

LIBRARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2023 8:00 a.m.

BENNETT MARTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Dan Sloan, Rhonda Seacrest, Lisa Hale, Donna Marvin, Joe Shaw, Jackie Ostrowicki, Morgan Gerteisen, Nichole Bogen, present

CALL TO ORDER AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF POSTING OF OPEN MEETINGS ACT

President Dan Sloan noted that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. He announced the Open Meetings Act was posted and available for review.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

President Sloan noted that the Agenda and Meeting Notice were posted according to the Open Meetings Act of the State of Nebraska. Sloan asked for a motion to approve the Agenda. Shaw so moved. Seacrest seconded. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Gerteisen, Hale, Marvin, Ostrowicki, Seacrest, Shaw, Sloan – AYE. Motion carried 7-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

President Sloan noted that public comment is welcome and reviewed the public comment process for those attending. Jessica Wersky, 1330 N. 79th spoke on the topic of the Request for Reconsideration Appeal – asking the board to approve the appeal. President Sloan thanked her for taking the time to share her thoughts. Steve Smith, address not given, spoke on the topic of the Request for Reconsideration Appeal – asking the board to deny the appeal. President Sloan thanked him. There were no more comments at this time.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 18, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

President Sloan noted the Minutes of the April 18, 2023 meeting had been submitted. Sloan asked for a motion to approve the Minutes. Ostrowicki moved approval. Hale seconded. There was no discussion. Sloan asked for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Hale, Marvin, Ostrowicki, Seacrest, Shaw, Sloan – AYE. Gerteisen – ABSTAIN. Motion carried 6-0 with one abstention.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee on Administration

President Sloan welcomed new Board Member, Morgan Gerteisen and asked her to introduce herself to the Board. Gerteisen shared that she was born and raised in Lincoln, and a library patron (Gere and now Bethany) since youth and is excited to be on the Board.

Request for Reconsideration Appeal

President Sloan asked Director Wieber to review the Request for Reconsideration process. Director Wieber explained that when a Request is received, it's given to the Director who calls the Request for Reconsideration Committee –which consists of eight staff members from around the system, chaired by Vicki Wood. They read/watch/listen, review, and discuss the item and make a recommendation to the Director. The Director then reviews the item and the recommendation and makes a decision. The Director then notifies the requestor of his decision within 30 days of the receipt of the request and includes information regarding the appeal process.

If the requestor wishes to appeal the Director's decision to the Board, as in this instance, the Director then forwards the appeal to the Library Board Committee on Administration. The Committee on Administration reviews the item, the committee's and the Director's recommendations and develops their recommendation to the Library Board, to be voted on at the following Board meeting. Once the Board makes their final determination, the Library Board President responds to the requestor with the Board's action within 60 days.

President Sloan added that the Committee on Administration consists of the President and the two most senior Board members. He shared that the Board takes all such requests very seriously. President Sloan reported that the Committee on Administration has reviewed the title in question, "True You: A Gender Journey" by Gwen Agna, and their unanimous decision is to retain the item in its current location in youth non-fiction.

Sloan made the motion to Deny the Request for Reconsideration Appeal. Hale seconded. Discussion followed. Ostrowicki spoke in favor of retaining the book . She shared her family's experience; reading about others in differing circumstances has created opportunities for family discussions and engendered empathy. Marvin also commented in favor of retaining the book. She commented on her experiences with families dealing with gender issues who need resources and may not be able to afford them. She noted that families have the right to determine the choices for their own kids. Hale noted the previous Request for Reconsideration was a book focused on the opposing side of the gender conversation, and that book as well was retained in the collection. President Sloan concurred that the Library Board guards against having a specific content-related agenda, stating "fair is fair," and the library collection should have fair representation of a variety of opinions. Bogen noted that the location of the item was consistent and appropriate – it was displayed with other new items, and its normal location on the shelf is near other resources for parents with kids struggling through similar difficult situations, like a divorce or the death of a family member. Bogen also commended the thorough job the committee did, examining the authors and reviews of the work. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Marvin, Ostrowicki, Seacrest, Shaw, Sloan, Gerteisen, Hale,– AYE. Motion carried 7-0.

