

**MINUTES of the MEETING of the
ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD**

THURSDAY, September 19th 2019
Admiral Room, Blasco Memorial Library

CALL TO ORDER:

Felix Lohitai called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Liz Allen, Heather Canfield, William Conway, Martha Knuth, Felix Lohitai, Trevor Pearson, Mary Ann Tempestini

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kristin Bowers (excused)

OTHERS PRESENT:

Blane Dessy (Executive Director), Sheryl Thomas (Assistant Director), Alyssa Johnson (Administrative Officer II), Deana Cooper (Business Office Manager), Shane Donaldson (Youth Services Manager) Peg Shenefelt (President of the Friends).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

August 15th, 2019

Trevor moved to approve, Mary Ann seconded. All Aye. Minutes approved.

HEARING OF CITIZENS:

None

REPORT OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL LIAISON:

None

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY UPDATE (Peg Shenefelt):

Peg relayed that Fall Book Drive held September 14th was a success. There were 35 volunteers that worked from 9am to 3pm (breaking the previous record). The Friends group will continue to work towards improving the flow and process of the drive-thru. The members of Delta Kappa Epsilon at Gannon were a great help.

REVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL REPORT (Deana Cooper):

See attached Monthly Library Fund Report—September 12th.

Deana remarked that the inconsistencies due to a processing error in last month's report have been largely corrected. The library is doing well and on target for all expenditures. There are some anticipated savings ahead in the 4th quarter due to staffing vacancies. We are awaiting final amounts from the finance department regarding the impact of wage adjustments due to the new AFSCME Pay Plan. Blane remarked that the Pay Plan has been a recent major change and asked Deana to explain for the board. The AFSCME Pay Plan brings all clerical and professional employees onto one singular pay matrix, resulting in a higher starting wage for incoming employees. Existing employees are being placed on the matrix and will receive back pay dating to January 1st. It is this back pay that will affect the library's Wages & Fringes budget the most for 2019. Deana stated that for the 2020 year alone, our wages & fringes budget will incur an additional \$350k obligation. Blane remarked that this is a fixed cost, there is nothing the Library can do about it. Deana reiterated that this back pay is an unknown variable that will affect library budget in Q4.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (Blane Dessy):

- 2020 Budget
 - For years the ECPL has presented a status quo budget—keeping the budget requests fairly even from year to year.
 - In talking with staff, he uncovered a number of needs to address for the 2020 budget
 - The library has asked for the following increases in the upcoming budget year:
 - \$350k for wages and fringes (as previously discussed)
 - \$400k for the addition of 2 new bookmobiles. Our current 38' bookmobile is in a sad state—it looks bad, the generator just broke, and it will need \$40k in repairs in order to pass inspection next April. Blane is optimistic that the County will be able to approve the purchase of 1.
 - Increase of 8% overall to the acquisitions budget. This will allow for:
 - Expansion of ever popular e-resources
 - Addition of traditional library materials
 - Upgrade of outdated categories, especially Science material
 - 25 additional wifi hotspots. The library currently loans 26 units with an average waitlist of 60-70 at any given time.
 - New Public facing computers. The staff computers are purchased through County IT budget, but public-facing ones are the responsibility of the library. In partnership with Library IT, ECPL will institute a 5 year technology plan, replacing roughly 20% of the tech every year.
 - Requesting the addition of 2 positions:
 - Heritage Room Specialist
 - Total increases equate to roughly \$1 million.
 - Kathy Dahlkemper will present the budget to County Council October 1st.
 - Library's Budget Hearing will happen on October 21st at 4:30pm at the County Courthouse. All are encouraged to attend and advocate.

- Minerva
 - A local plaster worker has been found who is able to complete the repair work.
 - Friends of the Library has agreed to raise funds for the repairs
 - Planning to restore her to original state. Peg added that the scope of work is dependent on the quotes and availability of funds.
 - October 1: Minerva will be placed in the display case outside the Heritage Room.
 - October 7: Press Conference
 - Peg announced that the Friends will have their board meeting on Monday. Trevor mentioned that CAM could host a Q&A session if we like. Jake is the person responsible for scheduling studio time. Blane asked Alyssa to follow up with this.
 - Fundraising discussion ensued.

- Master Plan Updating:
 - Phases I & II are complete, Blane was tasked with completing Phase III when he was hired. Phase III plans are now 4 years old, hence the need to do some updating to cost estimates and evaluating the original plans—not scrapping them. Admin commissioned Bostwick to do an abbreviated update.
 - Blane brought the plans to show the upcoming changes of Phase III
 - 1st Floor: Bring Fiction collection to first floor, bring internet lab to first floor, minor adjustment to JUV.

- 2nd floor: relocate non-fiction collection to 2nd floor, adding public restrooms, more meeting space.
- Sheryl added there will be some more rearranging in the Heritage Room as the digitization initiative unfolds and Microfiche readers are removed. Shane relayed there will be reworkings to make additional storage room for Children’s Dept and the Friends. Blane added there are plans for the Admiral Room and Lobby spaces.
- These phases will require upwards of \$2,000,000.
- Blane sent an invite to all 3 boards for a collaborative working meeting to meet each other and really discuss the library’s plans for 2020. The meeting will take place on November 20th at 12:30pm in the Admiral Room.
- Board discussion followed on subject of purchasing bookmobiles.

STATISTICAL AND OTHER REPORTS (Sheryl Thomas):

The statistic reports were sent in the advance agenda packet.

Sheryl shared that circulation was down 2% last month, but that there were a large number of increases, in such categories as: Bookmobile, Millcreek, eResources, Iroquois, Interlibrary Loan, and programming. Blane mentioned the programming is “brought to you by” the Friends of the Library. Sheryl divulged that the library programs will now feature labels to the 5 PA Forward literacies, enhancing our ability to report.

10. REPORT OF THE DISTRICT CONSULTANT (Marcia Wilking):

Marcia out of office, Blane provided update.

The SNOE region (Seneca, New Castle, Oil Creek, Erie library districts) just signed a MOU to provide support services between the 4 districts of NWPA. This is especially helpful as our district consultant is expected to be on leave for part of the coming year, and will be beneficial to reach out to other consultants. It is the first time that any PA Library Districts have come together formally.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES:

None

STAFF PRESENTATIONS:

Shane Donaldson, Youth Services Manager.

- Shane reviewed the results of our Summer Library Challenge. It was a great year, and the staff may have discovered their threshold for programming! New this year: Shane structured a week 1 that included more contractors and big events as an introduction week. This strategy helped to increase overall program attendance. Large numbers were seen during the Elephant & Piggie Costume Character visits. This year ECPL had the added benefit of employing 2 branch managers with Children’s Programming backgrounds. That allowed the Children’s Librarians more flexibility. Attendance overall increased, and Shane was particularly proud of his staff’s ability to raise August numbers above last year’s—where a 400+ attendee event was held that was not replicated this year.
- To cut costs this year, Shane worked with partners in house to make and print our own flyers/forms versus sending to a designer.
- Shane compared our Summer Library Challenge to the state’s Summer Quest model, and relayed some of the more rigorous differences we embrace.

- Sheryl expressed what a great job was done by not only the staff, but by Shane in managing the entire summer event.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

There are several news releases included.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVITIES:

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

- Officer Change—Felix Lohitai to assume office of President per bylaws upon the vacancy left by Julie Thiess-Boam’s resignation. Blane stated that Julie resigned to focus on her health and that the Library wishes her well.
- Vice President Vacancy—Vote to fill vacancy left by Felix Lohitai. President asked for any volunteers or nominations. Trevor Pearson nominated himself. Put to vote, all Aye.
- Approve Library Calendar for 2020—Sheryl explained the changes and library operating hours during each holiday. Trevor motioned to approve, Liz seconded, all Aye.

The majority of County employees will celebrate **HOLIDAYS** for the year **2020** on the following dates:

DESIGNATED COUNTY HOLIDAY

DATE CELEBRATED IN 2020

1. NEW YEAR’S DAY	Wednesday, January 1
2. MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY	Monday, January 20
3. PRESIDENT’S DAY	Monday, February 17
4. GOOD FRIDAY	Friday, April 10
5. EASTER SUNDAY	Sunday, April 12
6. SPRING STAFF TRAINING DAY	Thursday, May 14
7. MEMORIAL DAY	Monday, May 25
8. FLAG DAY (Library is open)	Monday, June 15
9. INDEPENDENCE DAY	Friday, July 3
10. LABOR DAY	Monday, September 7
11. FALL STAFF TRAINING DAY	Monday, October 12
12. VETERAN’S DAY	Wednesday, November 11
13. THANKSGIVING EVE	Wednesday, November 25 close at 5pm
14. THANKSGIVING DAY	Thursday, November 26
15. DAY AFTER THANKSGIVING DAY	Friday, November 27
16. DAY AFTER CHRISTMAS/CHRISTMAS EVE	Thursday, December 24
17. CHRISTMAS DAY	Friday, December 25
18. NEW YEAR’S EVE	Tuesday, December 31 close at 5pm
19. EMPLOYEE’S BIRTHDAY	Floating holiday; must be used 14 days before or after birthday

- Discuss: Review of By-Laws (President/ Vice-President/ Executive Director)
The bylaws are due for revision in 2019. Discussion to begin in September, revisions will be presented at the October board meeting, and the board will vote on revisions at the November meeting.

- e. President to appoint nominating committee to prepare a slate of officers.
Felix asked for volunteers. Mary Ann, Bill, and Trevor all volunteered.
- f. The next Advisory Board meeting is October

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 1:03 pm.