

Scenic Regional Library  
Board Minutes – August 24, 2021

Scenic Regional Library Board of Trustees met at the Scenic Regional Library Union Branch on August 24, 2021 at 7:00 pm. Board President Karen Holtmeyer presided at the meeting. Board members attending the meeting were Martha Lindsley, John Cheatham, Paula Sutton, Kathleen Ham, Michele Fehlings, Robert Niebruegge, John Barry, Susan Richardson, Joy Dufrain, Carla Robertson, and Laura Hengstenberg. Board member Linda Andrae joined the meeting virtually via phone.

Library Director Steven Campbell, Assistant Library Director Megan Maurer, Business and Human Resources Manager Kjersti Merseal, Administrative Assistant Erica Mosley, and Circulation Coordinator Diane Disbro were also present.

The Scenic Regional Library Board of Trustees will consider the proposed property tax rate of \$0.1907 per \$100 of assessed valuation for Scenic Regional Library District, a consolidated library district and political subdivision, to generate revenue for the fiscal year that began on July 1, 2021.

**Public Hearing**

There were no public comments.

**Public Comments**

*Robert Niebruegge made the motion to accept the June 15, 2021 minutes, including the minutes from the June 15, 2021 Executive Session, as written. Susan Richardson seconded the motion. All voted Aye. The motion carried 13/0.*

**Approval of Minutes**

Director Campbell noted that some budget lines appear high, but as the Library is only one month into the budget year this is normal and will regulate as the year progresses. Personnel expenses are high due to there being three pay periods in July. The Library has collected 1.1% of revenue, which is the same as at this point in the last fiscal year. John Barry noted the increase in passport fee revenue, which he considers a good sign.

**Financial Report**

*John Cheatham made the motion to accept the Financial Report. Joy Dufrain seconded the motion. All voted Aye. The motion carried 13/0.*

Laura Hengstenberg, the new Board member representing Gasconade County, introduced herself to the Board.

**Reports**

Director Campbell briefly summarized the Reports in the Board packet, adding the following updates. He is still awaiting the report from Henderson Building Solutions about the HVAC systems at the New Haven, Owensville, and St. Clair branches. Once received, he will send it to the Library's attorney, Dave Politte.

Farmer's Mutual Insurance of Warren County has begun work to extend the sewer line at their site next to the Warrenton branch.

Director Campbell is allowing the Warren County Licensing Center to use the Warrenton branch for its day-to-day operations. It is conducting license testing

there, and doing driving exams in the parking lot. Director Campbell said it is a great partnership, and brings foot traffic to the library.

The Franklin County Health Department was supposed to end their lease of the old Union branch building in July. However, they asked Director Campbell to continue billing them, as they are still using the space for storage and meetings, and expect to begin administering COVID vaccine boosters soon.

The former mayor of Hermann was pursuing grants to install sidewalks from the school to the new Hermann branch before he left office. Director Campbell talked to the new City Administrator about resuming this project. The Administrator will bring it up to the City Council. The City would have to provide 20% matching funds to receive the grants. The section of sidewalk would be approximately one mile, but sidewalks have already been constructed over most of that distance.

Missouri Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft visited the Union branch today to present the check for a \$30,000 grant for e-books. Director Campbell described it as a good visit. Ashcroft toured the branch and talked to staff.

There was no unfinished business.

#### **Unfinished Business**

#### **New Business**

Director Campbell said the pro forma data from Crawford County was incorrectly input into the State Auditor's system. The County Clerk has corrected the error; however, the Library is still waiting for the revised copy to arrive from the State. Director Campbell revised the figures on the pro forma, which resulted in a maximum rate of \$0.1907. With that rate applied, the Library's revenue for FY 2021-2022 will be \$5,888,465, (an increase over last year of about \$300,000). He does not expect the numbers on the corrected pro forma will be any different; however, he informed the Board the rate they were voting on could potentially be slightly different, and that he would notify them if that were the case.

