

Fort Madison Public Library Board of Trustees

Minutes of the regular meeting held March 19, 2020, 5:30 p.m. in the Sheaffer Memorial Meeting Room at the Fort Madison Public Library.

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

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

A motion to excuse the absences Phil Hecht and Candice Smrt was made by Welder; 2nd – Heitz. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Public Comments: There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes of the February 20 – Welder; 2nd – Heitz. Carried unanimously.

Correspondence: No Correspondence.

Approval of March 2020 Bills: Trustee Bartlett asked about the amount of the cloud backup as it was significantly larger than February. That bill also included other phone and computer work provided by J&S. She also asked about the postage, wondering about how long that usually lasts. The director explained that she requested extra postage in case the library expanded its books by mail program due to Covid-19. Trustee Groene inquired about the Center Point Large Print, Recorded Books and WT Cox bills from the county fund, asking if these were annual expenses. The director said that they were. Trustee Welder recommended including an explanation of that, possibly just an asterisk after the bill amount, in case there were questions in the future.

Motion to approve the March 2020 bills – Whitcomb; 2nd –Pollpeter. Carried unanimously.

Director's Report: The director started by saying that a lot has changed since she typed up this report, especially under operations. The director has also decided to go ahead and cancel the Financial Literacy program for April. She plans to take what she has gathered and store it until the fall or next spring. The library is now closed through March 31 and city hall offices closed to the public today. We are currently waiting to see what direction comes from the government as to how to proceed from here. Employees are still coming in and working and getting caught up on projects and using the time productively.

New Business

Behavior Policy – Including discussion of cell phone restrictions

Library employees had expressed concern to the director about excessive and loud cell phone use in the library. The director did some research and libraries are about 50/50 split on allowing use of cell phones. The director doesn't have strong feelings one way, or the other, so would agree with the employees that cell phone use in the library should be limited. Kathy Burkhardt asked about people who answered a phone briefly to let someone know they are in the library and will call back later. The director said that this would not be a problem and patron's wouldn't be instructed not to do that. Patrons would still be allowed to use their phones silently in the library, such as texting, using the internet or playing games, the policy specifically prohibits talking.

Motion to approve amending the behavior policy with the following added restriction, "Talking on cell phones

with the exception of the lobby, Sheaffer Meeting Room, study rooms and for patrons receiving technical assistance at a public computer or library laptop. Cell phone notifications should be set to vibrate only or silent.” – Welder; 2nd – Pollpeter.

Unattended Child Policy

There are no recommended changes. The policies need to be reviewed every three years and it is this policy’s turn. This policy has been working well.

Motion to approve the unattended child policy unchanged, as written – Heitz; 2nd – Whitcomb. Carried unanimously.

Password Policy

There are no recommended changes. The policies need to be reviewed every three years and it is this policy’s turn. This policy has been working well.

Motion to approve the password policy unchanged, as written – Bartlett; 2nd – Heitz. Carried unanimously.

Operations Emergency Policy Amendment

The director became aware of this shortly after the February board meeting agenda that the current policy could cause legal problems with the city since the library policy is in conflict with the city policy. In 2012, when the library employees were under an extensive union contract that covered more than just wages, the board approved that library employees would be paid for the hours they were scheduled to work if the library closed due to a disaster or emergency. In about 2017, several city contracts changed to only cover wages and the employees covered by those contracts were then covered by the same city personnel policy that does not include this language. If library employees were paid if the library closed, it could open the city to a potential discrimination legal action and the city would also highly disapprove of this behavior. Part of this is a written policy about employees making up time. Kathy Burkhardt asked if there was a specific time period for making up time. The director did include a time frame for all but emergency library closures. The director did for everything except for emergency library closures. Kathy Burkhardt also suggested including language about time needing to be made up in the same fiscal year that was added.

Motion to approve the amended Operations Emergency Policy – Burkhardt; 2nd – Whitcomb. Carried unanimously.

The director also asked the board if there were any thoughts as to what should be done over the next few weeks. Board members pointed out that this is an evolving situation. Trustee Welder suggested also following city hall. The director did tell the board that she is more likely to follow recommendations for bars, restaurants and rec facilities because we are more like those than we are an office building due to the nature of how the library is used.

Approve Library Holidays/Closings for 2020/2021

Suggested holidays/closings based on the city personnel policy:

- i. Friday, July 3 and Saturday, July 4 – Independence Day
- ii. Monday, September 7 – Labor Day
- iii. Monday, October 12 – Staff Work Day (Columbus Day)
- iv. Wednesday, November 11 – Veteran's Day
- v. Thursday, November 26 – Thanksgiving
- vi. Friday, November 27 – Day after Thanksgiving
 1. Open Saturday, November 28
- vii. Thursday, December 24 – Close at 1 pm

- viii. Friday, December 25 – Christmas Day
- ix. Saturday, December 26 - closed
- x. Friday, January 1 – New Year’s Eve Day
- xi. Monday, February 15 – President's Day
- xii. Friday, April 2 – Good Friday
- xiii. Monday, May 31 – Memorial Day

There was discussion of being open or closed the Saturday after Christmas. The board opted to be closed that day.

Kathy Burkhardt asked about Good Friday since it is a religious holiday. The director replied that this is a holiday in the city personnel policy and all city employees will be off that day. The library will be open the Saturday after Good Friday.

Motion to approve the 2020/2021 Holidays/closings – Burkhardt; 2nd – Whitcomb. Carried unanimously.

Upcoming Business and Events

Upcoming board meeting dates:

April 23 – This is a week later than usual, the director had requested this in March due to a vacation request but suggests leaving it at this date due to Covid-19.

The May and June board meeting dates were amended due to strategic planning sessions. The director suggests postponing the strategic planning and the board agreed so the May and June board meeting dates will stay the same, May 21 and June 18.

April Meeting business:

- Approve the 2020/2021 budget
- Amendments for the 2019/2020 budget
- Nomination of officers
- Review board members whose terms end June 30.

Kathy Burkhardt – would like to stay on

Tom Pollpeter – would like to stay on

Anne Heitz – would like to think about it.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05 pm