

Fort Madison Public Library Board of Trustees

Minutes of the regular meeting held October 17, 2019, 5:30 p.m. in the Sheaffer Memorial Meeting Room at the Fort Madison Public Library.

Present: Sharon Groene, Jane Bartlett, Candice Smrt, Ron Welder, Anne Heitz, Phil Hecht and Kathy Burkhardt.

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

A motion to excuse the absence of Kathy Burkhardt was made by Welder; 2nd – Smrt. The motion carried unanimously. *[NB: Kathy Burkhardt arrived during the approval of the bills and was present for the remainder of the meeting]*

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Heitz; 2nd – Bartlett. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments: There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes of the September 19 meeting – Hecht; 2nd – Smrt. Carried unanimously.

Correspondence: No Correspondence.

Approval of October 2019 Bills: Trustee Bartlett asked what DEMCO was. The director replied that DEMCO is a library supply company and VistaFoil is a heavy duty contact paper used mainly for protecting book covers. This is usually purchased as needed. The director isn't sure how long this will last us.

Motion to approve the October 2019 bills – Smrt; 2nd –Heitz. Carried unanimously.

Trustee Groene inquired about the expenditures for “Rents and Leases” and “Contract Work”, noting that almost all of the budget for “Rents and Leases” had been spent and half of the budget for “Contract Work” had been spent. The director replied that these are two budget lines that include large, one-time annual expenses and, looking at the entire budget spending, we are about where we should be for the year at 26.11%.

Director's Report: In addition to the attached reports, the director reported that she did talk to Darrin Eid (recommended by Ron Welder) about updating the landscaping around the front of the building. Trustee Groene mentioned that the conference looked interesting. The director agreed that it was very informative and she got some good ideas, especially the session on the escape rooms. The director plans to pass this information on to the Crafting T.A.L.E.S. group. Trustee Heitz asked about what the library was doing on Beggar's Night. The director replied that there will be a haunted house that night. 3:30-5:00 will be family friendly with lights on and 5:30-7:00 will be scarier with the lights off. The director also needed to add, under operations, that the library's server software will no longer be supported by Microsoft as of January. The original estimate from J&S was about \$7,000 but they recommended looking into getting the software from TechSoup which brings the cost down to about \$4,000. We will be using some of the \$7,000 in the Contract Work budget line for this and there is also some technology money in the Lee County Joint Projects Fund that can help cover this cost.

Unfinished Business

Review Operations Policy

The director went through the proposed changes to the policy.

First, under “Registration” the policy will change the age for getting a library card without a parent signing for

it to 14. Patrons 14-18 years old will still need to have a photo ID and proof of address. Trustee Burkhardt asked who would be responsible for the fines. The director replied that, if they sign up for their own card, they would be responsible for their own fines and fees.

Under “Lost or Forgotten Cards” the last sentence about notifying the library about lost cards was moved up from procedures.

Under “Reserve and Interlibrary Loan” there is a change with the courier service. Since we won’t be sending items through the postal service, we won’t need to insure items anymore unless they are out-of-state. The change in wording in the policy reflects this. This section also clarifies that patrons cannot have any outstanding fines, fees or overdue items, even if their card is not blocked, to place or check out interlibrary loan requests. Trustee Heitz inquired about the courier service. This is a service that will be offered by the State Library indefinitely and the library will have pick-up/drop-off of interlibrary loan materials once a week on Monday afternoons. The director mentioned that it may slow down how quickly we get items in but this is just their starting point and they may amend the schedule once they see where the heavy traffic is. Trustee Heitz inquired about if someone needed something sooner than a week could pay the postage to get it here, thinking about people who might be doing research. The director replied that she isn’t sure because the state, currently, only allows us to charge \$2 for interlibrary loan transactions which wouldn’t cover the cost of postage. The director will look into this. There is an informational session the last week of October and she will add this to the questions to ask. Trustee Burkhardt asked about how many books the library received in interlibrary loan items. The director replied that it looks like between about 40 and 100 per month and the books come from all over the state.

Under “Fees” the director recommends changing the policy to block all related parties on a card when the fees and length of time items have been overdue reach a level to trigger a block. Previously, we have only blocked the parent’s card, not all the children. The new system is set up to block all related cards and changing this policy will make it easier for library staff working on the circulation desk. This will also help to limit the total amount of fines a family can end up owing before they are blocked. Related parties would be the adult who signs up children 13 and younger and the children they are responsible for. If a child 14 years or older signs up for a library card on their own, they are not considered part of the related cards, even if their parents and siblings have cards. The library would also like to continue offering payment plans for patrons with large fines. This has helped us recover fines we might not have gotten otherwise while also helping patrons maintain access to library services.

Under “Overdue Materials” we can now send e-mail notices shortly after a book is due, rather than waiting a week to send a letter. This change in wording reflects options in the new system.

Under “Damaged Materials”, the director would like to change the wording from “the patron must pay” to “the patron may have to pay”. This gives us the leniency to not charge patrons for older damaged materials or damaged materials that we probably wouldn’t be replacing.

The only other change was adding “Workplace Violence” and “Active Shooter” to emergency procedures.

Trustee Welder inquired if we had done active shooter training. The director replied that there was a training a couple of years ago and there are only two new employees since then. Trustee Burkhardt recommended looking into a new active shooter training session. The director will check with the police department about what they recommend. The director mentioned that she has gone over these procedures with all the employees and they do review emergency procedures annually in the spring when the emergency alert system tests the sirens.

Trustee Burkhardt had a question about the sex offender policy, inquiring if the library staff check the sex

offender registry periodically. The director replied that we don't. It is not the library's responsibility to enforce the state law prohibiting the presence of sex offenders in the library, it is the sheriff's responsibility to enforce this. Trustee Burkhardt asked how they could enforce it if library employees don't know who is in the library. The director pointed out that the primary purpose of the library policy is what to do if a sex offender requests permission to be on library property – which the state code says is the purview of the director to give the permission. The director didn't want to be the one solely responsible for making that decision, if it came up, so the policy puts that responsibility on the library board, as a whole, taking the responsibility off of one person. The advice that the director has received from the State Law Library is that it is not the library, or the librarian's, responsibility to enforce this law and there can be significant legal liabilities if we try to, especially if we try to enforce it on someone who is not, in fact, prohibited from being on library property. Trustee Welder also wondered if we should be doing due diligence in case something happens. Trustee Burkhardt wondered why we don't have a notebook with pictures of people on the registry? The director shared the advice she has gotten from the State Library, "Iowa Code chapter 692A makes it abundantly clear that offenders are entirely responsible for compliance with the exclusionary zones statute and local sheriffs are responsible for monitoring that compliance. Librarians have absolutely NO responsibility or role in keeping track of local sex offenders and ensuring they stay out of libraries. By law, librarians, library boards and cities cannot be held liable for the presence of prohibited offenders in libraries. The terms of offenders' probation plans require them to stay out or to ask the director for permission to come in. While it may be easy for librarians in tiny communities to monitor prohibited local sex offenders and confront them if they visit their libraries, imagine the impossibility of doing that in Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, Davenport, Waterloo or any other larger city, which is why it's not something with which librarians need to concern themselves, legally. There is also some risk involved in depending upon the Iowa Sex Offender Registry for infallible information, which is what the website's disclaimer asserts. It is possible for cities to be sued if a librarian creates intended or unintended consequences by acting outside the scope of his or her professional duties, so please leave the enforcement of Iowa's sex offender statutes to local sheriffs." The director has told employees that, if someone reports a sex offender in the library, to tell the patron to alert the sheriff's office, so we're not telling employees to ignore a situation that may come up.

Motion to approve the recommended changes to the operations policy - Hecht; 2nd – Smrt. Carried unanimously.

New Business

Quad Cities Community Foundation

The Library has a fund of about \$40,000 with the Community Foundation of North Lee County that was set up many years ago by the Library Foundation, an organization that has since disbanded. We got some very generous anonymous donations that helped us get started. We get about \$1,800 a year in income from this, and we will continue to get that regardless of the decision the Library Board makes.

The Community Foundation of North Lee County (CFNLC) is severing their ties with the Quad Cities Community Foundation (QCCF) because CFNLC has become dissatisfied with the fund management. CFNLC feel that they are getting fewer benefits than they were and the unallocated funds that the QCCF has been receiving seem to have been being used primarily for organizations in the Quad Cities area. CFNLC would like to have the opportunity to take similar action locally in Lee County by affiliating with the Keokuk Area Community Foundation. At the informational sessions the director went to, the CFNLC said that they were also planning to become more active in helping organizations grow their funds.

The director did double check and, when the Library Foundation disbanded, the authority to manage this fund was passed on to the Library Board so the board does have the authority to make this decision according to what I've been told.

Motion to approve the transfer of the Fort Madison Public Library Foundation Endowment from the Quad

Cities Community Foundation to the Keokuk Area Community Foundation - Heitz; 2nd – Smrt. Carried unanimously.

Motion to authorize library board president Sharon Groene and vice-president Ron Welder to sign the authorization form – Heitz; 2nd – Smrt. Carried unanimously.

Library Director Evaluation

Trustees Groene and Hecht met to go over the board's individual evaluations and developed one joint evaluation form for the director. Trustee Groene will go over this information with the director after the meeting and other board members can ask to view it.

Trustee Education –Chapter 11: Working with the Library Director and Chapter 12: Hiring a Library Director

Chapter 11 – Working with the library director. The board's main job is monitoring the director's effectiveness in providing library services to the community and the director appreciates the board's feedback. The board sets the parameters of how the library operates and then the director carries out the day-to-day functions. The policy review we did tonight is a good example of this. The board has set the overall policy and then the director goes in and creates the specific procedures that library staff follow to implement that policy. The board has a right, and responsibility, to request from the director information needed to fulfill their governing duties and the director asked the board to let her know if there is anything they need. Trustee Groene said she appreciated the chart was included. The director agreed and also mentioned that one thing she noticed was that the advocacy responsibilities were identical – it's everybody's job.

Chapter 12 – Hiring a Library Director. The Director is certified at Level VI and has the continuing education hours to maintain this. The other thing the director wanted to talk about was salary. It is the director's opinion that the director's salary is currently where it should be. The director appreciates this, and it also places a (far in the) future board hiring a (far in the) future director in a good position to find a highly qualified person. When comparing salaries, as the document mentions, you don't just want to compare to other libraries in the area but also to comparable positions within the city. The director hasn't done a salary comparison for other positions because they are currently unionized and the union sets salaries. If this changes, the board and the director would want to review those salaries to make sure they are comparable to other city positions.

The director mentioned that the city council will be having a budget discussion work session on November 12. This is also the same night as Cook the Book so the director won't be able to get there right at 5:30, she does plan to watch the recording of what she misses. No action can be taken at this meeting but the director was wondering if a board member might be available to attend until she gets there and at least take notes if there is something that needs to be addressed that evening. A couple of board members indicated they might be able to make it. The director will send out a reminder e-mail the week before.

Several board members mentioned that they wouldn't be able to attend the next meeting on November 21. The board decided to move the November meeting up a week to November 14 to help make sure there is a quorum.

Motion to adjourn the meeting until November 14– Welder; 2nd – Smrt. The motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.

[Stopped listening at 59:00 – double check there isn't anything important to listen to at the end]