

WICHITA PUBLIC LIBRARY

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Directors

April 21, 2009

The regular meeting of the Library Board of Directors was held at 12:00 Noon on Tuesday, April 21, 2009 with the following present: Ms. Donna Aldrich, Ms. Melissa Alley, Mr. Tom Engelmann, Mrs. Susan Estes, Ms. Cathy Landwehr, Ms. Evelyn Neier, Ms. Nancy Ogle, Ms. Helen Parli, and Mr. Steve Roberts. Absent: Ms. Barbara Baker, Mr. Randy Brown, Ms. Jane Eshelman, Mr. Randy Yeisley, and Ms. Marge Zakoura-Vaughan.

Staff Present: Jennifer Allen, Administrative Aide II, Cynthia Berner Harris, Director of Libraries; Mary K. Bird-Guilliams, Collection Development Administrator; Jennifer Heinicke, Special Projects Librarian; Julie Linneman, Programming/Outreach Manager; Jaime Prothro, Customer Service Manager; Sarah Shetlar, Art, Music, and Video Section Manager; and Larry Vos, Reference Services Manager.

Staff Presentation

The staff presentation was an excerpt from “The Art of Storytelling” video that the Library has made in partnership with Trees for Life/Books for Life.

Nancy Ogle asked who would receive this video. Cynthia Berner Harris answered that it was originally created to send to countries where Books for Life is building libraries but after seeing the finished product, staff realized that it is also something that can be used internally in the Library by people doing storytelling, early childhood educators, education students, babysitters, and people working in church schools. Next week, along with Trees for Life and with the support of the Mayor, the Library has invited a group that has interests in those areas to the Library. They will be shown the video and asked to help ensure that the training materials are widely available and used in our community. Because the philosophy of Trees for Life is not to make money, they have the video segments on YouTube for easy access and free use. They do ask for a donation if people want an actual DVD copy, but that just helps with the cost. At the end of the DVD is a trailer that says to share with everyone.

Susan Estes stated that she would like the link to share with people at Rotary Clubs.

Jennifer Heinicke stated that a companion workbook is being developed.

Ms. Berner Harris stated that, in making this video, Trees for Life realized that this could be the prototype for a whole variety of training material. The next one they will be working on will probably be on puppetry.

Nancy Ogle, President, called the meeting to order at 12:11 p.m., a quorum being present.

Introductions

None

Public Comment

Zach Gift was present and stated that he would like to comment on the Library's dress code policy. He stated that he believes in citizens helping public servants if the citizen wants the best service he can get. Last fall he observed a problem at the Evergreen Branch with an employee wearing what he considers to be inappropriate and unprofessional dress. He tried to find out what the dress code was Citywide. He found out there is not a master policy, but that it is up to each department to decide what is appropriate and to enforce it. He stated that he received a copy of the Library dress code and feels the wording "clothing that is too revealing" is too ambiguous. Yesterday he was back at the Evergreen Branch and once again this staff member was wearing inappropriate clothing. He feels that the dress code should be spelled out more so that it is clearer as to the height of hems, how see through clothing can be, how low-cut the tops can be, and how loose they should be. He compared the employee's attire to something out of Victoria's Secret. He would like to see the board have discussion on this. Mr. Gift went on to say that the branch manager stated that the employee's dress was in compliance with the policy.

Susan Estes asked if his bottom line was that he doesn't want to see undergarments. Mr. Gift replied that was a little simplistic. Mrs. Estes stated that words have to be put down on paper in a simplistic way that is easily interpreted. He stated that there should be a length of hem, some indication of how low a top is, and how see through it is. It would depend on the type of undergarment.

Mr. Gift stated that he doesn't have pictures to show the Board. He went on to say he wished he had a picture of what the employee was wearing and had asked the branch manager if it would be inappropriate to take a picture and she replied that she felt it would be harassment. Mrs. Estes stated that she would never let a man that she does not know take a picture of her for any reason and asked Mr. Gift to please not put any employee through that. Mr. Gift replied that he doesn't understand why, as a City employee performing their job, what the difference is in saying the clothing is too revealing and taking a picture to show it is too revealing. Mrs. Estes answered that just because you are a City employee does not mean that you should be subjected to the humiliation of someone coming in and photographing you for evidence.

Cathy Landwehr stated she has a problem with making dress codes too specific as to how many inches and that type of thing. She went on to say that she doesn't believe, in this day and age, this is done in any type of business. This is something that the supervisor must take responsibility to say what is allowable and what is not.

Mr. Gift went on to say that when you leave it open you get into murky waters. If the supervisor was a male with a libido problem, he might be much more lenient. Mrs. Ogle pointed out that, in this case, it was not a male supervisor.

Mr. Gift stated that when he asked the branch manager for the employee's name, he was told that she was not comfortable giving it to him.

Ms. Ogle stated that the Library Board does have an Operations Committee that deals with

policies, procedures and things like that and this would be referred to them for review. Mr. Gift asked how he would receive follow up on this and Ms. Berner Harris replied that she would follow up with him.

