



City of Muscatine

LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Wednesday, March 20, 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 Library Board meeting for Wednesday, March 20, 2024, to order at 4:30 p.m. Present were Nora Dwyer, Scott Comstock, Diana Boeding (Zoom), Mary Odell, Kraig Reed, and Kevin Knox. Steve Truitt and Diana Gradert had excused absences. Also present were Bobby Fiedler, Molly Garrett, Greg Benefiel, and Emerson Taylor.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Fiedler asked that Emerson Taylor's presentation be moved to Item #6 on the agenda.

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

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Reed moved to approve the minutes for the February 21, 2024 Library Board meeting. Seconded by Comstock. All ayes; motion carried.

4. RATIFY BILLS FOR PAYMENT

Fiedler provided an overview of the bills. For Dwyer's benefit, Fiedler stated there are two sets of bills as well as three fund statements. He stated he would first give an overview of the bills and point out any abnormalities. He asked

Dwyer if she had any questions.

Fiedler stated that on the bills for February 16, 2024, there are entries for the West Hill Cakery and the Coffee Belt. He stated these expenditures stem from the Strategic Planning sessions. He stated the shrink wrap purchased was for wrapping the boxes of books that were being shipped out.

Fiedler, responding to Dwyer's earlier question concerning the Unique Management invoice, stated this is a monthly fee that can vary in cost. He explained how the "gentle nudge" by Unique Management works and its benefit to the library.

Odell stated she thought the price seemed high.

Fiedler stated it is, but the library has received a lot of materials back. He stated it balances out over time. The higher number this month indicates a lot more people were contacted.

Fiedler then talked about the entry for the purchase of knives. He stated the library is working with a local craft person to offer wood carving classes at the library. He stated two demo classes took place with a few of our staff members attending.

Loconsole told Dwyer that he hopes she gets to approve bills with dinosaurs on them.,

Fiedler then explained the trust expenditures. He stated the Computer Rollover Fund has a good amount of money in it that is being used to replace our PCs.

Fiedler then gave an overview of the bills dated March 8, 2024. He responded to Dwyer's earlier question about the SonicWall expenditure. He stated it is a two-year subscription to our firewall service.

Loconsole stated he always feels well-informed on the bills. He stated they show what goes on in the library. He stated he feels Bobby and Greg do a great job with the bills.

Odell moved to ratify the bills dated February 16, 2024 and March 8, 2024. Seconded by Reed. All ayes; motion carried.

Fiedler then talked about the Trust Funds. He stated the General Fund is the library's main budget. He stated the Trust Fund contains memorials, bequests, and monies from the state. He stated the city allows monies remaining in the

library budget to be rolled over into the Computer Replacement Fund because of the number of computers in the building. He stated the money is for expected and unexpected expenses.

5. RECEIVE COMMUNICATION

6. COMMUNICATIONS - CITIZENS

Emerson Taylor began by introducing himself. He stated he had worked for the school district and was a special education teacher for a number of years.

Taylor began his presentation by introducing his staff, consisting of Jenny Howell, Katie Roquet, and Heather Benninger. He explained each of their responsibilities. He stated he took over Betty Collins' position in October and explained his responsibilities.

Taylor spoke about the School Outreach Program and the activities he holds within the schools. He then spoke about the location of the programs. He stated that from July 2023 to February 2024, there were 271 programs with 79.7% held within the library and approximately 20% outside the library. He then gave an explanation of the weekly programs.

Taylor highlighted Spark Plugs. He stated that when he came on board at the library, there were 20–30 participants. He stated that the number has grown to approximately 45 participants now.

Taylor stated the age ranges for program participants are 56.4% for the 0-5 age range and 33.6% for the 6-11 age range.

Taylor then talked about the LENA program. He stated that since its inception, approximately 126 families have participated in the program. He stated it has a graduation rate of approximately 88%. He stated that Katie Roquet and Jenny assist with the program, and he was responsible for reporting back to LENA.

Taylor stated LENA is funded through the Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) program.

There was discussion concerning the LENA graduates.

Taylor stated the data from LENA goes to the families, ECI, and AIM (Aligned Impact Muscatine County).

Odell asked when LENA was started at the library, and Taylor stated it was approximately four years ago.

Odell stated original funding for the program had been through the Muscatine Community Foundation.

Loconsole stated LENA is a great program, and its success rate is because of the library.

