

## Fort Madison Public Library Board of Trustees

Minutes of the regular meeting held November 14, 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 and Kathy Burkhardt.

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

A motion to excuse the absence of Phil Hecht was made by Smrt; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Welder. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Public Comments: There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes of the October 17 meeting – Welder; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Smrt. Carried unanimously.

Correspondence: No Correspondence.

Approval of November 2019 Bills: Trustee Bartlett inquired about the Mediacom bill, this is for our four phone lines and internet access.

Motion to approve the October 2019 bills – Burkhardt; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Bartlett. Carried unanimously.

Director's Report: In addition to the attached reports, the director updated the board on IA Shares. The totes and bags arrived on Monday and we will begin shipping things out next Monday. Trustee Heitz inquired how this would affect the public. The director replied that she will start tracking how long it takes us to receive ILL requests to see if the new system causes a significant delay in receiving materials. The ILL system does have a way to track the length of time between an item request and it arriving at the library. The State Library is also monitoring this system closely. They anticipate about a three-month break-in period while the bugs are worked out of the system.

### New Business

#### Budget Discussion, including report from the city's workshop session

The city council budget work session was postponed until next Tuesday, after the city council meeting. The city manager is presenting to the council a very realistic picture of the general funds financial situation to convey how serious the situation is and what it will take to remedy that. At this point, he did send out some information to the council that includes a couple of options, that even he says are not viable, to show the city council the severity of the financial shortfall the general fund will be facing in the next two years if a drastic change is not made. As far as the director knows, at this point, nobody is recommending significant cuts to the library in case that is reported in the news media. The director explained that the library is funded by property and sales tax. The state legislature has capped property tax and sales tax several decades ago and then about three years ago they made significant cuts to commercial property tax rates. The state has been backfilling some of the money cities lost from commercial property tax but that may not continue in the future. So what has happened, is the city's revenues have remained relatively flat while the cost of providing services has gone up. The director does plan to remind the city manager about the \$.27 library levy that is an option. This is an option in state code to add a levy of up to \$.27 per \$1000 of valuation to support library services. It has to be voted on at a city election, which are held in odd numbered years, and the next opportunity is 2021. Trustee Welder stated that his

problem with that is that we might see a budget decrease on the other side, with no net gain. He has seen this happen where a library gets a bequest and then it is used for operating expenses. The director understands this, and it is a concern, but there are ways to word what the citizens vote for that can minimize that. The city does have a similar levy for public safety and the way it was worded, the city has stuck to using the money they way it was promised to augment public safety services.

Trustee Education –Chapter 15: Advocating for the Library and Chapter 16: Monitoring and Evaluating Library Success

**Chapter 16 – Monitoring and Evaluating Library Success.** The director really likes the sentence, “you should not be in the library every day monitoring the kind of service provided by the library staff.” There are library’s where this has been an issue and the director really appreciates that the Fort Madison Library board is active and involved but avoids micromanaging. The board also does a good job of following the budget, though, looking over this, the director thinks we may need to start paying a little closer attention to the revenue side of things, though we don’t have as much control over that.

**Chapter 15 – Advocating for the Library.** This is one of the five primary duties of the library board. It is also important for the board to speak with one voice and, also, for the director to share in that voice. The director also wanted to remind the board that they do represent the community and can be seen as less biased when speaking up for the library and can have a powerful voice when asking for support for the library.

Motion to adjourn the meeting until January 16– Welder; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Smrt. The motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.