

## Fort Madison Public Library Board of Trustees

Minutes of the regular meeting held January 16, 2020, 5:30 p.m. in the Sheaffer Memorial Meeting Room at the Fort Madison Public Library.

Present: Sharon Groene, Jane Bartlett, Ron Welder, Anne Heitz, Tom Pollpeter, Mary Whitcomb and Bob Morawitz.

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

The meeting started with introductions for two new board members, Tom Pollpeter and Mary Whitcomb.

A motion to excuse the absences of Phil Hecht, Candice Smrt and Kathy Burkhardt was made by Welder; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Bartlett. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Public Comments: There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes of the November 14 meeting – Bartlett; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Heitz. Carried unanimously.

Correspondence: No Correspondence.

### Affirmation of December 2019 Bills:

Jane Bartlett asked questions about the fund and bills sheet mentioning that the electric bill wasn't included. The director forgot to ask that this be included on the bills sheet and will do so in February. In addition, a Minecraft purchase wasn't included because it was purchased with the city's credit card and there can be a delay in those items being posted to the general fund expenditures.

Motion to affirm the approval of the December 2019 bills – Heitz; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Bartlett. Carried unanimously.

Approval of January 2020 2019 Bills: The director explained that the January bills are more than December due to two large one-time expenses, the new server and a new motor for one of the automatic doors.

Motion to approve the January 2020 bills – Bartlett; 2<sup>nd</sup> –Welder. Carried unanimously.

Director's Report: In addition to the attached report, Trustee Bartlett asked about the staff meetings. The director explained that staff meetings are an opportunity to share information and/or receive feedback from all employees at once. Trustee Heitz inquired about if there were any issues with people experiencing homelessness or people using the library all day. The director hasn't seen any major problems, though there are patrons who use the library for most of the day. There was also one instance where a patron felt they received different treatment because they were staying in a shelter, which they weren't because library staff didn't know they were staying in a shelter until they told us. Trustee Bartlett also inquired about the Wi-Fi statistics and what we are currently counting is the number of times a device connects. We will be using a new system to track this and that number may be going down. Trustee Welder strongly

### New Business

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

The city's first budget workshop session was on Tuesday night and it received good coverage in the Daily Democrat newspaper. The discussion primarily centered on finding new revenue streams as well as the ramifications of adding an investigator to the police department. The police department and streets were the two departments that received the most scrutiny. Last Friday, the director did get the proposed budget back that the city manager sent to the council which is almost exactly the same as what the director sent in with a couple of slight increases. The director hasn't heard anything from the city council about wanting to make significant cuts. Councilman Morawitz did talk to the city manager about exploring the library levy, which would have to go be on a ballot at a city election if the council wanted to pursue that.

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

**Chapter 17 – Intellectual Freedom.** The director began by defining intellectual freedom as “the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question cause or movement may be explored.” That is the principle behind what the library does and the library's collection development policy of trying to provide a balanced collection that meets the needs of the community.

A corollary to this is privacy and that is why library records are confidential. The library's new automation system does allow people to keep track of their circulation history, if they choose to. This is an opt-in system so that patrons are aware that the library is tracking their circulation history.

In an interesting current events twist, a senator in Missouri has proposed a bill that to create parental library review boards. He argues that the measure would protect minors in public library by making it illegal for minors to access age inappropriate sexual material. The parental library review board would be made up of five locally elected community members who would determine what content would be appropriate. It does include a fine and possible jail time for librarians who willfully violate the policy. This is where the library bill of rights come into play. Librarians do not act “in loco parentis” (in place of the parent) and, while they try to provide a safe facility, they cannot control what children are taking out of the library, that is the parent's responsibility. Trustee Welder also pointed out that the proposed Missouri parental review board would not be allowed to include librarians or board of trustee members.

Which brings the discussion to challenge of library materials, which is part of intellectual freedom. The library does have a process and any completed complaint forms come to the library board for their consideration. “When a member of the community complains about an item in the library's collection, often they just want someone to listen to them and to take their concern seriously. A formal challenge may be averted if the library director takes the time to listen.” and the director has found this to be the case a couple of times when people have complained about books and, when given the option of filling out the form, they either say they don't want to or the form isn't brought back. By listening, you have a patron who is still using the library and you don't end up in the newspaper.

**Chapter 18 – Developing and Adopting Policies.** Policies should be developed, and not just written, and be reviewed regularly. The library has good policies and that have covered any situations that have come up, so far.

Motion to adjourn the meeting until February 20– Welder; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Bartlett. The motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.