

MINUTES

Waukegan Public Library – Board of Trustees Meeting

Wednesday, February 19, 2020

128 N County Street, Waukegan, IL 60085

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:45pm

II. Roll Call

Trustees present: Ms. Sylvia England; Mr. Josue Pasillas; Mr. Larry McShane; Ms. Tatiana Amorella; Ms. Jean Smith; Ms. Rachele Mendez; Ms. Mary Stickels; Ms. Annette Darden and Ms. Chetara Jenkins

Also present were: Ms. Selina Gomez-Beloz, Executive Director; Mr. Jon Gaskill, Assistant Director; Ms. Debra Jordan, HR Manager; Ms. Anna Guthman, Business Office Manager; Ms. Amanda Civitello, Marketing and Communications Manager; Ms. Alicia Garcia, Development Manager, Mr. Doug Dorando, Attorney; Ms. Pat Mallory, Friends of the Library; and Ms. Susan Royer, Executive Assistant.

III. Agenda and Minutes

Motion to approve Agenda for WPL Board of Trustees February 19, 2020 meeting with one amendment was made by Mr. Pasillas and seconded by Ms. Amorella. Motion passed.

Motion to approve the Minutes of the WPL January 15, 2020 meeting with two amendments was made by Mr. Pasillas and seconded by Mr. McShane. Ms. Mendez and Ms. Amorella abstained. Motion passed.

IV. Finance Committee Report

There was no quorum for the Finance meeting. Mr. McShane and Ms. England met with Ms. Guthman to review the budget vs actual and check detail reports. All appeared appropriate with nothing unusual.

The WPL Foundation Profit & Loss Statement for the period of May 2019 – February 2020 was also reviewed.

The Fiscal Year 21 Budget was the Library was also reviewed during the meeting. The budget did include the increase from the city. Ms. Gomez-Beloz provided information on the line items of the budget:

- The city awarded the Library 4.4 million dollars, which is an increase of two hundred thousand dollars, which was very generous and appreciated

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- There have been discussions about going fine free so the anticipated revenue was decreased in the budget
- The per anticipated per Capita Grant is 69,000 to be on the conservative side give our total income anticipated \$4,494,000.
- Earlier this year the Board saw a more general explanation of this of these amounts. This is a little bit more detailed because this goes by our various account lines.
- Salaries went up two percent in terms of the overall amount.
- Health care benefits are anticipated to increase
- Legal fees have now been added to Administrative expenses
- Marketing costs have increased for printing costs of the mailer.

Approval of the Budget may be added to the Agenda for the next Board meeting.

Motion to Approve January 2020 disbursements was made by Mr. McShane and seconded by Mr. Pasillas.

Ms. Amorella asked if there is a way to be more specific in the general category of the check detail. Ms. Mendez asked if programs could be broken out as well, for adults/children's and teens.

Ms. Guthman explained that the general is from Collection costs. The books, DVD's, etc. and there is a separate report that breaks this down.

After questioning from Ms. Mendez on several line items for clarification, since she was not able to attend the Finance Committee Meeting, the vote to approve the January 2020 disbursements was taken. Motion to approve was made by Mr. McShane and Seconded by Mr. Pasillas, motion passed.

V. Director's Report

The Directors report is part of the Board Packet.

Ms. Jordan provided an over view of vacancies. The Library has hired five people to fill vacancies. We currently have four more open positions.

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VI. Services Report

- Mr. Gaskill provided the Board with copies of the welcome packets the Marilyn and the customer service department are handing out to new patrons. Included are our newsletter, flyers and fun items like stuff some kids like a pencil or a pen.
- Sixty four boxes of books have been in the past month have been donated to local community organizations
- Mr. Gaskill has been working with various department managers on converting some of our staff space into more beneficial spaces:
 - The inventory space would essentially be split to accommodate the inventory team and create a permanent space for the Friends book sales.
 - Providing the space to the Friends would open up the Teen Corner/Young Adult Collection and allow the Library to better merchandise the Young Adult Materials.
 - The old Bookmobile space is being looked at as a shared space for staff. We are looking into cost and timing.
- We're also talking with a company called Happy or Not that allows you to rate your experience at the library from frown face to smiley face. Patrons would be able to rate how they feel about the library programming that they experience or a library service experience. Without having to fill out a card.

VII. President's Report

I want to say thank you for the postcards. Those are very informative that come in the mail. So I do get postcards. I'm hoping that everybody is getting postcards about things that are happening.

Ms. Gomez-Beloz addressed what is happening with the Ray Bradbury collection.

- The Ray Bradbury collection is being repacked and we are looking for either creating space in house that's climate control or finding a storage space that's climate control to protect those items
- Gabriel. Our new reference librarian will be in charge of processing those items. Box by box which eventually the majority of that collection will end up at the new Carnegie Center. We are hoping to get those items out of the garage and out of the bookmobile room and the other little spaces where it's at, but it's in the process of being boxed up right now.

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Ms. England brought to the Boards attention that Black History Month is all of February. It's not January 20th through February 19 or 23. So we'll make sure that that's the sign is done correctly next year. In addition, yesterday she did go to a program here at the Library that was very good.

VIII. Foundation Report

The Foundation did not meet last week. They had a strategic planning meeting instead. Ms. Garcia provided a list of current members and job description for interested parties to join.

