.

Prepared by
Kristen Roberts, recording secretary

Cosigned by
M. Kissinger, board president