

**CLINTON-ESSEX-FRANKLIN LIBRARY SYSTEM**  
**Minutes for Board of Trustees Regular Meeting**  
**Held January 26, 2015**

**Call to Order**

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, November 24, 2014 at Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System, 33 Oak Street, Plattsburgh, New York, by Mary “Lisa” Minnich, President.

**Oaths of Office – Trustee and President**

President Mary “Lisa” Minnich administered the Oath of Office to Charles “Kip” Thompson for his reappointment as a trustee of the System, then she administered the Oath of Office to him for the Office of President of the Board.

**Roll Call**

Present: James “Jim” Bennett, Emily Castine, Wallace “Wally” Day, Donna Fulkerson, Thomas “Tom” Mandeville, Mary “Lisa” Minnich, Rita Quinn, Barbara Stowe and Charles “Kip” Thompson

Present via video conferencing with Schroon Lake Public Library: Fran Filshie

Excused: Gary Alexander and Nicole “Nicky” Bryant

Staff Present: Ewa Jankowska, Executive Director; Dawn Recore, Administrative Assistant; and Michael Spofford, Principal Account Clerk

Others Present: Anne de la Chapelle, Director of Plattsburgh Public Library and David Minnich

**Oaths of Office – Trustee, Treasurer and Member-at-Large**

Kip Thompson administered the Oath of Office to Donna Fulkerson for reappointment as a trustee, then to Lisa Minnich as Treasurer and to Emily Castine as Member-at-Large. Those who will hold the Offices of Vice President and Secretary for 2015 were not present for this meeting so they will take their Oaths of Office at the February meeting.

**Consent Agenda:**

**Approval of Excused Absences**

**Approval of Agenda** – As distributed prior to this meeting, adjusting the order of Roll Call and Oaths of Office

**Approval of Minutes of November 24, 2014 Meeting**

**Committee Reports** - Advocacy, Development, Executive, Finance, Health Plan, Negotiating, Property, and Strategic Planning Committees have no reports at this time.

**Approval of Consent Agenda**

Lisa Minnich motioned approval of Consent Agenda, seconded by Fran Filshie. Motion carried unanimously.

## **Financial Reports**

Lisa Minnich motioned that the following financial reports be approved as presented by Michael Spofford, Principal Account Clerk, seconded by Wally Day.

- Over and Under Report for period ending 11/30/14
- Budget-to-Date Report from 01/01/14 to 11/30/14
- Balance Sheet as of 11/30/14
- Revenues vs. Expenditures from 11/1/14 to 11/30/14
- Grants/Non-Current Aids Status Report as of 11/30/14
- Preliminary Over and Under Report for period ending 12/31/14
- Accounts Payable and Receivable Quarterly Report
- Preliminary Budget-to-Date Report from 1/1/14 to 12/31/14
- Preliminary Balance Sheet as of 12/31/14
- Preliminary Revenue vs. Expenditures Comparison Report from 12/1/14 to 12/31/14
- Preliminary Grant/Non-Current Aids Status Report as of 12/31/14

A motion to approve the Financial Reports as presented was made by Lisa Minnich, seconded by Wally Day. The motion was approved unanimously.

Michael Spofford stated that the December reports are preliminary, as he is still paying bills from 2014, such as vehicle fuel. He hopes to provide final December reports by the February meeting.

Michael called attention to the Preliminary December Revenues vs. Expenditures Comparison Report, where it shows big negative figures. The December 2013 “Actual” expense for Library Materials for books had to be moved to assets. In the Revenue section, he had to move the amount that has been earned but not spent to “Grants Payable”. The same process will be applied to the December 2014 report.

Kip Thompson questioned health insurance on the Revenues vs. Expenditures Report. Looking at 2013 vs. 2014, Kip asked if it is correct that there was \$16,000 less spent on health insurance in 2014 and can it be anticipated that in the future health insurance will be closer to the lower figure. Michael responded that in 2014 there were fewer retirees and staff members on the plan. For 2015, Management Confidential insurance increased 12 percent, NYSHIP increased 3 or 4 percent, there is an additional retiree, and the Board will be asked to approve the hire of a new staff member at this meeting, so 2015 health insurance expenses might be in between 2013 and 2014 figures.

