



Bethel Public Library

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Meeting Minutes
BPL Board of Directors
Virtual Meeting
Monday 05/17/2021 at 6:00 pm

PRESENT: Chairman Mary O'Leary, Tia Murphy, Judith Schlemmer, Robin Kahn, Connie Kauffman, Linda Curtis, Robin Grubard, Mary Spain, Ted Stevenson, Library Director Megan Dean, Librarian Tom Borysiewicz, and Jan Patzold .

ABSENT WITH NOTICE: Sue Morton

ABSENT WITHOUT NOTICE: Chris Sell, Terri Rotella

Call to order: Chair Mary O'Leary called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

PUBLIC INPUT: None

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: Director Dean reported that the Library received an email from patron Pat Rist about the topiary in containers flanking the Seeley House pillars and a tree on the Greenwood Ave. Library lawn which she felt took away from the Barnum Statue. A brief Board discussion ensued, concluding with Chair O'Leary stating that the Board would respond by thanking Ms. Rist for her comments.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 26 MEETING MINUTES: Chair O'Leary asked if the members had read the minutes, and if there were any questions. Connie Kaufman moved to approve the minutes; Robin Grubard seconded the motion. Mary Spain and Ted Stevenson abstained. All in favor; motion passed.

TREASURER REPORTS: Treasurer Murphy asked the Board if they had reviewed the Treasurer's report and if there were any questions. Receiving none, Treasurer Murphy asked for a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Robin Kahn made the motion, Ted Stevenson seconded. All in favor; motion passed

FRIENDS OF THE BETHEL PUBLIC LIBRARY: FOL Chair Jan Patzold indicated that because this Board meeting is earlier than the FOL Meeting, which will be this week, there were no FOL updates.

LBOD CHAIR UPDATE: Chair O'Leary thanked Director Dean and her staff for their hard work in making the reopening of the Library smooth and well received by the public. She also praised their work and innovation throughout the Covid 19 pandemic. Board applauded and agreed.

DIRECTOR UPDATE: Library Director Megan Dean began by thanking the Board for approving closure of the Library on Friday, May 7, 2021 to allow staff to reconfigure furniture, computers, and other items in

anticipation of reopening to the general public. Director Dean indicated that foot traffic is slow at the moment but will build over time as the public begins to return to pre-pandemic activities. Computers continue to be the most accessed resource at this time, but all patrons are not lingering. Statistics over time will be notated to reflect the impact of the pandemic on patron utilization.

In-person programming with small patron groups are starting up again, including the Knitting group, in the Parloa Room, with masks required. Staff will be required to continue wearing masks at this time. Hand sanitizing is no longer required as patrons enter the Library, but there will continue to be sanitizer available in different locations. Outdoor Story Times will begin soon, with other in-person programs slowly being added over the next few months.

Director Dean reported that Senior Library Assistant Katie Dygon has taken a position with the Wallingford Library. This position will be reviewed, and the job description updated and reviewed by the Personnel Committee to reflect the position's duties.

Regarding the progress of the AARPCT Grant to provide a permanent location for three picnic tables on the Greenwood Ave. Library side lawn, Tom Borysiewicz reported that the tables have been ordered, one that is fully ADA compliant, which will take about 5 -6 weeks to arrive. In the meantime, Parks and Recreation will be prepping the site.

The Friendship Bench, which will be located on the School St. side of the library adjacent to the parking lot, will be undertaken once the AARPCT project is completed, anticipating that the bench will be installed by late August/early September and fully marketed to the general public in October. Parks and Recreation will be prepping this site as well.

Director Dean indicated that the whole staff is glad to welcome back in-person patron contact and the resumption of Library operations.

POLICY COMMITTEE: Committee Chair Robin Kahn reported the committee motion to approve the By Laws as submitted and discussed in the April 26 Board Meeting. All in favor, motion passed. Next, the committee will review Personnel Handbook, in a meeting scheduled for this Thursday.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE: Committee Chair Judy Schlemmer reported that the committee had been asked by the Board to make a recommendation regarding the continuance of the annual scholarship. The Committee recommendation is that the scholarship be discontinued. Connie Kauffman made the motion, Mary Spain seconded. All approved. The motion passed.

RFID SYSTEM: Director Dean asked that the RFID System be presented before the Security System discussion. The Board agreed.

Tom Borysiewicz gave the Board a detailed briefing on the proposed RFID system, how it works, the benefits to both patrons, Library Operations and staff, and a rough timeline for the system rollout and operation. The Board had a number of questions, and a discussion ensued. Ted Stevenson noted that he was quite familiar with RFID systems, having been a technology journalist reporting on this technology for a number of years, and was very supportive of this technology adoption and adoption of operational systems designed to provide patron and Library Operations efficiency and effectiveness. A discussion ensued with a number of questions regarding rollout and costs. The Board indicated its support of this approach.

Director Dean reported that due to the pandemic's impact on staffing levels, there are dollars in the employee salary line that will not be spent by fiscal year end and would like the Board to approve moving those funds into the Equipment and Maintenance account. A motion was made by Robin Grubard to

allocate the remaining funds from the Salary account to the Equipment and Maintenance account to cover the costs the Security and RFID systems. Judy Schlemmer seconded. All approved; the motion passed.

SECURITY SYSTEM: Director Dean stated that prior to the pandemic, the Library had a Security System Plan, which has now been scrapped to align the Library's approach with the Town of Bethel's Security System approach. Tom Borysiewicz has been working with the town IT department on a number of issues and the experience and insight gained has informed a different solution and approach.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair O'Leary thanked the Board for its involvement and attentiveness to all the agenda items, then asked for a motion to adjourn. Robin Kahn moved to adjourn; Mary Spain seconded. All in favor, motion passed unanimously. Chair O'Leary adjourned the meeting at 7:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tia Murphy, Treasurer in the approved absence of Sue Morton, Secretary