IX. Friends Report

Ms. Mallory provided the Friends report. The Friends concert on Valentine's Day was a success. They sold all the cookies and made \$83.00, the audience enjoyed it and the room was filled to capacity. The next event will be the book sale and that's March 13th on Friday and Saturday the 14th.

The annual meeting is on April 26th from 1:00 – 3:00pm. The Board is invited.

Ms. Civitello thanked everyone for their kind words and said “leaving WPL is definitely bittersweet and I've had so many great opportunities and was fortunate to work with so many fantastic people, especially in my department. So I have a really awesome Department team, Jennifer Herrick and Karina Martinez. I've been so proud of the work that we've done together. The Friends of the library have been such a bright spot in my yearly five years here at the Library. I'm excited for some new responsibilities and new opportunities for growth and my new position, but I will always be grateful for and proud of the work that I've done here in Waukegan with my team and leave this position with a lot of love for this library and for this community.

X. Public Comment – Comments limited to three minutes.

- Ms. Sherwood expressed her concerns her concern over staff morale.
- Ms. Pulido made comments about her harassment grievance.
- Ms. Diana Wence expressed her concerns about the lack of support she felt.
- Ms. Priscilla Resendez commented on the reason for her resignation from the Library
- Marilyn McClelland commented that she feels supported in her work
- Ms. Alicia Garcia provided a copy of a letter from an anonymous source to Ms. England.
- Ms. Esmeralda Maldonado commented that she has seen things at the Library going in the right direction.
- Ms. Carolina expressed concerns that staff was not being supported by management and the high turnover.

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XI. New Business/Action Agenda

None

XII. Announcements/Trustee Comments

Mr. McShane shared his concerns about the recent news articles about the Library and the numerous resignations to what was described as an extremely unhappy toxic Library atmosphere. The executive director's contract is for two years. It began in February 2018 and ends in the end of February 2020. I do not believe our executive director has proven to be a good match for the library and I am not in favor of any renewal of the contract for the executive director and no contract extensions period.

Ms. Jenkins expresses her concerns about Ms. Pulido's harassment grievance.

In addition she encouraged people to come to Board meetings and thanked everyone for their comments. Ms. Jenkins stated that she thought that they would get everything figured out.

Ms. Darden appreciated hearing the different perspectives. She agreed with Ms. Jenkins that we're going to figure this out and thinks we're all going to do the right thing.

Ms. Mendez appreciated hearing from people that came up and spoke bravely putting a face to this issue. Expressing it was really is unnerving to hear.

She also expressed concerns regarding the harassment grievance and wanted more information on how it is going to be handled.

Mary Stickels:

Ms. Stickels also expressed her concern over the harassment grievance and that the Board was not informed of the incident or how it was handled.

Ms. Amorella expressed her concerns over what has happened over the past weeks with the Board and what she believes to have been political involvement with the Trustees.

She also spoke about Ms. Gomez-Beloz being a qualified and respectable person and admiring the work she has done, however; she does not feel she is a good fit for this Library. This is not personal, it's business.

Ms. Amorella expressed her feelings that she fought honestly for the community she loves and whose interest she has taken an oath to represent and defend and she trusts that things that have been said behind closed doors, in secret discussions, that the truth will come to light.

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Mr. Pasillas thanked staff, former staff and community members who came out to speak to the Board. It really helps us understand situations here at the Library.

He also expressed that information regarding the harassment grievance be distributed to the Board as soon as possible. I think this Board has not been informed to the full extent that we should be.

Mr. Pasillas expressed his appreciation to Ms. Civitello for her efforts and the great Community Engagement team she led and credited them for their work on the Bradbury sculpture project, building relationships with partners in Waukegan, with the park district and School District other agencies.

He also complimented Ms. Santana on her efforts to promote the census within the community as we are a hard to count community. Mr. Pasillas also attended the Illinois Library Association legislative breakfast, and was able to interact with North Chicago and Zion trustees. His hope is that we can work with them in the future to collaborate on the census efforts since the communities have similar demographics

- XIII. Motion to adjourn to closed executive session pursuant to code 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (1) was made by Mr. Pasillas and seconded by Ms. Smith. Motion passed.

Mr. McShane; Ms. Darden and Ms. Amorella voted Nay.

Ms. England; Mr. Pasillas; Ms. Smith and Ms. Jenkins voted Aye

Ms. Stickels and Ms. Mendez abstained from the vote.

- XIV. Motion to end closed executive session and return to open session was made by Mr. Pasillas and seconded by Mr. McShane at 9:20pm, motion passed.

- a. Executive Directors Contract

Mr. McShane stated we couldn't accomplish anything further. It didn't happen now we are in open to discuss the contract.

Ms. Amorella stated that she uncomfortable with this contract and did not support it

Ms. England stated she would like to table this conversation on the contract in light of what happened upstairs.

A motion to table was made by Ms. England and seconded by Mr. Pasillas.

Ms. Mendez; Ms. Amorella and Mr. McShane voted nay.

Ms. England; Ms. Smith; Ms. Stickels and Mr. Pasillas voted aye.

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Ms. Amorella made a motion that the topic of the contract of the Executive Director be postponed indefinitely. Ms. Mendez seconded the motion.

Ms. Stickels; Mr. McShane; Mr. Pasillas; Ms. Amorella and Ms. Mendez voted Aye.

Ms. Smith and Ms. England voted nay. Motion passed.

Please note: Ms. Jenkins and Ms. Darden left the meeting following the closed session. They were not included in the vote.

XV. Adjourn - Motion to adjourn at 9:35pm.