Mr. Gift left.

Ms. Berner Harris stated that she was at Evergreen the previous day when Mr. Gift was complaining. She was able to observe the employee and found her dressed appropriately for her job duties.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the regular meeting held on March 17, 2009 were presented. Steve Roberts moved (Engelmann) to approve the minutes as written. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Finance Committee Report

Tom Engelmann gave the Finance report.

Mr. Engelmann made a committee motion to approve the Finance report and bills for March 2009 as presented on the agenda: General Fund Operating Bills in the amount of \$617,900.50; Grant Fund Bills of \$53,841.41; and Gift & Memorial Fund Bills of \$978.59 for a total of \$672,720.50. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Operations Committee Report

Director Berner Harris stated that the Library would like the board's permission to eliminate the charge for non-book materials placed in the book drops. She added that there are now separate media drops in place at the larger branches and mixing of books and non-book materials is less critical in the smaller locations where the volume is lighter.

Cathy Landwehr moved (Estes) to eliminate the charge for placing non-book materials in the drop boxes. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Planning & Facilities Committee Report

Evelyn Neier gave the Planning & Facilities Committee report.

Repairs of the Linwood roof are underway but they had to stop for awhile because of the weather. The Library developed many new leaks here at the Central Branch. Public Works crews patch as leaks appear.

Replacement of carpet under public computer areas on the first floor of the Central Library has been completed. This eliminates the places where carpet was stretched to the point of being a trip hazard and safety issue.

We are in negotiation with Public Works and Child Start about the latter's request to upgrade a

dishwasher in the Head Start kitchen in the Evergreen building. If work proceeds, all expenses will be paid by Child Start.

Ms. Berner Harris stated that the City Council has voted 6-1 to approve the contract for the Library's building program with Councilman Skelton voting in the negative. The contract was awarded to Holzheimer, Bolek and Meehan, also known as HB+M Providence. This will be about a six-month process. The City Manager has asked to be involved in the project.

Public Affairs Committee Report

Melissa Alley gave the Public Affairs Committee report.

Kansas public libraries are looking at a combined two year reduction in State Aid of 21%. This is a significant impact for our library. Word came out earlier this week that when the legislature returns there will be new conversation about reductions to the Interlibrary Loan Development Program (ILDP). Funds to our library from this program have already been cut 15%. The eventual outcomes of the legislative session will be critical to the Library's 2010 work plan.

At the federal level, there is a movement under way to amend the Consumer Product Safety information Act of 2008 to exclude children's books from lead testing. Congressman Tiahrt has agreed to become a co-sponsor of that bill.

Special Committee Reports

Friends of the Library – Helen Parli gave the following information:

- 140 staff and volunteers were at the volunteer luncheon yesterday – the biggest ever.
- The Friends of the Library met on April 9th.
- The bookstore made nearly \$5,000 in sales in March and Kristian Strom sold \$465.25 in Internet sales.
- Current membership is 891 members, including 29 platinum, 810 gold and 52 Individual card members.
- The next scheduled meeting is May 14.

Library Foundation – Nancy Ogle stated that the Foundation met briefly yesterday before the volunteer luncheon with conversation centered on the stock market.

Wichita Genealogical Society – Cynthia Berner Harris stated that the Genealogical Society was currently on its way to Independence, Mo for three days at the Midwest Genealogy Library.

Director of Libraries Report

- Jennifer Heinicke took a 1st place state award from the Kansas Professional Communicators for her work with The Big Read and will be going on to nationals.
- The Wichita Public Library has received a Big Read Grant for 2009 but cannot officially announce the award until June.

- The Library submitted program enhancement requests for 2010 which includes moving Internet fees for the Central Library and the Alford Branch to the general fund and moving half of the employees currently paid out of State Aid into the general fund.
- It was learned late last week that the City may be receiving some Community Service Block Grant Money as part of the economic stimulus. There may be an opportunity for the Library to receive some funding for some projects as a part of this.
- The Library is working with the Workforce Alliance and United Way to make sure that if there is something the Library can be doing as part of the One-Stop Employment Center that is opening up, we are doing it.
- When the Central Library book drop was replaced, the old one was donated to the Valley Center Library. Ms. Berner Harris passed around a thank you letter from that Library.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

Ms. Ogle stated that six board members who were reaching the term limits were recognized at the volunteer luncheon yesterday. It is time to start thinking about replacements. Board members were encouraged to recommend anyone that they thought would make a good fit. Applicants must live in the City limits and not be a member of another City board with the exception of a district advisory board.

The Library received a joint responsibility agreement from the Levand Trust. It must be signed by both the Library Director and the Library Board President and returned by Monday, May 18th. The agreement simply outlines the amount of Trust money that the Library will receive, when money must be expended and what happens when a Library fails to meet a reporting deadline. Ms. Berner Harris recommended approval and processing of the agreement. Steve Roberts moved (Alley) to approve the Director and President to sign the agreement. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Announcements

None

The meeting was adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be May 19, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Berner Harris
Director of Libraries