

LIBRARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, August 15, 2023

WALT BRANCH PUBLIC LIBRARY

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Dan Sloan, Lisa Hale, Rhonda Seacrest, 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 6:00 p.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. Ostrowicki motioned approval. Seacrest seconded. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Gerteisen, Hale, Marvin, Ostrowicki, Seacrest, Shaw, Sloan – AYE. Motion carried 7-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

President Sloan asked if there was any public comment on items on the Agenda. There was no comment.

APPROVAL OF JULY 18, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

President Sloan noted. Hale moved approval. Marvin seconded. There was no discussion. Sloan asked for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Hale, Marvin, Ostrowicki, Shaw, Sloan, Gerteisen – AYE. Seacrest – ABSTAIN. Motion carried 6-0 with 1 abstention.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee on Administration

No meeting. No report.

Committee on Buildings and Grounds

No meeting. No report.

Committee on Finance

No meeting.

Approval of Monthly Recap of Expenditures for June 2023

Marvin reported total Operational Expenditures of \$876,681.41 and total Expenditures from Other Funds of \$1,109,663.44 for a total of \$1,986,344.85. Marvin moved approval. Ostrowicki seconded. Discussion: Hale asked for clarification on the Capital Improvements Figure of \$939,407.63. Accountant

Paul Jones replied that it was in payment for the new Williams Library Construction. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Marvin, Ostrowicki, Seacrest, Shaw, Sloan, Gerteisen, Hale – AYE. Motion carried 7-0.

Committee on Nominations

President Sloan noted that the committee is made of Seacrest, Hale, and himself. The nominees decided upon were Sloan as President, Shaw as Vice President and Ostrowicki as Treasurer. He noted the remaining committee assignments will be made once the officers are determined. Seacrest moved approval. Marvin seconded. Discussion: Shaw asked Sloan to share his vision for the next year compared to the past two years. Sloan expressed his hope that the Future Libraries project will get to citizens for a vote in the coming year. He shared that the Mayor's office has expressed excitement about moving forward. Sloan reiterated the shift in thinking about the project from simply a new Central Library to the future of all the libraries in the system as well as the potential for new branch locations. He indicated that would be his main focus this year and alerted all that the Board's resulting time commitment this year may increase. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Ostrowicki, Seacrest, Shaw, Sloan, Gerteisen, Hale, Marvin – AYE. Motion carried 7-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Resolution in Honor of Donna Marvin's Tenure

President Sloan read the following Resolution aloud:

Whereas Donna Marvin's eleven years of exemplary service on the Library Board from 2012-2023 encompassed both a partial and a full term, during which she held a nearly perfect attendance record and held the offices of President, Vice President, and Treasurer,

Whereas Donna has served as Chair of the Technology, Buildings and Grounds and Finance committees, and participated as a member on the Administration, Nominations, Bylaws, Foundation Liaisons, Branch Improvements, One Book One Lincoln, and various Central Library committees,

Whereas Donna has served not only the Library Board, but also other for and non-profit boards, including the Nebraska Literary Heritage Association from 2009 to present, and the Nebraska Center for the Book from 2010-2013 and is near the top of any list for the example of what a board member should be: an ever competent and cooperative leader,

Whereas Donna has always wisely and generously shared her financial expertise, giving measured thought to how the library's budget reflected its mission and consistently asking thoughtful and engaging questions that showcased her investment in the library system while also being mindful of the cost to the community,

Whereas Donna has been unfailingly kind and welcoming to colleagues and has enriched us all with her authentic wisdom and concern for the greater good of Lincoln and Lancaster County residents.

Whereas Donna has been a fierce advocate of the freedom to read – bravely and passionately speaking her truth, "I believe in Democracy, and I am not afraid of books!"

BE IT RESOLVED that that Lincoln City Libraries Board of Trustees expresses its sincere appreciation and gratitude to Donna Marvin and adopts this resolution in tribute and appreciation of her contributions to and support of the Lincoln City Libraries.

Applause followed. Sloan asked for a motion to approve the resolution. Shaw so moved. Hale seconded. Discussion: Marvin expressed her thanks and noted that while eleven years didn't pass quickly, it passed well, and she's enjoyed being on the Library Board. She noted, the library is such an outstanding organization, a backbone of our community and will continue to be so for years to come. She expressed love for all the new plans and proclaimed that she WILL be at a groundbreaking, eventually! **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Seacrest, Shaw, Sloan, Gerteisen, Hale, Marvin, Ostrowicki – AYE. Motion carried 7-0.

Approval of Hompes Revenue Allocation

President Sloan invited Director Wieber to review the funds data. Director Wieber noted that this is a yearly distribution of funds that need Board approval. This year, the Board is asked to approve \$30,000 of funds that result from income from the Hompes Fund, which is a bequest held in trust by the City of Lincoln, restricted for purchase of adult library materials. This money will provide collections support primarily for the Heritage Room and for general materials for adults. This amount is similar to last year's amount. Seacrest moved approval. Marvin seconded. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Shaw, Sloan, Gerteisen, Hale, Marvin, Ostrowicki, Seacrest – AYE. Motion carried 7-0.