The motion to approve the financial reports as presented carried unanimously.

## **Public Comment Period**

Kip Thompson took this opportunity for the CEFLS Board to show appreciation with a round of applause to Dave Minnich for the 54 years that he worked as Director of Wead Library in Malone.

## **Director’s Report**

In addition to Ewa Jankowska’s written report which was previously distributed, she reported that 2015 funding for libraries in the Governor’s budget looks to be the same as for 2014.

Regarding the tax freeze, we have learned that a two percent cap is really that or the rate of inflation, so if the rate of inflation is lower, the tax cap is equally lower. There is also an Efficiency and Consolidation Plan that public institutions will have to file next year that will determine a tax rebate for people in the area.

February 25 is Advocacy Day in Albany, formerly known as Leg Day. We have an appointment to meet with Betty Little at 9:30 and with Dan Stec at 11:30. Janet Duprey will not be available, so at 10:30 we will meet with her assistant.

Ewa will be going to Albany on February 24 to attend preliminary meetings and events, and on February 25 Betsy Brooks will drive the CEFLS vehicle to Albany with three or four passengers, some being from member libraries. Fran Filshie stated that Schroon Lake Public Library will have four to six people attending and she encouraged CEFLS trustees to attend also.

There has been much dialogue with Plattsburgh Public Library about the Central Library Contract in regard to the aid that CEFLS receives to pay for their services. This will be explained under New Business.

Ewa will try to meet with the Member Libraries Council, a group that would approve some of the system-wide policies as well as the aid for the Central Library.

There is a little uncertainty at the State level surrounding the resignation of the Commissioner of Education, which has left no one at the helm. The State Librarian, Bernie Margolis now has the additional responsibility of being the Director of the State Library, which is kind of a research library for the State. The Division of Library Development is very understaffed and there is no education law specialist in Plattsburgh, nor can we afford to pay for advice, though other systems do, so Ewa has inquired of the Director of PULISDO whether their website could share legal advice for libraries.

### **Comments and Questions Directed to Ewa Jankowska:**

Kip commended the CEFLS staff on getting the Crown Point Library automated.

### **Plattsburgh Public Library (PPL) Report**

Anne de la Chapelle reported:

PPL is in the process of creating a new Drupal website with Adworkshop in Lake Placid and anticipates going live by late March.

Their Principal Library Clerk, Jody Helfgott, has transferred to the Engineering Department of the City of Plattsburgh. Shery Silcio has been promoted to fill that position. On February 2, a new Library Clerk, Matt Rock, will begin work, and there is a new page, Adi Basil.

The Office of the State Comptroller has completed its financial audit of the library and the final report is expected in March.

She has been working with CEFLS on the 2015 Budget and a plan to spend the balance of CBA funds remaining from 2013 and 2014. They are looking into new digital content that would be accessible online to anyone in the system.

Thanks to Julie Wever, PPL received \$2,500 in matching funds from both the Lake Placid Education Foundation and the Charles R. Wood Foundation for technology. Creation of a new “smart” meeting room on the main floor is planned. The grant money will provide projection equipment as well as a smart board for the new space.

### **Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System (CEFDA) Report**

CEFDA is planning to meet in March, so there should be a CEFDA Report for the following CEFLS Board meeting.

### **President’s Remarks**

Kip Thompson, President, commented on the following topics.

At the February Board meeting, in Kip’s absence, Lisa Minnich will administer the Oath of Office to Nicky Bryant as Vice President and Gary Alexander as Secretary. Due to the nature of people’s schedules in winter, he suggested cancellation of the March meeting. Meeting agendas for March in the past several years have been short and relatively inconsequential, and it is already known that some officers of the Board cannot be present.

