



City of Muscatine

LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Wednesday, February 21, 2024

The Library Board of Trustees meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 4:30 p.m. in the Library Conference Room

Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

Tony Loconsole called the Board meeting for February 21, 2024 to order at 4:30 p.m. Present were Steve Truitt, Mary Odell, Kraig Reed, and Scott Comstock. Diana Boeding, Diana Gradert, and Kevin Knox had excused absences. Also present were Bobby Fiedler, Molly Garrett, and Greg Benefiel.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Fiedler asked that Kathy Kuhl's presentation be moved to Item #6 of the agenda.

Odell moved to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Truitt. All ayes; motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Fiedler asked that the minutes for the January 17, 2024 meeting be amended to read that the library policy will be reviewed on a rotating basis.

Reed moved to approve the minutes for the January 17, 2024 meeting as amended. Seconded by Odell. All ayes; motion carried.

4. RATIFY BILLS FOR PAYMENT

Fiedler gave an overview of the January 19, 2024 bills. He stated the entries for West Hill Cakery and the Coffee Belt stemmed from the strategic planning meetings.

Fiedler, speaking in reference to the bills for February 2, 2024, stated that Dan Chapman will be returning to the library on a contract basis to do the movies for Channel 5.

Fiedler then gave an overview of the Computer Fund, Trust Fund, and General Fund.

Loconsole, referring to the personnel funds, stated the library is now fully staffed.

Comstock moved to ratify the bills for January 19, 2024 and February 2, 2024. Seconded by Truitt. All ayes; motion carried.

5. RECEIVE COMMUNICATION

6. COMMUNICATIONS - CITIZENS

Fiedler introduced Kathy Kuhl to everyone. He stated Emerson Taylor and Chad Yocom would be giving presentations in March and April, respectively. He stated if the presentations are a success, more could be done.

Kuhl stated she is the Marketing and Public Relations Coordinator for the library. She gave an overview of what her job entails.

She presented a perspective on social media, which is part of her job. She then listed her everyday tasks.

Odell asked Kuhl if she followed the Muscatine Community Chatroom on Facebook, and she answered no. Odell stated she felt it would be a good idea to check it on a regular basis to make sure there are no library issues out there.

Kuhl then went over events that occurred at the library. She stated she sometimes attends those events. She stated she was responsible for writing the library's newsletter stories. She then talked about what she does on a weekly basis, monthly basis, and seasonal basis. She also talked about her on-the-fly activities. She also talked about the bigger library events she had promoted and what she had posted on social media. She stated her little victories are what the media has picked up on.

Fiedler stated that Kuhl has done a lot for the library.

Tony stated he liked the media interaction and the fact the library has someone for public relations. He stated it is a win for the library and a win for the City of Muscatine.

Fiedler stated the library has all kinds of things to offer, and Kuhl has done a good job of bringing out the library's functions.

Reed stated he likes seeing the older pictures of downtown Muscatine as well as the Grossheims.

Loconsole stated he likes the fact that the newsletter is offered digitally as well as in paper form. He then stated there are many library collections the public does not know about.

7. STAFF LIAISON

8. FRIENDS' REPORT

Fiedler stated the Friends' group will be holding its annual meeting on March 6, 2024 at 2:30 p.m. in Room 301. He stated it will conduct its normal business meeting and appoint officers for the next year. He stated an annual meeting had not been held for many years. He stated they are making an effort to increase membership. He stated the annual meeting would also be good for those serving on the Friends' Board.

Fiedler stated the group is continuing to look for different fundraising possibilities. He stated they are also looking into putting up a donor plaque in the front foyer of the library recognizing those who have contributed to Friends.

9. DIRECTORS' REPORT

Fiedler stated City Council would be taking action to approve liaisons for its various boards and commissions. He stated Peggy Gordon would likely be appointed to attend the library's board meetings. He then read the responsibilities of the liaisons from the proposed resolution.

Fiedler stated Gordon would speak under #6 on the agenda. He stated she would be the communication channel between the Board and City Council. He stated liaisons are a pretty common practice in a lot of communities.

Fiedler stated he is going to start attending the City Council's in-depth meetings beginning in March.

Comstock asked if the liaison would attend every Board meeting, and Fiedler stated they would not be required to attend every meeting.

Odell stated she felt it was a good idea and explained why.

Fiedler gave a quick update on the budget. He stated his presentation to City Council went faster this year. He stated he had requested the status quo amount this year of 3%, and the library is receiving 2.4%. He noted that the library had received more last year.

Fiedler stated he felt City Council was open to his proposed request of a \$10,000 allocation for furniture replacement. He then stated he also felt they were open to his request to allocate \$5,000 from the Computer Replacement Fund for Channel 5.

Fiedler stated his third request for the conversion of a part-time position to a full-time position did not happen, and he explained why. He stated he did let City Council know that he would be asking for this position again.

Fiedler stated the final hearing for adoption of the proposed Fiscal Year 2024/2025 budget would be in April.

Odell asked what the county would be doing, and Fiedler stated he thought they would be going with the 3% the library had requested but he is not sure.

Fiedler talked about spending down the \$44,000 savings realized from personnel changes. He stated expenditures to date include the request from the Children's Department for play structures and gift cards for LENA, the SonicWall Subscription, and Molly Garrett's request to attend the PLA conference in Columbus, Ohio, in April.

Odell asked what PLA stood for, and Fiedler stated it stands for the Public Library Association.

Fiedler stated he feels the conference is in line with professional training for

staff. He stated he would like to see his staff attend more professional conferences.

Fiedler stated he would like to improve technology for Room #104. He stated if it goes well, he would like to see technology updates to Room #017.

Fiedler stated the library is looking at mobile shelving and an interactive game table for the Children's Department.

Fiedler stated that last Friday he met with the City Administrator and the City Council Nominating Committee concerning the appointment of a new Board member. He stated Nora Dwyer was the candidate selected and hopefully she will be on board by the March meeting.

Fiedler then talked about the strategic plan, which he will forward to Board members once it is received.

Fiedler provided an overview of the House bills that recently generated a lot of discussion. He stated the bills died during the February funnel week but could be revived during the second funnel week in March. He stated he is hoping the two bills (678 and 3168) do not make it to the next funnel week. He stated if they are not approved this year, they will probably be back next year. He then gave a quick summarization of the bills.

Fiedler stated the ILA is going to have conversations with the writers of the bills and hopefully enlighten them. He stated the bills stem from a library issue that happened in Pella last year.

Fiedler stated that House File 2442 is coming up, explaining that it has to do with library levies, which the library does not have.

Fiedler stated Eliza Township has chosen not to renew their contract for library services. He stated services to Eliza patrons ended on February 1, 2024. He stated some of the patrons still have books out. He then stated we would be open to renewing the relationship should they choose to do so in the future. He noted there are three remaining Illinois townships who have contracts for library services with our library.

Loconsole asked about them paying the outstanding bill from the last fiscal year, and Fiedler stated they had not officially signed the contract.

Fiedler stated one of the library's goals for the next fiscal year is to begin looking at ways to make the patio space useable. He stated he is going to find out what

steps need to be followed to begin the process. He stated he would like to receive input from Board members on their thoughts about the project. He stated it is such a nice space out there and there are a number of things that could be done.

Fiedler stated that Eastern Iowa Landscaping provided a bid of \$162,000 in 2021, which included all the bells and whistles. He stated he feels the library could get something nice for approximately \$130,000.

Reed stated Kellor & Kellor in Muscatine does really good work, and Fiedler stated he would keep them in mind when the bidding process begins.

10. BOARD TRAINING

A. Department Presentation by Kathy Kuhl - PR/Marketing

This presentation took place under Item #6 of the agenda.

11. OLD BUSINESS

A. Request to Approve Equipment Rental Policy and Add to the Current Library Policy Manual

Loconsole read the proposed request as submitted.

Fiedler stated the Equipment Rental Policy was not included in the Library Policy Manual, but it is very straightforward.

Comstock, speaking in reference to the library's large projector, asked if it stated the estimated replacement cost of the project anywhere. He stated he feels it is something patrons should be made aware of.

Fiedler stated it could be included with the policy.

Comstock moved to approve the request to add the Equipment Rental Policy to the current Library Policy Manual with the amendment to include the estimated replacement value of the library's large project. Seconded by Truitt. All ayes; motion carried.

12. NEW BUSINESS

A. Request to Approve Children's Department Play Structures Totaling \$4,619.94 from the Library Trust

Loconsole read the proposed request as submitted.

Fiedler stated that Emerson Taylor had requested replacement of the children's kitchen, which is in really rough shape. He stated Norma Lewis, a long-time patron of the library, had made donations to the library with the stipulation that a portion of the funds be used for the Children's Department. He stated it would be nice to have new items in the Children's Department.

Odell moved to approve the request as submitted. Seconded by Reed. All ayes; motion carried.

- B. Request to Approve Gift Cards for Current LENA Cohort Totaling \$240 from the Library Trust

Loconsole read the proposed request as submitted.

Fiedler stated that purchase of these gift cards should be a library expense, and it makes sense to take the money from the Trust Fund. He stated we do want to give something to the families that participate in LENA. He noted this is an expense that will probably come up annually.

Fiedler stated that he would ask Taylor to talk about the LENA program during his presentation in March.

Odell moved to approve the request as submitted. Seconded by Truitt. All ayes; motion carried.

- C. Request to Approve Purchase of SonicWall Subscription totaling \$5,223.00

Loconsole read the proposed request as submitted.

Fiedler provided an overview of the subscription, noting it always runs through the city's IT Department.

Comstock moved to approve the request as submitted. Seconded by Reed. All ayes; motion carried.

- D. Request to approve PLA Conference (4/2-4/6) registration and travel expenses for Assistant Director Molly Garrett for an estimated cost of \$2,501.53

Loconsole read the proposed request as submitted.

Fiedler stated this request is for the continuation of providing professional development for library staff.

Reed asked about the conference.

Garrett stated it would be a huge conference offering approximately 40 different breakout sessions. She stated it would give the library new ideas. She stated that attending the conference falls in line with what we are trying to do at the library.

Fiedler stated our goal is to have staff start attending more conferences for professional development.

Loconsole asked that Garrett share with the Board what she learned.

Odell moved to approve the request as submitted. Seconded by Truitt. All ayes; motion carried.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Reed moved the meeting be adjourned at 5:45 p.m. Seconded by Comstock. All ayes; motion carried.

14. NEXT MEETING

A. March 20, 2024