Approval of Allocation of Book Sales Funds

Director Wieber explained, these funds represent proceeds from Book Nook and Thrift Books sales totaling \$31,750.83. Wieber asked approval to designate the full amount to be used for purchase of library materials for customer use. He noted, this amount is close to double last year's amount, by virtue of having more customers through the door, able to purchase books from the Book Nooks. Seacrest moved approval. Ostrowicki seconded. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Sloan, Gerteisen, Hale, Marvin, Ostrowicki, Seacrest, Shaw – AYE. Motion carried 7-0.

Approval of Foundation Allocation

Director Wieber shared that his proposal for the annual distribution of unrestricted funds in the amount of \$77,340.64 includes \$10,000 for membership in The Urban Libraries Council – an organization that provides staff training and development as well as allowing staff connectedness and communication with libraries across the country, \$10,000 for misc. staff furnishing needs, and the remainder, \$57,340.64, for programming and miscellaneous support, for example, outreach events, youth special events and school nights, strategic planning. Hale moved approval. Ostrowicki seconded. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Gerteisen, Hale, Marvin, Ostrowicki, Seacrest, Shaw, Sloan – AYE. Motion carried 7-0.

Approval of State Aid

Every year, Lincoln City Libraries receives State Aid, this year's amount is slightly higher than last. We've received \$52,321.00 in State Aid to Libraries through the Nebraska Library Commission. That lump sum payment will be received in the spring. Director Wieber sought a motion to approve designating \$22,321.00 for purchase of library materials, \$15,000 for technology purchases, and \$15,000 to staff attendance at conferences, which is a similar allocation to past years. Marvin so moved. Gerteisen seconded. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Hale, Marvin, Ostrowicki, Seacrest, Shaw, Sloan, Gerteisen – AYE. Motion carried 7-0.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Foundation Executive Director Report

Gail McNair shared that this year, the Foundation will not be having their usual large annual sale, instead are exploring a new path involving neighborhood sales at four quadrant libraries. Thanks to staff and volunteers, the sales will be held on four upcoming Saturdays. Details will be shared soon. Volunteers will include a group from Farmer's mutual to help with setup. McNair shared the hope that these events will bring more people into the libraries and see all the great opportunities available at the libraries.

Wednesday, November 1st the Spelling Bee will be held at Screamers Family Restaurant downtown. "Screamers" is the nickname the UNL Scarlet and Cream singers gave themselves. The restaurant features great singing servers, and they're planning to host and entertain for the cocktail hour and dinner. McNair provided sponsorship forms and encouraged all to find and sponsor spellers. Tickets are \$75 for members of the Friends organization, \$80 for the public which includes a buffet dinner and a donation to the NLHA endowment fund.

Marvin praised the idea of holding the sales at the branches – to provide the branches with good promotion and visibility. McNair commended library staff, and Director Wieber for the inspiration. She noted as this is the first year, we don't know how big the crowds will be. Everyone is anticipating a big success. Hale asked for information on volunteering. McNair noted that the work is being divided into shifts, and more information will be forthcoming. Gerteisen asked if the sales will include all genres. McNair noted that the Walt sale will focus on kids' books, in response to interest from parents and teachers, but the Book Nooks will also be stocked with all genres.

One Book One Lincoln Report

Ostrowicki reminded all that votes need to be cast by August 31st. Please see lincolnlibraries.org for the link to vote. The winner will be announced on September 4th – Labor Day. She shared information from the LCL One Book One Lincoln Team: While the top eleven choices were narrowed to three, the circulation of all eleven titles has been strong. Holds lists are just being fulfilled so more copies are now available on display in the branches. Attendance at One Book One Lincoln events this year has been mixed – but attendance at Book Clubs that have requested LCL staff to present has been outstanding. Requests for titles outside the top three have been high. Community feedback has been enthusiastic and there is a strong favorite in the voting – we're excited to learn the winner! Staff are in talks with the author of the title who is likely to win for a Q&A program, and are seeking promotional opportunities with local media.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

No report.

ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Assistant Director Glass shared updates on the new Bookmobile purchase progress, the Page to Stage program, the new Williams location and staffing. Regarding the new Bookmobile – the RFP has been running for less than a month and Glass has received two questions already indicating good interest. The Bookmobile committee consists of Glass; Eiseley/Williams/Bookmobile manager Lisa Olivigni; Library Service Supervisor and Bookmobile driver, Rebecca Hueske; Superintendent of Fleet Services for LTU, Bill Fleisher; President at Specialty Vehicle Services, LLC., Michael Swendrowski and Director Wieber. The evaluation period is set for September 5-8, oral interviews will follow and then the contract will be awarded.

