

## Fort Madison Public Library Board of Trustees

(Unapproved) Minutes of the regular meeting held November 20, 2014, 5:30 p.m. in the Sheaffer Memorial Meeting Room at the Fort Madison Public Library.

Present: Sharon Groene, Candice Smrt, Brenda Graham, Anne Heitz, Phil Hecht and Linda Beck.

Staff Present: Sarah Clendineng (Library Director)

Guests: David Varley, city manager

Excused Absences: Ron Welder, Mary Kay Moline and Fred Winke.

The meeting was called to order with a quorum present by President Sharon Groene at 5:35 pm.

Approval of Agenda: Motion to approve the agenda – Beck; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Hecht. Carried Unanimously

Public Comments: There were several issues brought to the directors attention by board members on behalf of the public. There have been issues with the wi-fi connection not working consistently and going offline frequently. Also, it has been somewhat chilly in the library lately. There were a couple of issues in the meeting room brought up as well, first, the need to add a paper towel dispenser in the Kitchenette and, secondly, that the faucet in the kitchenette doesn't work well and seems to be backwards as far as hot and cold water.

Approval of minutes: Motion to approve the minutes October 16 meeting correcting types and the names of the board members who made the motion about the library director evaluation – Beck; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Graham. Carried Unanimously.

Corresponding Secretary: One thank you was sent for the Connie Fahey memorial.

Approval of Bills: Trustee Groene inquired about the phone bill which seemed high compared to the last few months. July and August were off because our e-rate discounts for the current fiscal year was not applied until August. Resulting in a bigger than usual July bill and a credit covering all of the August and part of the September bill. Motion to approve the November 2014 bills – Hecht; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Graham. Carried Unanimously.

Director's Report: In addition to the attached report. The director offered an explanation of the city reports sheets and the libraries various trust funds. Trustee Groene inquired about the amounts for the two memorial funds in the director's report. The numbers don't seem to match the amounts in the trust fund report sheet. The director will look into that. Trustee Smrt mentioned that the library's facebook page isn't being updated. There was some confusion as the director has been posting updates. It seems that there are multiple pages for the Fort Madison Public Library on facebook. The director will look into resolving this. Trustee Hecht inquired about progress with the Lego robotics program. The director attended the Lee County Economic Development Group breakfast this week and, if others attendees are interested in this area, will be working with that committee. Rhonda Frevert from the Burlington Public Library also contacted us about sharing their kits and the director is currently waiting to hear from them about at least borrowing the kit to see what is involved. The director also contacted the Lee County Extension office for some information from their program last summer and they may be interested in partnering with the library, as well.

Committee Reports: There were no committee reports.

### New Business

Discussion in preparation for 2015-2016 budget process: The 2015-2016 fiscal year budget process will begin in early December. This year is probably going to be a more difficult budget process than previous years. Last year, the city faced a cut in the general fund money available due to the state rollback on commercial property taxes. All departments took some cuts from the city manager recommended budget. During the budget process, the director puts together an initial budget request based on the library's needs and the library board's requests.

This budget is presented to the city manager who looks over all the budget requests from all the city departments and prepares the city manager's recommended budget for the city council. The council then looks at the budget, makes any changes they want, and then approves the final budget. The library board has control over expenditure of the funds that the council approves for the library budget.

In our budget last year, the library asked for the addition of one full time employee who would serve as the children's librarian and an increase in library materials from \$25,000 to \$30,000. The city manager's recommended budget to the city council took out the additional full time employee and the increase in library materials expenditures, leaving us with the previous year's amount of \$25,000.

As the budget cycle progressed, it became apparent that the city was either going to have to make further cuts to the proposed budget or find a way to increase revenue in the general fund. The city tried to change from sales tax on gas and electric utilities to a franchise fee. The franchise fee would come directly to the city and would help with the budget shortfall. Due to opposition from some industries in town and Lee County, the council did not pass this and, instead, made up the shortfall with money from the grant opportunity fund and by making small cuts in all department budgets from the city manager's recommended budget. For the library, this meant that our library materials line item went from \$25,000 to \$19,000.

This year, we will be facing the same issue, with a larger shortfall and less ability to fill in from the grant opportunity fund, as the director understands it.

The director would recommend for the budget request that, this year, we do not ask for an additional full time employee and that we request to increase library materials to its 2013-2014 budget level of \$25,000. In order to maintain our current level of service in library materials offered, we need to spend a minimum of \$40,000 each year. \$25,000 from the city, \$9,000 from the county and \$6,000 in donations will get us to the minimum.

Trustee Smrt asked if the director thinks the library is fully staffed. The director does not. We could easily use one more full time employee and, possibly, two. With an additional full time employee, we'd be able to be open at least one more evening until 7. Right now, we can't add any more hours, the library schedule is stretched as far as it can go. If we lose any employees, we would have to cut hours. The full time employee we have been consistently asking for is for the children's department. There have been six different part time employees in the children's area since the director started, eight years ago. Most of them move on because they find a full time position with benefits and our part time employees do not receive benefits. A full time position is not a guarantee that an employee won't leave but there is more incentive to stay. It would also be nice to have an additional full time employee hired specifically to do adult programming, with the understanding that evenings and weekends are part of the job.

The library board agreed with this recommendation, though they agree that it is not optimal and with the understanding that the council can add to the library board's request if they desire.

Trustee Hecht recommended contacting business in Lee County, such as IFC, Siemens, Roquette and DuPont to see if they would be willing to donate.

Trustee Smrt mentioned that Shopko offers grants as well.

Trustee Smrt also mentioned talking to teachers about doing an externship during the summer with the library's reading program.

Trustee Heitz mentioned that special ed at the high school places some students in the community as workers. The director mentioned that the library is taking advantage of this and currently has a student working on the genealogy indexing project.

Discussion of special library levy: The library director reminds the board about this at the end of every even numbered year because it has to go to the community to be voted on and can only be placed on the ballot during the city election, held in odd numbered years. State code allows for cities to levy an additional property tax of up to a maximum of \$.27/\$1000 to support the public library. We are not currently taking advantage of this. This is similar to a levy that the police department currently takes advantage of. If it is something the board wants to do, you want to get started early, it would be a lot of work and you have to be very careful not to use public monies to lobby for it. We would probably need to set up a special committee to work on this. At the maximum level, it would bring in about \$68,000. When the referendum is being put together, you set the amount you want to levy and how long the levy would be in place for.

Trustee Hecht inquired about other libraries in the area using the levy. The director will look into that.

Trustee Heintz inquired about the downside. The primary downside is that there are libraries that have put this into place and then had the city cut their budget. However, there are ways to publicize and advocate for the levy that can make it harder, and more politically risky, for the council to do that but there is nothing to stop them.

Motion to adjourn until the next meeting December 18, 2014, 5:30 pm Fort Madison Public Library –Beck; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Smrt. Meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm.