

Scenic Regional Library
Board Minutes – April 20, 2021

Scenic Regional Library Board of Trustees met at the Scenic Regional Library Union Branch on April 20, 2021 at 7:01 pm. Board President Susan Richardson presided at the meeting. Board members attending the meeting were Paula Sutton, John Cheatham, John Barry, Robert Niebruegge, Karen Holtmeyer, and Linda Andrae. Joy Dufrain, Carla Robertson, Kathleen Ham, and Martha Lindsley attended via Zoom. Board member Michele Fehlings was absent. Library Director Steven Campbell, Assistant Library Director Megan Maurer, Business and Human Resource Manager Kjersti Merseal, and Administrative Assistant Erica Mosley were also present. Warrenton Branch Manager Angie Scott attended via Zoom.

There were no public comments.

Public Comments

Karen Holtmeyer made the motion to accept the March 16, 2021 minutes, including the minutes from the March 16, 2021 Executive Session, as written. Paula Sutton seconded the motion. All voted Aye. The motion carried 11/0.

Approval of Minutes

Director Campbell presented the Financial Report. He said that the Library is currently on track to finish the fiscal year with a \$275,000 surplus. He also anticipates that revenue will exceed budget projections by \$175,000. Combined, this will give the library a \$450,000 surplus for the year. About half of this has already been designated for the library's RFID conversion project. The remaining \$250,000 could be applied toward the new Hermann facility. The \$145,000 from the pending settlement from JEMA could also be applied toward the Hermann project, covering soft costs, such as moving expenses, furniture, landscaping, and signage.

Financial Report

Robert Niebruegge made the motion to accept the Financial Report. John Barry seconded the motion. All voted Aye. The motion carried 11/0.

Angie Scott, new Warrenton Branch Manager, introduced herself to the Board. Library Board member John Barry was Ms. Scott's teacher. The Board welcomed her to the Library.

Reports

Director Campbell said three Wright City children were the first to complete the library's "1000 Books Before Kindergarten" challenge. He added that each time a child completes the challenge, it is an opportunity for the Library to publicize the program. He plans to continue sending press releases to local newspapers with each completion and hopes the publicity will help the program maintain momentum.

Director Campbell received a call from Edward Jones on behalf of a client wishing to donate to the Library. The amount is not yet known.

Staff has completed RFID tagging the adult fiction sections, ahead of schedule. Adult fiction represents 25% of the library's collection. Director Campbell said if the Library returns to normal service hours progress may slow, as there will be fewer staff available to work on the project. Tech Logic will install the security gates this summer, but the Library will need to hire an

electrician to install power and data for each gate location. The Library should be able to go live with RFID this fall.

The Library Board discussed the possibility of leasing space in the new Hermann building to the Hermann Area Hospital. The Hospital is seeking 9,000 to 9,500 square feet. They would increase the value of the library's building by spending \$2 million to renovate the leased space into medical offices. The Hospital's architect is evaluating the space and will provide the Hospital Board with a report; the Hospital Board plans to decide in mid-June. Ideally, if they do decide to lease the space, the Hospital and Library would be able to coordinate construction to occur at the same time. Considering those benefits of the lease for the library, Director Campbell suggested the Board be willing to negotiate the cost of the proposed lease amount, if necessary.

A former mayor of Hermann has approached Director Campbell about opening a youth center in the remaining 4,000 square feet of the library's building. Director Campbell asked the Board if they would be open to the idea of allowing the youth center to use the space for free, only making them responsible for the cost of utilities and insurance. He said he would expect the youth center to present a plan to improve and operate the space. Board member Robert Niebruegge pointed out the youth center would need access to bathroom facilities and a clear plan in place for youth supervision. Director Campbell agreed. Niebruegge also cautioned that the Library may have to pay property taxes on the building if it starts collecting rent, even if the prospective lessee is non-profit. Director Campbell said that he would look into the issue, but his understand was that if the Library leased to another non-profit, they would not have to pay property tax.

Director Campbell noted that as Board member Michele Fehlings is also on the Hospital's Board of Directors, and that she said she will refrain from discussing the lease issue due to potential conflict of interest.

An article commemorating former Board member Diann Wacker's years of service will appear in the May newsletter.

Unfinished Business

The Board discussed the Library's face mask policy. Director Campbell would like this to be a standing agenda item as the issue continues to evolve. Administration surveyed frontline staff about their support of the mask requirement. Support has dropped from last November, with only 55% of respondents supporting continuing the mask requirement for patrons. Director Campbell believes there is staff fatigue due to public pushback and verbal abuse. The decrease may also be the result of staff feeling personally safer due to being vaccinated. Approximately 80% of responding frontline staff said they are (or are planning to be) vaccinated.

Library Face Mask Policy and COVID Restrictions

Paula Sutton feels the Library has a legal and moral responsibility to not send unvaccinated staff to do outreach in nursing homes or children's storytimes. Carla Robertson warned that requiring staff to disclose their vaccination status may be a HIPAA violation. Director Campbell said the Library can legally

require staff to get vaccinated, but advised the Board to not go down that road. John Barry fears legal liability of having unvaccinated staff, as staff are acting as representatives of the Library. Martha Lindsley said screening staff for antibodies might be an alternative to vaccination, and that it would be comparable to teachers getting screened for tuberculosis. Director Campbell said that he would consult the Library's employment attorney about these liability issues.

The Board declined to make a motion to change the mask mandate at this time. Linda Andrae, using a virus tracking app, said Franklin County has fallen below 10 per 100,000 for the first time since the pandemic started. Karen Holtmeyer said the numbers are very good, and she would like to see them stay that way by remaining vigilant and keeping the mask requirement.

There was no new business.

New Business

The Board did not go into executive session, as there was no new information to report beyond what Director Campbell already included in the Board packet.

Closed Session-
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Director Campbell reported that Sullivan Branch Manager Kecia Philpot won the Sullivan Chamber of Commerce Woman of the Year award. She was also recently elected Alderman in Sullivan.

There being no further business, Board President Susan Richardson adjourned the meeting at 7:58 pm. **Adjourn**

Secretary

Approved: _____
President, Scenic Regional Library Board of Trustees

Date: _____