

## Fort Madison Public Library Board of Trustees

Minutes of the regular meeting held February 21, 2019, 5:30 p.m. in the Sheaffer Memorial Meeting Room at the Fort Madison Public Library.

Present: Don Edwards, Candice Smrt, Ron Welder, Anne Heitz, Samantha Lang and Fred Winke.

Meeting was called to order with a quorum present at 5:30.

A motion to excuse the absences of Sharon Groene and Phil Hecht was made by Lang; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Heitz. Carried unanimously.

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Heitz; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Winke. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments: There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes: The director was asked to make the watermark lighter in future and she will look into this. Motion to approve the minutes of the January 17 meeting – Edwards; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Smrt. Carried unanimously.

Correspondence: There was no correspondence.

### Approval of Bills:

Approval of February 2019 Bills: Trustees Edwards and Welder asked about the Hellige bill. This is for a series of five lawn treatments between early spring and late fall to keep the lawn healthy and minimize weeds.

Motion to approve the February 2019 bills – Edwards; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Smrt. Carried unanimously.

Director's Report: In addition to the attached reports, Trustee Edwards asked about the budget discussion at the Tuesday city council meeting. The director reported that the council approved a budget to go to a public hearing on March 5 that did not include significant cuts to the departments apart from what was in the budget that we submitted and does include funding for the Amtrak platform. The council did talk about future work sessions looking at, and finding ways to improve, the city's long-term financial situation but those have not been set yet. Trustee Lang commented that she's been enjoying the unboxing videos on Facebook.

### New Business:

#### Scheduling and Staffing

##### Change Saturday hours to 9:15 to 1:00 effective on a date to be determined by the library board

The director is recommending this change because of two concerns. First is the safety of library employees. Currently, being open from 10-3, we have full-time employees in the library by themselves before we open getting computers and other equipment turned on. Secondly, as mentioned in the director's report, this will help address the issue of part-time employees working more than 26 hours per week. All Saturday employees would be scheduled from 9-1 and the library would open at 9:15. With just two people working, the director thinks we also need to consider the ability to take a full lunch break if we want to be open later in the day on Saturday.

Trustee Welder inquired if the lunch break was contractual. The director replied that it is not but thinks the board needs to consider that there are certain medical conditions employees might have that could make working more than four hours without a meal break an issue and needs to be considered for future scheduling. Trustee Smrt inquired about the current hours and the director replied that they are 10-3. Trustee Welder stated that he understands why we would do this but he hates to see hours on Saturday being cut back. He inquired

about what other options, if any, there might be. The director replied that, with just two people working and our current hours, we could possibly rearrange the schedule during the week for part-time employees and have a paid lunch break on Saturdays since the second person needs to be available and they can't be asked to be available unless it is a paid lunch break. At a minimum, we would need to cut back one half hour in order to get things turned on and ready for patrons and we need two people in the building doing that. This option would put greater stress on the schedule during the week. Right now, part-time people have one day each week they work four hours and they get that day off if they are scheduled to work on Saturday. If we look into this option, we would need to have them take off a day that they work five hours. Trustee Heitz inquired about Saturday traffic and the director replied that it varies widely and is impacted by too many variables to be able to pin it down to just one. The director replied that it does often seem to slow down later in the afternoons but even that is not a constant. Trustee Welder asked the director's opinion on if it was better to open a little earlier and close a little earlier than open later and stay open later. The director replied that staying open later would still require creating a policy for a paid lunch. Trustee Welder asked if based on everything this was the director's best recommendation and she said yes, it was but she then inquired if there would be an objection to a paid lunch for employees on Saturday. Library employees would be on the premises and could be available in case of emergency. The director could go back and look at the schedule to see what affect that would have during the week. If this schedule is an option, the director would probably recommend 10:30-3:00 to give time for employees to get things turned on and ready for patrons in the morning. Trustee Welder asked if there was a motion to table this item until the March meeting.

Motion to table discussion of library hours on Saturday until March 21 – Heitz; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Smrt. Carried unanimously.

#### Discuss library staffing levels in light of recent city budget discussions

This is not an action item but just for discussion. As noted in the newspaper after the February 5 city council budget work session, there was discussion of the library staffing levels compared to the parks department. The council member who proposed reducing library employees at the February 5<sup>th</sup> meeting did bring it up again at the council meeting on February 19<sup>th</sup>. The library director first wanted to look at library staffing levels compared to libraries of similar sizes, circulation and budgets. Looking at the chart the library seems to fall in the middle, or even the low end, depending on which criteria you are using for comparison. This is for the board's information in case members of the public should inquire about staffing levels.