Committee on Buildings and Grounds

No Report.

Committee on Finance

Approval of Monthly Recap of Expenditures for April 2023

Marvin reported total Operational Expenditures of \$765,425.78, total Expenditures from Other Funds as \$177,241.03 for Total Expenditures of \$942,666.81 for the month of April. There was no discussion. Marvin motioned approval. Shaw seconded. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Ostrowicki, Seacrest, Shaw, Sloan, Gerteisen, Hale, Marvin – AYE. Motion carried 7-0.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Foundation Executive Director Report

Gail McNair thanked everyone for their support of the *Wine and Dine* event. Results of the giving are pending. *Give to Lincoln Day* is next week. The website will continue to accept donations until the 24th. With slightly over \$2,000 given to date. Donations will support children's programming. McNair reminded all that on Memorial Day the *Coffee on the Patio* event at the Mill Telegraph will host the announcement of the three *One Book One Lincoln* finalists. Proceeds of coffee sales for the morning will be donated to the Foundation. Book nooks are still making steady money and providing a service to the community. More sales opportunities are being planned for the fall. There will be a *Spelling Bee* event again this fall. Hale commended the food and fun events at the *Wine and Dine* event.

One Book One Lincoln Report

Ostrowicki shared that the top eleven finalists are being announced a few at a time using short videos on social media created by the OBOL committee members. Kudos to library staff – Huffman, Jackson and Lombardo for their creativity and hard work making that happen. Please attend the *Coffee on the Patio* event at the Mill on Memorial Day.

NEW BUSINESS

Approval to Purchase Computers from Dell Technologies at an amount not to exceed \$104,850.00

Director Wieber provided background information – First, a correction. The amount has been bumped up to \$110,000.00 to account for any unexpected or additional expenses. On a regular basis, about 150 staff computers are replaced every six years. All the work is completed in house by the Virtual Services Department, headed by R. Cummings. This amount from Dell, a contractually approved vendor by the City of Lincoln, reflects a large discount. A quote from HP came in \$30-35,000 higher. Cummings was present via Zoom to answer questions. President Sloan asked what happens to the machines that are phased out? Cummings explained those are then used to upgrade the Public Access Computers (PACs.) The 12-13 year old, now obsolete PACs are recycled. There were no further questions. Hale motioned to approve \$110,000 for the purchase of computers from Dell Technologies. Ostrowicki seconded. Hale noted that 6 years for staff computers is on the long end of their usefulness, and if you can get 13 years out of any computer, you're doing a tremendous job of using your resources. There was no further discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Seacrest, Shaw, Sloan, Gerteisen, Hale, Marvin, Ostrowicki – AYE. Motion carried 7-0.

Summer Reading Program Report

Youth Services Coordinator, Vicki Wood invited attendees to see the Library Lineup provided – the big, condensed version of everything happening at the library from June to August. There used to be three separate events handouts (adults/teens/kids) which have been replaced by this one document. Kudos to Huffman, Queen, P. Jorgensen, Dale, and the crew of proofreaders at the branches for putting this together – it’s a huge undertaking. The library remains one of the only places in town where kids, teens and adults can all attend events for free.

Wood shared, this year we’re having all the Summer Reading Kickoff parties on the same day and time at all locations. In addition to magic and music, this year we’re hosting alpacas at the library! We’re using the Beanstack software again this year, which gains users each year we use it to track reading. Paper booklets and stickers are still available. This year, we’ve reinstated the, “four visits to the library” piece of the contest, which was put on hold during the pandemic. We’re very excited to welcome folks back in person.

She noted that LCL created a promotional video for the program and shared it with all the Lincoln and Lancaster County schools. Program promotions are in the Journal Star, in Lincoln Kids, on the radio, and the LPS community newspaper. There’s also an FAQ on lincolnlibraries.org. County outreach programs are in place. A storyteller gives a storytime and an art craft or science activity, then leads the kids through the Summer Reading program so they can earn rewards. Those are sites like the Salvation Army, Summer CLC and summer library sites. LPS provides summer library hours at many elementary schools, and we provide Summer Reading Challenge materials to those neighborhood locations.