#### **FY 2021-2022 Tax Levy Rate**

***Robert Niebruegge made the motion for the Board of Trustees to set the proposed property tax rate of \$0.1907 per \$100 of assessed valuation for Scenic Regional Library District, a consolidated library district and political subdivision, to generate revenue for the fiscal year that began on July 1, 2021. However, if the maximum allowable tax rate on the final pro forma from the State Auditor's Office is higher than the \$0.1907 rate, the Library Director will submit the pro forma with the new maximum allowable rate. Martha Lindsley seconded the motion. All voted Aye. The motion carried 13/0.***

Director Campbell presented his findings on the possibility of adding a new branch in Marthasville. Operating expenses would be approximately \$95,950 per year. After doing the research, he is disinclined to open a Marthasville branch at this time. Martha Lindsley said that even though the area is not heavily populated, Highway 47 through Marthasville is a busy road and commuters might find a branch there convenient. Susan Richardson said when the Board first started discussing a Marthasville branch, she envisioned

#### **Possible Marthasville Location**

something much smaller and less expensive than what Director Campbell presented. Linda Andrae said that while a full branch might not be necessary, she would like the Library to do something to invest in the Marthasville community. Director Campbell distributed pictures of several models of self-service library vending units. Patrons can use them to browse up to 1,000 books and pick up holds. The machines can cost a couple hundred thousand dollars, but it is a one-time investment, unlike a staffed location that requires ongoing operating expense. The Board discussed possible Marthasville locations for the machine. Carla Robertson suggested researching grants to cover the cost. Michele Fehlings said the Marthasville population doesn't justify the cost of a library branch, but would like to see more information on the self-serve machines.

Director Campbell distributed the architect's drawing of the Hermann building interior, which included the floor plans for the Library and the hospital. The project is now out for bid. The Board did not have any concerns with the general framework of the proposed lease agreement, including the depreciation schedule applied to the building's sale price should the Library ever sell the building to the hospital. Director Campbell said the lease negotiations are now down to details such as deciding who covers the cost of snow removal. The Library's contractor will build the entire front exterior of the building, and the hospital will then reimburse the Library for their portion of it. The final version of the lease agreement will be introduced for approval at the September Board meeting.

**Hermann Building  
Project – Hospital  
Lease Agreement  
Framework and  
Parameters  
Resolution**

Director Campbell requested that the Library Board approve the Parameters Resolution, consisting of eight documents, to move ahead with financing the Hermann project. The library has received an "A" bond rating for the Hermann project, which is the same rating it received for its previous bonds. Piper Sandler & Co., the library's bond company, are currently estimating the interest rate will be 2.34% on the \$1.9 million transaction. The interest rate on the library's 2017 bond transaction is 3.85%. The average annual payment for the bonds is estimated at \$123,664. The issuance cost for the bonds will be \$77,000, which is incorporated into the financing.

***John Cheatham made the motion to approve the Hermann Parameters Resolution. Michele Fehlings seconded the motion. All voted Aye. The motion carried 13/0.***

The 10 hour per week Technical Services position mentioned in the Board packet has been updated to 28 hours. An additional 18 hours has been added to the position, which can be used as floater hours to help cover shifts at the branches.

**Draft of Proposed  
FY 2021-2022  
Annual Budget**

Director Campbell said public libraries generally try to make personnel expense 60-65% of their total budget. With proposed increases, Scenic Regional's personnel expenses remain around 59%, which he considers very sound. In light of salary increases across the area due to COVID, a rising Consumer Price Index, and increasing turnover of part-time branch staff, he is recommending a 5% raise for non-professional staff and 3% for professional staff. Laura Hengstenberg suggested offering benefits to part-time staff in order to differentiate the Library in the local job market. The Board discussed the

potential expense, which was felt to be prohibitive. John Cheatham, Carla Robertson, Robert Niebruegge, and John Barry all voiced support for the proposed salary increases. The Board will approve the draft of the proposed FY 2021-2022 Annual Budget, as is, at its September meeting.