Another thing that came up unexpectedly at the February 19<sup>th</sup> meeting was one of the councilmen asked about the possibility of combining the city tourism/marketing position with a part-time library position, should a position open up through retirement, creating a full-time position working part-time for the library and part-time for the city. After talking with the city manager there are questions about that being a significant savings. There were also concerns about the distance between the two different locations. Would the marketing position be able to work effectively with the city manager from 10 blocks away? This is not currently in the budget that is going to the public hearing. The director just wanted to let the board know that it had come up.

One other thing that was mentioned and the director wanted to discuss was reducing library staffing levels through attrition. First, the director wants to clarify that she has not received official notification from any employees with a specific retirement date. Trustee Welder commented that he's not sure you can even ask someone if they are planning to retire. That said, the director did want to discuss with the board, and at least starting to think about, possible scenarios, since other people may be talking about it now, and in the future. These are not options that the director is proposing, or even recommending, at this point, but it is information the board should have in light of current budget realities.

First, the board should probably be thinking about the question, if a part-time employee resigns, do we replace them? The director has looked at scheduling implications for that. When the director was looking at those

implications, it was considering a four hour Saturday. If the library did have a part-time employee resign, we could keep most of our current hours but would need to reduce to a 4 hour Saturday and would have to close at 6 instead of 7 on Thursdays. Trustee Welder wanted to clarify that if the library loses staff, we will have to lose hours. The director agreed that this is the case and this would be the least we would lose would be two hours. At this point, the library is open as many hours as it can be with the employees it has. The other scenario is if a full-time employee resigns, one option that was mentioned, at one point, was replacing them with somebody at 35 hours instead of 40 hours. The director looked into that and the salary savings seemed minimal. Trustee Winke inquired about how many part-time employees the library has. The director replied that we currently have 4 part-time employees and 3 full-time employees. If we don't replace a full-time employee, we start to have concerns about having two people in the building at all times without having to reschedule part-time employees if a full-time employee takes a vacation and the director doesn't think that's entirely fair for the part-time employees because you make plans based on what your work schedule is. Trustee Welder agrees that there should never be fewer than two people in the building at a time.

Trustee Lang inquired about the discrepancy between library employees and parks employees. The director replied that the parks department has two full-time and two part-time employees. Several trustees expressed the opinion that comparing staffing between these two departments was like comparing apples and oranges. The director agreed saying that they have different duties. The parks employees perform very important services but, in addition to maintaining the parks, they aren't working directly with the public helping them use the parks, teaching them the best way to play games in the parks, to reserve park facilities for them. Trustee Welder added that, for all we know the parks department may need more employees. The director concluded by telling the board that the budget going to the public hearing on March 5 has 3 full-time employees and 4 part-time employees at the library. However, the city's financial situation is not improving and we are getting to the point where expenditures are exceeding revenues. If this situation doesn't change, library staffing levels may be something that the board needs to look at in the future. This discussion also provides the board with information if any community residents ask about what's been going on at city council meetings. Trustee Heitz inquired about a deadline on making a decision on this. The director replied that there isn't one but, if a library employee retires in the next year, she will probably come to the board to discuss this again before starting to look for a replacement.

Continue to offer Kanopy (streaming movie service) to Open Access patrons:

This is something the director hadn't considered when we first subscribed to this service that is gaining in popularity.

The library participates in the State Library Open Access program. Among other things, this program allows almost anyone in Iowa to get a library card at almost any library. As part of our agreement, we are required to check out, and renew, physical items available in our collection with the same policies as local patrons. We do get some reimbursement for checking out books to Open Access patrons based on a formula from the State Library that takes into consideration our Tier level.

Open Access does allow libraries to restrict some of the services they offer to Open Access patrons. For example, we do not offer Interlibrary Loan services to Open Access patrons because we want them to go through their home library for that service primarily because of the postage cost associated with it and inter-library loan transactions are not counted as transactions for reimbursement from the State Library.

Electronic and downloadable materials also do not qualify as eligible transactions for reimbursement from the State Library, either, and the Open Access agreement does not require libraries to offer electronic materials to Open Access patrons. Currently, the only electronic resource we restrict access to is Bridges, the e-books and e-audiobooks, and this is because of our contract with the company that provides those.

With Kanopy, we pay per video watched and we are currently the only library in the area offering Kanopy and the director is concerned that we may get increasing use from Open Access patrons, especially from other cities in Lee County; it could adversely affect our budget.

Since starting the program, we have had 10 patrons use it and one is Open Access (though the director knows of 2 other Open Access patrons who have asked about it).

The director wanted to talk about this before we have many people using this and then we cut them off and, if open access patrons like this, we should encourage them to talk to their home library about adding the service.

Motion to limit Kanopy movies to residents of the Fort Madison Public Library legal service area, which would include the city limits of Fort Madison and Rural Lee County – Smrt; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Heitz.

#### State Library Accreditation Report:

Every three years we have to send in a report to the State Library about how we are meeting their standards. We have gone over the standards at previous board meetings. The director has it almost complete for this year, she just needs Trustee Welder's signature. We are still at Tier 1 and cannot move up a tier until we can open the library more hours, which we can't do without more people. If that changes, we can reapply to move up a tier at any time but, if nothing changes, we are only required to update this every 3 years. We are doing really well. We are solidly at tier 1 and are two required standards away from being fully accredited.

Trustee Education – Chapters 1 and 2 of the Trustees Handbook: This is an introduction to the boards roles and responsibilities.

As Chapter 1 says, "Libraries add to the quality of life" and, "offer books and so much more". The director made a handout for a report writing an article about the library's services and it ended up being two pages, which didn't include a full listing of our database options; we really do a lot. The director is a department head and is responsible for the day to day management of the library. The board is responsible for larger aspects of the library such as adopting policies, hiring and evaluating the director and adopting the budget. The director will develop a better procedure for this next year.

The public library is established by an ordinance adopted by the city council and is available online if you want to read it. The director will e-mail the board a link to this. The two sentences included in this chapter about the board's control over library funds are included in our city ordinance. Finally, the board is responsible for approving expenditure of funds. This chapter states that "invoices and bills are approved by the board and signed by the designated board authorities". The city's checks are signed by the mayor and city clerk but are not sent out until approved by the library board.

The board has control over how the money that is allocated by the city council is spent. So, once the city council says, "you have this amount of money", that's when the board can determine how we are spending on line items and approve any amendments that go to the council. The city finance clerk gets a record of all donations, those are kept in the separate trust funds, and those are accounted for by the city. The city finance clerk processes all checks to pay bills and then sends us reports about the general fund and the trust funds so we can keep track of that money and how it is spent.

Trustee Heitz inquired about the meaning of "once the library receives funding from any source, it becomes public funding." She wanted to know if this means that it goes to the city. The director replied that no, it does not go to the city. "Public funding" means that it has to be spent and accounted for according to the state laws governing public funds. There are rules about how that can be invested and how it has to be accounted for and audited. That is why we pass those on to the city finance clerk so that they are kept in the right types of

investment accounts and accounted for according to law. Trustee Heitz wanted to clarify that if someone donates a sum of money to the library for landscaping what happens to that. The director replied that we control how that is spent. We can't go out and buy stock or CD investments with that but we can earmark it for maintaining the library landscaping. All that public funds means is that there are rules about investing and accounting for it, the city can't take it and use it for parks or fire or city administration.

Chapter 2 talks about the five primary roles of public library boards. In the director's opinion, the first one, Advocating for the library in the community, can be the hardest because it requires more than just showing up at a meeting once a month. Some trustees disagreed that this was difficult.

The board is responsible for planning for the future of the library and we will need to begin a new strategic plan this coming year. Trustee Heitz inquired about this, especially "planning is deciding what is going to happen with library services over the next few years", and asked how do you get a crystal ball? She stated that she feels this is a whole lot more difficult than the first one. The director replied that a lot of this is covered by the strategic plan, looking at our community and what it has, what it needs and the direction we want the library to go. It might not be specific, rather more general, such as we know that poverty is an issue in our area and so one thing the library might want to pick to work on for the next few years is developing financial literacy programming. The director would then go out and find ways to develop financial literacy programming.

The director wanted to commend the board for doing a really good job on the next three roles  
The board monitors and evaluates the overall effectiveness of the library. The board adopts library policies and the board hires and evaluates the library director.

Motion to adjourn the meeting until March 21, at 5:30 pm – Heitz; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Winke. The motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.