Wood announced, this year we’re partnering with a diverse group sponsoring the Field Trip Across Lincoln Passport, which encourages folks to visit Lincoln’s family-friendly resources like the Quilt Museum and Morrill Hall, where kids and families can go, their booklet stamped and get prizes at the end of summer. LCL will be a distribution point for the Passports. Last year, they only made 700 booklets, and 45 families completed. This year, with the help of LCL, they’ve increased their printing budget and look forward to having a lot more families participate.

Wood shared two other new things – the registration prize for the birth-pre-school aged kids has never been different from that given to school-aged kids. This year that’s changed. We’re putting an extra emphasis on that age group to encourage parents to read to their youngest kids, and have purchased a ton of fun rubber duckies to use as registration gifts. Traditionally as our grand prize, we’ve given away technology like E-readers and gaming systems. This year, the Lied Center lineup is so rich in family programming, we’re giving away three prize packages with \$250 towards Lied tickets.

Wood reported, the Saltdogs are our big sponsors again this year. The June 9th game is for everyone who signs up, and the tickets for the July 31 recognition night game will be given to those who have completed the program. They’ve been great supporters and we are grateful. The program runs May 26th through July 31st.

Hale noted that the program seems to get better every year, with fun and creative new programming. The Lied Center tickets were a great idea. Marvin asked who designed the great Lineup and Program booklets – all offered many kudos to Huffman and the team of program

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Sloan welcomed all meeting attendees, including new member Morgan Gerteisen. He extended thanks to Jessica and Steve for participating in the democratic process that helps keep the Board alert and aware of issues, and the library the very best it can be for the community. Sloan shared that he's excited to move forward with new library projects.

ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Assistant Director Glass shared an update on the new Williams Branch Library. She welcomed Lisa Olivigni, Branch Manager for Eiseley and Williams branches, with whom she has been working for the past three years to complete this project. Glass shared photos of the old facilities and the progress of the new joint Williams Branch Library / Air Park Community Center.

The Air Park neighborhood was originally served by the Arnold Heights Branch Library, which was run out of a former Air Force Duplex for 35 years thanks to an agreement with the Lincoln Housing Authority. The current Williams Library (opened 2009), within Arnold Elementary school provides 28 hours per week of service, in a 2,500 square foot facility, nearly identical to what was provided by the old library.

Glass emphasized; we've been very happy with our partnership with LPS. The new partnership with Parks and Recreation allows us to make a few desired changes, while maintaining at least as many service hours in a similarly sized space within the Community Center. Summer hours will be M-F 10-2, weekends 12-4. New hours will be determined in the fall based on community feedback and usage patterns observed at the new facility.

The facility will include, in addition to the full-service library, a gym, dance and yoga studios, gaming space, outdoor programming areas and more. Project partners include Sampson Construction, Clark and Enersen Architecture, Project Control, LCL and Parks and Rec.

Monument signage is being planned. Some new seating has been purchased, notably to add focus to the beautiful two-sided fireplace. Nearly everything else is being brought over from Williams. The library will have both a conference room, and its own patio. The outdoor patio space is part grass, part concrete for seating, and fenced in, perfect for library programming.

Glass informed the board, the old facility will close for moving the week of June 20th. The new facility joint opening will be on July 10th. There was no further discussion.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Wieber shared thanks to all the staff involved in preparing for the Summer Reading Challenge. It's always a ton of work and he's excited to see the results. Thanks to Traci and Lisa and the team at Eiseley/Williams for their hard work.

Wieber shared some charts reflecting activity in the library before, during and after the pandemic. 2023 has shown a large increase in patron usage. Gere and Bethany parking lot resurfacing resulted in some lower numbers on those few days, but LCL is on track to return to 2019 numbers. He also shared

circulation numbers from the time period, which suffered somewhat less due to the availability of online materials. All circulation and attendance numbers are steadily increasing, and we expect to meet or exceed our 2019 numbers.

Ostrowicki congratulated Seacrest on being named Rotary Club No. 14's Nebraskan of the Year.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jessica Wersky spoke, more generally, on the topics addressed in the book noted in the Request for Reconsideration. President Sloan thanked her for her comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:04 a.m.