There will be no video conferencing capability for the July 27, 2015 meeting from Saranac Lake Free Library, so Kip would like to have one of the Board’s “away” meetings on that date. Schroon Lake Public Library will be considered as a possible location.

Emily Castine motioned to cancel the March 2015 meeting and to plan for the July 27 2015 meeting to be held at a member library, seconded by Barbara Stowe. Motion carried unanimously.

Kip has been considering for years the funding concentration of CEFLS, which is primarily a single, unstable source, New York State. The dollar amounts they provide are fickle, and their payment arrives sometimes in August, September or even later in the year. Kip has two suggestions for alleviating this that could be long-term goals that he would like the Board to be thinking about for a future conversation.

The first way is to work toward improving the finances of our member libraries over the course of years, letting them know that we are helping them so they can help CEFLS by paying for some of our services, thus making us less dependent on NYS funding. While fund raising would put us in competition with member libraries, it would help them as well as us.

The second way is for the CEFLS Board to go into the fundraising business, which would also take years to develop. Kip is on other non-profit boards that have designated Board funds, and feels that this could help CEFLS to fill gaps when problems arise. He feels that stock and bond investments would be a plus because money deposited in banks gets little return. An investment vehicle, such as connecting with Cali Brooks of Adirondack Foundation, would be necessary. It would also be helpful if we could connect with a big donor.

Wally Day inquired whether funds raised by the System would offset the funding received from NYS, to which Ewa responded she does not think so because there is a formula used for determining the amounts awarded to systems. Ewa stated that other systems receive much more funding from member libraries than CEFLS does. She also stated that if we are going to start thinking about

raising money and investing, we need to look at adopting some sort of investment policy because as a public institution there are limited ways that we can invest.

Jim Bennett stated that Friends of the Library groups are often the vehicle used for fundraising for libraries and can be very successful.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Nominating Committee**

Emily Castine stated that currently there are three vacancies on the CEFLS Board, one from each county. From Clinton County, we have an interested potential candidate, Dr. Dorothy Latta, who has submitted her letter of interest and resumé. Lisa Minnich motioned acceptance of Dr. Latta as a trustee candidate, and to send a request to the Clinton County Legislature for appointment to the CEFLS Board of Trustees. Motion seconded by Emily Castine. With no further discussion, motion carried unanimously.

Emily had a lead for a potential trustee candidate from Essex County, but for health reasons, that person declined.

### **Personnel Committee**

Barbara Stowe stated that it is time to begin the evaluation process of the Director. Printed copies of the procedure were distributed prior to the meeting. The document is one of flux, so Barbara welcomes suggestions for amending the procedure. Ewa stated that 27 of 30 libraries have submitted the member library survey, so soon Julie Wever will compile the responses. A summary will be provided to the Board, and in a couple of weeks Ewa will submit her completed self-evaluation. Barbara will provide evaluation forms to the trustees by mid-February or sooner so that in Executive Session at the February meeting the Director's evaluation can be discussed.

### **Communications**

Dawn Recore read from three communications:

- Letter to Betsy Brooks from Jane Bouchard, Director of Schroon Lake Public Library, thanking her for assistance with their open house in early December
- Thank you card for CEFLS staff for ongoing assistance from Lora Langston, Director at AuSable Forks Free Library
- Card from Chris de Grandpré, former trustee of CEFLS, expressing appreciation for the opportunity to serve CEFLS and the member libraries, and for the friendship of fellow trustees and system staff over the years, as well as the gift card that was presented at his final Board meeting.

### **Old Business**

There is no Old Business at this time.