Dwyer asked if we are seeing some of the children who completed the program going into the school system, and Taylor answered yes.

Loconsole stated a family he talked with had not been library patrons but they are now because of the LENA program.

Taylor then talked about the monthly programs, which include My First Book Club, Skeleton Key, Adventure Story Hike, and the Mother/Daughter Book Club.

Taylor showed pictures taken at a My First Book Club activity. He then showed pictures from a Skeleton Key activity.

Taylor stated he enjoys doing the Adventure Story Hike and talked about some of the places where they have taken place.

Taylor then talked about the adult programs, which include Adult Book Club, Trivia Night, Muscatine Voices of History, Hobby Services, and Spoon Carving (to be determined).

Taylor then talked about the library's special programs, which included the building of gingerbread houses over Christmas break. He shared pictures of this activity.

Taylor stated another special program called Sensory Story Time was held in conjunction with Rock Valley Physical Therapy. He stated the program was for children with diverse sensory needs.

Taylor stated there were 280 programs held from July 2023 to February 2024. He stated 45 programs were held in July and 49 in February.

Taylor stated the Children's Department has a lot of programs to offer. He talked about in-house activities such as the scavenger hunts.

Taylor stated the age ranges of participants are 0-5 and 6-11 years of age. He stated his goal this year is to focus on the 12 to 18 year olds. He stated he would like to appeal to a broad range of ages.

Dwyer stated there are a lot of teens at the YMCA falling into that age range.

Taylor stated he is trying to figure out how to make programs work with the YMCA. He then explained how he would be working toward his goal of bringing 12 to 18 year olds into the library fold.

Garrett stated she feels it is important to remember it is not just about the numbers and more about what participants are getting out of the programs.

Fiedler stated Taylor is doing a great job with the Children's Department. He stated it is incredible how much is going on with such a small staff.

Taylor stated the Summer Reading Program is approaching fast. He passed out fliers of the event entitled "Adventure Begins at Your Public Library".

Taylor stated it is hard to grab a high schooler and that sixth grade is a good age group to bring into the library.

Loconsole stated the Board will support Taylor in his effort to meet his goal.

7. STAFF LIAISON

Benefiel echoed what Fiedler has said about the library being fully staffed and trained.

8. FRIENDS' REPORT

Fiedler stated there were no minutes for the Friends' group's meeting. He stated the group held its first annual meeting earlier this month. He stated officers were elected at that time. He stated that right now the primary goal of the Friends' group is to increase membership.

9. DIRECTORS' REPORT

Fiedler stated the library liaison had been delayed. He stated the City Administrator is making some slight changes before it is submitted for City Council approval.

Fiedler stated the Strategic Plan is almost finished. He stated he would share it with the Board upon completion.

Fiedler stated the materials for the flagpole are here and now arrangements must be made for its installation.

Fiedler stated the House bills did not make it through the second funnel, which was last week. He stated that in theory they should be done, but there is always the possibility they could come back next year. He stated the ILA would keep us informed.

Fiedler stated HNI has donated some pieces of furniture to the library, which Emerson Taylor will be picking up.

10. BOARD TRAINING

A. Presentation by Emerson Taylor, Youth Services

This item was moved to Item #6 on the agenda.

11. OLD BUSINESS

12. NEW BUSINESS

A. Request to Close Library on May 17, 2023 for Spring Staff In-Service Day
Loconsole read the motion as submitted.

Fiedler stated two staff in-service days would be held each year. He stated that during this proposed spring activity, staff will be visiting libraries in the area. He stated once everyone was back at the library, lunch would be served, which would be followed by circulation training. He stated many of the circulation staff members are new. He stated we might have Betty Collins come in and do story time for staff. He stated that Board members were welcome to attend.

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

B. Request to Approve Registration and Travel Expenses for ALA Annual Conference in June 2024 for Library Director for an Estimated \$2,800
Loconsole read the request as submitted.

Fiedler stated this request falls in line with the library's goal for training staff members. He stated the last conference he attended was in 2019. He stated this conference would have numerous breakout sessions and a lot of vendors. He stated he feels it will help develop the library's reputation and put us on the map.

Loconsole liked the goals set for Bobby, Molly, and the staff.

Odell moved the request be approved as submitted. Seconded by Knox. All ayes; motion carried.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Odell moved the meeting be adjourned at 5:36 p.m. Seconded by Dwyer. All ayes; motion carried.

14. NEXT MEETING

A. April 17, 2024