Regarding our Page to Stage collaboration with the Lied Center – a press conference was held with the Mayor and Mathew Boring from the Lied. Thanks to Rhonda Seacrest for attending. Glass and Boring followed up with a First at Four appearance on Channel 10/11 where they promoted the program generally, and the first collaboration – a Q&A with members of cast and crew from Hamilton. Beautiful Hamilton posters, provided by the Lied, graced the first floor of Bennett Martin and 79 library patrons attended the Q&A.

The Williams Branch Library - Air Park Community Center opened July 24th. Glass participated in a press conference with Maggie Stuckey-Ross, director of Parks and Rec, along with the Mayor and NW City Council member Brodey Weber. Thanks also to Library Board VP Joe Shaw, and City Council member Bennie Shobe for attending. Last minute construction details are still being seen to. New fall hours have gone into effect: M/T: 4-8pm, W/Th: 10-6pm, Fri/Sat/Sun 1-6pm. These hours will be in place through the winter and new summer hours will be planned for next year.

Glass shared thanks to Office Specialist Heath Gewecke for his assistance in the new staffing changes. There are currently 15 active processes reflecting open positions at Bennett Martin public service and Support Services, Eiseley, Walt, Anderson/Bethany, Gere/South, and more are upcoming from Gere. Two of LCL's highly valued staff members: Youth Services Coordinator - Vicki Wood, and our longest serving employee at 42 years, Library Service Associate from Support Services - Karen Restau, will be retiring at the end of the month. Glass shared that she and Gewecke have been working to improve the library's hiring process by looking at it through the lens of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and have in the past two years managed to close the gap between the diversity of LCL's staff compared to the diversity shown in Lincoln's census data.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Wieber led with thanks to Donna Marvin – despite having worked together a short time, he expressed his appreciation of her enthusiasm, thoughtfulness and wisdom, and looks forward to her future advocacy for the library. Kudos also to Vicki Wood, her depth and breadth of knowledge of children's materials, her understanding of and advocacy for intellectual freedom. He commended her leadership both at LCL and all across the state of Nebraska. Wieber stated, so many people are grateful for your help and influence along the way. We're definitely going to miss you. Applause followed. Board member Hale left at this time.

Director Wieber confirmed that future new Library Board member, Patty Beutler was confirmed at City Council on August 7th. She will have her orientation and begin at next month's meeting – a Board Member would be welcome to participate.

Wieber reported that the mid-biennium budget process is near completion. The library had very little activity take place in terms of the budget resolution and the CIP transfer ordinance. The hearing for those two items was last night and the budget is set to be approved next week by the City Council. Some activity – thanks to Accountant Paul Jones for his guidance in reappropriating funds and personnel costs. The \$200,000 that was identified for the potential purchase of property near Bethany branch was lapsed and then reappropriated for the cost of the architectural services. Some new money came to the library, \$75,000 was set aside for first floor carpet at Bennett Martin, a project which should be completed by winter.

Director Wieber provided an update on the BVH/MSR “Future Libraries” project, calling it exciting and monumental work. Architects met with staff at each location and there was excellent engagement at each location. Monumental because it's the start of a process that looks at this project in a different way – not just a downtown library, but the interconnectedness of our entire system and where lacks can be addressed. The architects need to hear from the experts at our branches to learn what is being done for each neighborhood, and what can be improved system wide. This information will form the basis for what we speak about with the community in our engagement period. Wieber asked for Board Members help in identifying library stakeholders with whom to meet at the upcoming quadrant library meetings. We want to speak with folks from different perspectives and backgrounds – both library supporters and others as well. Your attendance is encouraged.

Director Wieber introduced Gere Library Manager Brenda Ealey and Gere Library Service Supervisor Wyatt Packard. Ealey welcomed all to Gere and invited anyone who would like to tour the facility to meet with Wyatt after. She extended thanks and best wishes to Donna Marvin for being a great ambassador for the libraries. Ealey shared that Gere has had a very busy summer, looking over recent statistics she noted that Gere had six days in July with more than 1,000 patrons visiting the branch. She shared that Gere welcomed many new staff members at the beginning of summer and more new faces are coming. Ealey also shared the joy of getting to observe chickens hatching at Gere this summer, as well as the new Community Crops collaboration that's brought a beautiful new garden to Gere property – a joint venture that's going quite well.

TRUSTEE DEVELOPMENT

City Attorney Jocelyn Golden presented regular board trustee training on the Open Meetings Act and general board procedures, as well as general dos and don'ts. Donna Marvin left at this time. Golden shared information on public records requests and attendant laws, and described what items are protected and what are not. She cited cases of interest including local activity on public records and encouraged all board members to include a library employee in all emails regarding board activity. She touched on cases involving intellectual freedom in other states that she's watching. She shared that one of those cases included a quote from Ray Bradbury's, Fahrenheit 451. “There is more than one way to burn a book. And the world is full of people running about with lit matches.”

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jessica Wersky, 1330 N. 79th, Lincoln, NE 68505 spoke in her opposition to several books in the collection.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:47 p.m.