## **New Business**

### **Resolution to approve amended Central Library Contract**

Ewa Jankowska stated that Plattsburgh Public Library would not sign the annual Central Library Contract this year because they would like to change how the Central Library Development Aid and Central Book Aid are administered. Normally, invoices are paid by CEFLS after referencing that funds were spent in accordance with prior approval. Very often the aid is received by CEFLS toward the end of the calendar year, so in 2015 we would be using 2014 funds. PPL would like to spend the remaining money on non-fiction e-books or other materials then pay their 2015 bills and provide invoices to CEFLS. Ewa stated that it is very important that the contract says that we will pay after the funds are received. Lisa Minnich motioned approval of the amended Central Library Contract, seconded by Emily Castine. Motion approved unanimously.

### **Resolution to approve Service Priorities for 2015**

Motion to approve Service Priorities for 2015 was made by Barbara Stowe, seconded by Lisa Minnich. Ewa Jankowska stated that Service Priorities are based on the Five-Year Plan of Service, so they are almost the same from year to year, with the focus varying depending on the year of the plan. The yearly adjustments are in departmental and personal goals. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Resolution to accept Check Signers for 2015**

Motion to approve Check Signers for 2015 was made by Lisa Minnich, seconded by Donna Fulkerson. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Resolution to accept CEFLS Individuals Permitted to Conduct Business in 2015**

Lisa Minnich motioned approval of CEFLS Individuals Permitted to Conduct Business in 2015, seconded by Donna Fulkerson. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Resolution to accept Individuals, Entities and Institutions with Whom to Conduct Business in 2015**

Motion to approve Individuals, Entities and Institutions with Whom to Conduct Business in 2015 was made by Lisa Minnich, seconded by Fran Filshie. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Discussion and resolution to approve new hire**

Ewa Jankowska requested approval to hire for the Librarian I position. The interview committee was very impressed with Anja Bouchard who was one of two people on the Civil Service list. She has a library degree, which is required, is from the local area and has worked at Social Services. She would be a good resource for pinpointing services and her references are excellent. Ewa has offered her the job with the condition that the Board approves of her hire. Rita Quinn motioned approval of hiring Anja Bouchard for the position of Librarian I, seconded by Donna Fulkerson. Kip inquired whether an applicant's information on their resumé is verified, to which Ewa responded that Civil Service takes care of that. Motion carried unanimously.

## **Discussion of Horizon Fee Structure**

As a point of reference to begin this discussion, Ewa Jankowska provided, prior to this meeting, a list of Integrated Library Systems, HORIZON, fees from systems in NYS to show that CEFLS' fees are the lowest in the State. While she understands that our member libraries are not very wealthy, she stated that we have to try to raise ILS fees a little. Since contracting with North Country Library System, we are incurring about \$6,000 in additional expense on top of what is usually paid to Sirsi Dynix for the licensing fee. Additionally, Sirsi Dynix increases their fees yearly. Ewa would like to pass these additional fees on to member libraries over a three-year period. In our contract with member libraries, we provide a full year's notice of any increases; so if it is decided in February 2015 to raise fees by three percent, the increase would begin in February 2016. Michael stated in that January 2015 a ten percent increase became effective for which libraries were notified a full year ago. Prior to this, it had been a very long time since fees had been increased. A 3 or 5 percent increase on \$600 is only \$18 or \$30, and would help CEFLS. Going back to the President's Remarks earlier in this meeting, Ewa would love to be able to cover our costs and work toward covering part of Betsy Brooks' salary, since she is our automation librarian. She would like to discuss this further at next month's meeting.

## **Resolution to accept Lost Book Policy**

Ewa explained that the staff has been working to update the Lost Book Policy. Basically the books that people lose are CEFLS books and we try to receive payment for them. In most cases for the last six or more years, we have asked for reimbursement for the actual cost of lost books, plus processing costs but in some cases we don't have an actual price, so we are asking for Board approval of the policy with new default prices. Donna Fulkerson stated that at the Saranac Lake Free Library they lose a lot of books and she feels the amended policy is perfectly reasonable. Lisa Minnich motioned acceptance of the Lost Book Policy, seconded by Emily Castine. With no further discussion, motion carried unanimously.

## **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the trustees, Kip Thompson adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Alexander  
Secretary