***Joy Dufrain made the motion to approve the Reciprocal Lending Agreement between the Scenic Regional Library and the St. Louis County Library District. Carla Robertson seconded the motion. All voted Aye. The motion carried 13/0.***

**Proposed St. Louis County Reciprocal Agreement**

The Board reviewed the Conflict of Interest policy, which must be renewed every two years.

**Conflict of Interest Policy Renewal**

***Susan Richardson made the motion to approve the Conflict of Interest Policy. Paula Sutton seconded the motion. All voted Aye. The motion carried 13/0.***

The Board reviewed a copy of the book *The Hips on the Drag Queen Go Swish, Swish, Swish*, which several patrons have requested be removed from the Library. The Board declined to take any action on the book. Director Campbell thanked the Board for supporting intellectual freedom. Robert Niebruegge suggested the branches be more cognizant of which books they choose to display, and of what could potentially offend someone. Director Campbell reiterated that the branches are self-directed when it comes to displays; administration does not dictate display topics.

**Book Challenges**

Director Campbell reported that 67 out of 75 staff members responded to the face mask survey, which closed August 23. When asked if they support a face mask mandate for patrons, 45% responded “yes” and 55% “no.” The Board declined to take any action on a face mask mandate for patrons. When asked if they support a face mask requirement for staff, 61.2% of responding staff answered “yes,” and 38.8% “no.” Director Campbell said he is leaning toward re-enacting the face mask requirement for staff some time this week. Board approval is not required, but he asked for their input. The Board supported the idea of another face mask requirement for staff. The Board discussed the FDA’s approval of COVID vaccines and how this may affect the Library’s stance toward a vaccine mandate. Director Campbell said that he would not request that the Library Board approve such a mandate due to the controversy surrounding such measures. However, if the Board approved such a measure, of course, he would support and carry out the plan. Susan Richardson said she would like the Board to monitor the situation closely and revisit the issue at the next Board meeting.

**Staff Face Mask Survey and COVID Safety Precautions**

The Franklin County Historical Society previously asked for the use of the old Union branch building. The building is unavailable due to the Health Department’s lease extension. Director Campbell said they are now asking to use the old Administration building. The Board discussed the possibility. After their experience with the Ministerial Alliance in Hermann, they were not interested in allowing the Historical Society to occupy the building.

**Franklin County Historical Society Request**

Director Campbell requested that the Library Board move to close session due to an unexpected personnel issue.

**Closed Session –  
RSMo Section  
610.022 (3)  
Personnel**

*John Cheatham made the motion to move to closed session. John Barry seconded the motion.*

*There was a roll call vote to move into Executive Session: Karen Holtmeyer—Aye, Martha Lindsley—Aye, John Cheatham—Aye, Paula Sutton—Aye, Kathleen Ham—Aye, Michele Fehlings—Aye, Robert Niebruegge—Aye, John Barry—Aye, Susan Richardson—Aye, Joy Dufrain—Aye, Carla Robertson—Aye, Laura Hengstenberg—Aye, Linda Andrae—Aye.*

The Board moved into Executive Session at 9:10 pm.

*There was a roll call vote to move out of Executive Session: Karen Holtmeyer—Aye, Martha Lindsley—Aye, John Cheatham—Aye, Paula Sutton—Aye, Kathleen Ham—Aye, Michele Fehlings—Aye, Robert Niebruegge—Aye, John Barry—Aye, Susan Richardson—Aye, Joy Dufrain—Aye, Carla Robertson—Aye, Laura Hengstenberg—Aye, Linda Andrae—Aye.*

The Library Board returned from Executive Session at 9:28 pm.

*There being no further business, Board President Karen Holtmeyer adjourned the meeting at 9:30 pm.* **Adjourn**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
President, Scenic Regional Library Board of Trustees

Date: \_\_\_\_\_