

Fort Madison Public Library Board of Trustees

Minutes of the regular meeting held June 18, 2020, 5:30 p.m. in person and electronically via Zoom.

Board members present in person: Sharon Groene, Jane Bartlett, Candice Smrt, Ron Welder, Anne Heitz, Kathy Burkhardt, Mary Whitcomb.

Board members present online: Phil Hecht.

Others present: Sarah Clendineng, library staff, in person. Bob Morawitz, city council liaison, online.

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

A motion to excuse the absences of Tom Pollpeter was made by Welder; 2nd – Smrt. The motion was carried unanimously.

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

Public Comments: There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting May 21 –Welder; 2nd –Whitcomb. The motion was carried unanimously.

Approval of May 2020 Bills: Trustee Groene inquired about the phone expenses being over budget. The director explained that she forgot to budget for the taxes that are on top of the monthly phone fee. Those are included in the estimate for the 2020/2021 budget. Trustee Burkhardt asked about the ServiceMaster charge. The director explained that this is our monthly cleaning fee for service master. They vacuum, clean the restrooms, mop floors, change out toilet paper, soap and paper towels, some dusting and taking out the trash. Trustee Bartlett asked if they are doing anything additional with the Covid. The director said the only thing she is aware of is wiping down door handles more often.

Motion to approve the June 2020 bills – Bartlett; 2nd –Whitcomb. The motion was carried unanimously.

Correspondence: No Correspondence.

Director's Report: The director introduced Sabrina Fullhart, the Summer Reading Vista worker. Sabrina is working at the library in June and July, helping with the summer reading program. She shared some of her activities including Wednesday morning story hour, outreach to daycare facilities and helping prepare weekly craft kits. See attached report.

New Business

Lee County Joint Projects Budget

The Lee County Joint Projects Fund is money from the County Board of Supervisors that is accounted for by the Keokuk library to be spent on certain areas, though we do have flexibility in this spending based on specific library needs. These funds need to be spent in this fiscal year.

As of May 6, there was \$3,231.78 left in the Lee County Joint Projects Budget. Since May 6, we have paid for the following bills with this money:

Mobile Beacon Hotspot Renewal	\$120.00
MPLC Umbrella Movie Licesne	\$205.50

Niche Academy	\$1600.00
ELM Disc Cleaning 1 Year Maint.	\$425.00
Total	\$2350.50

Remaining Joint Projects Budget \$881.28

The director would propose spending about \$200 of this on 8 lattice panels for a story walk along the sidewalk in front of the library. These panels are 45.4 in. high by 32 in. wide and are \$25.98 each at Lowe's. A good use for the remaining amount after these are purchased would be to buy craft supplies for the children's area for programs in the summer and fall. In past years, we have used money remaining in the library's general fund budget to pay for some of these but that is not an option this year.

Trustee Heitz asked for more information about the storywalk. The director replied that she would buy eight of these panels and each panel would have two page spreads of the book attached to it and you would walk along, reading the book as you go. The director has one book with activities and another with seek and find items in the picture. Trustee Bartlett said that she and her granddaughter had visited the one in West Point that is in the windows of businesses around the square and they really enjoyed it. Trustee Burkhardt asked what the target age range would be. The director replied that it would be pre-school and up, though younger kids would need parent to read the story to them. They would also be set back a little from the sidewalk.

Trustee Heitz asked about NicheAcademy. The director shared that it is an online tutorial resource. Currently we are primarily using it to help people use our digital resources but there are also tutorials for things like social media. In the future, the director would like to add tutorials that are specific to our library.

Motion to approve spending the remaining Lee County Joint Projects Fund money on lattice panels for a storywalk and craft supplies; Heitz- 2nd –Smrt. The motion was carried unanimously.

End of Summer Pool Party

The Swimming Pool fully reopened this week and will be offering private parties on Saturday and Sunday evenings.

In previous years, we have had a pool party at the end of the summer reading program for anyone who completes at least one reading ticket. They are also able to bring one friend and parents are encouraged to attend with their children. With uncertainty about the pool opening, we had not planned on having this event and we haven't publicized that we will be doing it. In place of these, I am using some summer reading funds that would have been spent on performers to purchase books from Scholastic so that everyone who completes at least one reading ticket gets a book.

The director contacted the YMCA and they do not have guidelines yet for parties as far as attendance apart from encouraging social distancing, which would be the responsibility of the hosts.

As of Tuesday afternoon, we had 66 people registered for the summer reading program and 11 people have completed at least one reading log. 55 of the people registered are 18 years old or younger.

The director is looking for guidance from the board on this event. The children's librarians would really like to hold this event and the kids always have a great time. The director is not sure it is something we can safely do, yet.

The board was concerned both about the spread of virus within the community and, possibly, the pool needing to shut down if things change negatively. The decision needs to be made at this meeting since we would need to

reserve the pool before the next board meeting. Several trustees asked about using the funds in other ways. The director replied that she did purchase books from scholastic so that everyone who completes at least one reading ticket will get to pick a book of their own, to keep.

Based on uncertainty of the future the board has concerns about safety and the pool remaining open and does not support a pool party at this time.

Other discussion

Trustee Burkhardt asked about what happens to the money that was saved on salaries when library employees were furloughed. The director replied that it goes back to help the general fund. The director explained that the general fund is where the money would come from if the library has an emergency that we didn't budget for. Having a healthy general fund balance does, in the long run, benefit the library even if, in the short term, we aren't able to spend that money. Trustee Heitz asked to clarify that the only options for the money not spent on salaries was to spend it on salaries or return it to the general fund. The director replied that it would have to be spend before June 30 and politically it would probably not be a wise thing to do. Trustee Heitz said that she was thinking of the partitions that the director wrote a grant for last August. The director replied that, if the city was in a better financial situation, we might have looked at the money left in our budget and what are some things the library needs that we could purchase before the end of the year. However, the city is in a really tight financial situation and the director was at a meeting where all department heads were told to restrict spending to the basics. City Hall also did some furloughing of employees and the money saved by that will go back into the general fund, as well.

Trustee Welder inquired about the drinking fountain in the lobby. The director said she's not sure how to turn them off, though covering them with a trash bag was suggested. Trustee Groene said she had seen that the drinking fountain at Ivanhoe trail is on. Trustee Burkhardt said she's not sure they've determined that it is transmitted that way. There was no further action or discussion.

Trustee Welder also brought up that back in January and February there was serious discussion by the council about the library's budget and if there are places that cuts could be made or services supplemented by other resources in the city, such as school libraries. Trustee Welder is concerned that some city council members do not know what the library does. He would like the board president to extend an invitation to the council and the mayor to visit with the director and the board president to get a firmer understanding of what the library is and what we have to offer before next year's budget planning process.

The director replied that she's not sure that right now is the best time, as the library isn't terribly busy. The budget process begins around December so we would need to do this sometime between now and then. Trustee Bartlett replied that we may need to find another way to get the information to them if they don't come to the library. Trustee Heitz suggested maybe holding a council meeting at the library. Due to the city council being live-streamed, the library doesn't have the equipment to allow them to do that.

The director said that, after handing them a brochure showing what the library does, and then having one person say he's not sure what the library does for the community for the amount it costs, one thing that might make the biggest impact is to have people from the community writing to, or emailing, or calling their representative and telling them specific ways the library has helped them. The board suggested that maybe this is something that could be at the front desk, cards for patrons to fill out.

Trustee Burkhardt pointed out that the library is one of the last recreational facilities the city has to offer.

Trustee Bartlett asked if the school district had information about kids who have technology at home. The director thinks that they are working on a survey and will ask if they could share that information.

Trustee Heitz asked if the director had a sense of how much of a threat this is to the library. The director replied that she know that the library will need to pursue the \$.27 levy next year. The city's revenue is flat and this is one way for the city to bring in more revenue. She also said that she has gotten mixed messages from a couple of city council members. The director said that she will also look into calculating a return on investment to show the value the city is getting for the money they spend.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm until Thursday, July 16.