

Scenic Regional Library
Board Minutes – August 25, 2020

Scenic Regional Library Board of Trustees met at the Scenic Regional Library Union Branch in Union, Missouri on August 25, 2020 at 7:00 pm. Board President Susan Richardson presided at the meeting. Board members attending the meeting were John Cheatham, Paula Sutton, Kathleen Ham, Robert Niebruegge, Diann Wacker, John Barry, Joy Dufraim, Karen Holtmeyer, Martha Lindsley, and Michele Fehlings. Board members Linda Andrae and Carla Robertson were absent. Library Director Steven Campbell, Assistant Library Director Megan Maurer, Business and Human Resource Manager Kjersti Merseal, Administrative Assistant Erica Mosley, Hermann Branch Manager Kasey Wright, and Union Branch Manager Macee Jarvis were also present.

The Scenic Regional Library Board of Trustees will consider the proposed property tax rate of \$0.1973 per \$100 of assessed valuation for Scenic Regional Library District, a consolidated library district and political subdivision, to generate revenue for the fiscal year began on July 1, 2020.

Public Hearing

There were no public comments.

Public Comments

Board member Kathleen Ham clarified her comment in the June 16 minutes, which she said sounded like she was being lackadaisical about the construction of the new Hermann facility. She wants it made clear that, although the Hermann patrons are being patient, they do want a new building.

Approval of Minutes

Karen Holtmeyer made the motion to accept the June 16, 2020 minutes as written. Diann Wacker seconded the motion. All voted Aye. The motion carried 11/0.

Director Campbell presented the financial report, noting that as usual at this time of year (the beginning of the fiscal year) the Library has not collected very much revenue. The bulk of it comes in the Fall. For the benefit of new Board members Michele Fehlings and Martha Lindsley, Director Campbell explained the check register page in the report, as well as the Library's check signing process. Board member John Barry said he thought the money spent on the roof for the old Administration building was worth the expense.

Financial Report

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

Director Campbell introduced two new Board members to the Board. Michele Fehlings, representing Gasconade County, is replacing Board member Carol Leech. Martha Lindsley, representing Crawford County, is replacing Leonard Butts.

Introductions

Director Campbell introduced new Hermann Branch Manager Kasey Wright and new Union Branch Manager Macee Jarvis to the Board.

Director Campbell gave the following updates to the Librarians' Reports:

Librarians Reports

Administration has decided not to repair the Bookmobile. The Barry Lawrence Regional Library has expressed interest, and will be arriving to look at the Bookmobile in the coming weeks. They are expected to purchase it. The Library originally paid only \$13,000 for the Bookmobile (the rest of the cost was covered by insurance) and will likely be able to sell it for nearly as much.

A prospective buyer will be viewing the old Union branch building. The buyer, a church, looked at the property prior to the COVID shutdown. The realtor says they are very interested. Director Campbell is looking into having the parking lot chipped and sealed at a cost of \$5,700, to make the property more attractive to buyers.

Director Campbell said the new occupancy restrictions at the Wright City branch are going well, so far. Only 11 people were in the branch on the first day the Wright City Middle School was in session, so there was no issues. The Library will continue to enforce the restrictions.

Board President Susan Richardson inquired about the two-week checkout period for mobile hotspots, and the possibility that some patrons might find ways around checkout limits. Board member John Cheatham asked about the range of the devices. It is unknown, but Director Campbell said he would find out.

The art donation "The Readers" is now on display at the Union branch.

Between 700 and 800 (approximately) community survey responses have been received so far. Director Campbell said that would put the response rate at about 7%, which is average for this type of survey.

Board President Susan Richardson asked if the Library's soft hiring freeze is a financial boon. Director Campbell said that by not filling vacant positions, the Library could save up to \$10,000 per month. However, the intent is not to save money; rather, by distributing the workload, the Library is trying to ensure that remaining staff have enough hours and work. He hopes the freeze will be short-lived.

Director Campbell asked the Board their opinions on enacting a mask mandate. Board member Martha Lindsley suggested tying a mandate to monthly county positivity rates, requiring masks for library patrons if the positivity rate went above (for example) 10%. Board President Susan Richardson said that, unfortunately, mask wearing has become very political. Because of the local resistance against masks, she is reluctant to enact a mandate which could potentially involve the Library in a political debate. Board member John Cheatham said he does not think librarians and library staff are hired to do the job of standing at the door to police mask wearing.

The Board discussed the implications of requiring—but not enforcing—masks. Board member Paula Sutton said that while visiting the Union branch she overheard a patron ask if he was required to wear a mask. A staff member told him he was not. Ms. Sutton feels staff should instead answer those questions with “We would greatly appreciate it if you did.” Board members Robert Niebruegge and John Cheatham both suggested posting more prominent signage on the doors asking patrons to please wear masks. Director Campbell said the Library would have signs made and put up at the branches in the coming week.

Planning for a virtual staff training day is now in the works.

Carol Bell’s bench has been installed at the New Haven branch.

There was no unfinished business.

Unfinished Business

New Business

Director Campbell distributed corrected copies of the tax levy information and budget narrative draft. The assessed valuation figures and estimated tax revenue figures in the Board packet were incorrect. Board member Robert Niebruegge also pointed out a date error in the tax levy information, which said the fiscal year began on July 1, 2019. (It should be “July 1, 2020”). Director Campbell said the date had been correct in the newspaper notice.

Tax Levy

John Barry made the motion for the Board of Trustees to set the proposed property tax rate of \$0.1973 per \$100 of assessed valuation for Scenic Regional Library District, a consolidated library district and political subdivision, to generate revenue for the fiscal year began on July 1, 2020. John Cheatham seconded the motion. All voted Aye. The motion carried 11/0.

Paula Sutton made the motion to approve the appointments of Lynnette Watts, Debbie Heggemann, and Barbara Harman to the Scenic Regional Library Foundation Board of Directors. Kathleen Ham seconded the motion. All voted Aye. The motion carried 11/0

Proposed Appointments

Board member John Barry wants to see more publicizing of the Library’s donor wall book program. Board member Robert Niebruegge suggested advertising it in the newsletter as a Christmas gift idea or memorial.

Director Campbell said the most significant change in the proposed budget is pay increases for staff. He feels that part time Library Assistants, and Branch Managers, are currently the most underpaid. His goal for FY 2021-2022 is to increase salaries for these positions even further beyond the current proposed budget, to \$13.00/\$13.50 for Library Assistants, and \$40,000 for Branch Managers. That extra dollar increase for Library Assistants may be possible in the current fiscal year, if approximately \$35,000 can be reallocated in the proposed budget. Board President Susan Richardson was in favor of tabling the approval of the proposed FY2020-2021 budget until the next Board meeting. In the meantime, Director Campbell will further adjust the budget to try to make the further pay increases possible.

Draft of Proposed FY2020-2021 Annual Budget

Assistant Director Megan Maurer presented an update on programming. Since reopening in June, all Library programming has been virtual. The Library is trying to move more of its programming to its new YouTube channel which, unlike Facebook (the current platform), doesn't require viewers to have an account to access the content. She said programming statistics look different now, because instead of counting attendees in a room, the Library is now counting views based on differing software criteria (one YouTube view is considered to be at least one minute), and in accordance with the State Library's new virtual programming reporting requirements. She said the Library is trying to offer more programming, without overwhelming people with content.

Director Campbell asked the Board to approve moving forward with the design work for the new Hermann building. He pointed out that the \$120,000 architectural fee will be paid in cash, which means less to finance later. Board member Martha Lindsley asked if there was any concern building codes might change from the time the plans were completed to when construction begins, potentially one year from now. Director Campbell said he discussed this with the architect, who anticipates needing to make only very minor changes.

**Hermann Branch
Project
Architectural
Contract**

John Cheatham made the motion to approve the contract with Horn Architects for the design of the new Hermann branch facility. Paula Sutton seconded the motion. All voted Aye. The motion carried 11/0.

Director Campbell noted that between one-quarter to one-third of the architect's fees aren't paid until construction is ongoing, so the expense for the current fiscal year will actually be less.

Robert Niebruegge made the motion to approve the proposed change to the Library Code of Conduct regarding cell phone use in the Library. John Cheatham seconded the motion. All voted Aye. The motion carried 11/0.

**Proposed Revision
to Library Code of
Conduct – Cell
Phones**

The Board returned to discussion of the Bookmobile. Board member Robert Niebruegge asked if a formal vote needed to be taken to terminate bookmobile service. Director Campbell said that while many would argue that bookmobile service is an administrative decision, he consults the Board on major decisions, such as this one. He thought that having the Board confirm the library's decision with a vote would be a good idea. Board President Susan Richardson said she is sad to see the bookmobile go, but knows it is the right thing.

John Cheatham made the motion to approve ending Bookmobile service. Michele Fehlings seconded the motion. All voted Aye. The motion carried 11/0.

Adjourn

There being no further business, Board President Susan Richardson adjourned the meeting at 8:55 pm.

Secretary

Approved: _____
President, Scenic Regional Library Board of Trustees

Date: _____