

CLINTON-ESSEX-FRANKLIN LIBRARY SYSTEM
Minutes for Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Held July 27, 2015

Call to Order

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 4:36 p.m. on Monday, July 27, 2015 at Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System, 33 Oak Street, Plattsburgh, New York, by Nicole “Nicky” Bryant, Vice President.

Roll Call

Present: James “Jim” Bennett, Nicole “Nicky” Bryant, Wallace “Wally” Day, Fran Filshie, Dorothy Latta, Thomas “Tom” Mandeville, Mary “Lisa” Minnich and Rita Quinn

Present by video conferencing from Saranac Lake Free Library: Donna Fulkerson and Barbara Stowe

Absent: Gary Alexander, Emily Castine and Charles “Kip” Thompson

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

Others Present: Anne de la Chappelle, Director of Plattsburgh Public Library

Consent Agenda

Approval of Excused Absences

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes of June 1, 2015 Meeting

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

CEFDA Report

Approval of Consent Agenda

Lisa Minnich motioned approval of Consent Agenda, seconded by Rita Quinn. 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 Tom Mandeville.

- Budget-to-Date Report as of 6/30/15
- Balance Sheet as of 6/30/15
- Revenues vs. Expenses Comparison for June 2014 – 2015 & YTD 2014-2015

Michael Spofford stated that an Over and Under Report was not included at this time. He will try to distribute one early next week. He has been quite busy working with the auditors.

Regarding the Revenue vs. Expenditures Comparison Report, Michael stated if you look at Operating Revenue, Other State Aid, in 2014 Fiscal Year-to-Date Actual, it shows \$161,624.81 but in 2015 it

shows zero. The reason is that Michael was waiting for the audit to be completed because there is an amount that we put into what we call deferred revenue. That is revenue received from the State of New York or from our local grants, not spent in that year, so it is carried over as deferred revenue. When it is spent, then we can say it is revenue. For instance, with this year's Central Book Aide, there was about \$100,000 worth of deferred revenue that was moved into 2015 and spent on e-books and regular books. After the audit is reviewed, Michael will list that money as revenue.

Motion to approve the financial reports as presented carried unanimously.

Vice President's Remarks

Nicky Bryant stated that Kip Thompson continues to express interest in generating revenue for CEFLS. One of his considerations is to create a foundation. He would like to know how to do so, ways that staffing could be shared, whether other systems have done so and could we share information with them. He is asking everyone to think about this and look at options. He would like to hear from anyone with an interest and or ideas.

Jim Bennett stated that he has attended about four meetings this past month and has come back with what he thinks is the most appropriate funding source for a system; a legacy where people leave money in their wills to the system. Although it is long range, this type of legacy is being advocated for foundations across the country. Legacy funds would be directed to either offset or compliment system programming.

Ewa Jankowska stated that an option for raising funds is to become part of the Adirondack Foundation. She thinks an initial input of \$5,000 or \$7,000 is required and then dividends are paid from the money invested. However, the amount originally invested would be a gift and would no longer be ours. The return on such an investment varies, but the percentage may be in the teens rather than the single digits. By comparison, Ewa stated that if the CEFLS Board sets up a foundation, an investment specialist would be needed to manage the funds. With Adirondack Foundation, they would be the investment specialists.

Ewa commented that when she is at the annual PULISDO meeting this week, she will inquire about the success of smaller systems having foundations. She knows that some very big systems, such as Buffalo and the three in New York City, have foundations but they are very large entities and can afford to have people working for the foundations. She stated that having a foundation is an interesting idea, and she commented further that CEFLS already has 501c3 status.

Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

Director's Report

New Hires: Though Ewa Jankowska believed that the three new hires at CEFLS should be Board approved, Kip Thompson does not. Ewa recapped:

- In March, Anja Bouchard, Library I, was hired and we are very pleased with her. The Technical Services Department and the Automation Department were combined when Elizabeth Rogers retired, so Anja is supervised by Betsy Brooks, Librarian III.
- We have a new Library Clerk, David Fuller, who is working in the Outreach Department under the supervision of Julie Wever, Librarian III. David is very gifted in the area of

internet technology. Ewa handed out bookmarks made by David promoting e-books and other electronic media.

- We are also pleased to have a new Page who is working four hours per week, Sean Godreau. With regard to being understaffed, Sean has been a great help.

Ewa praised Michael Spofford, Anja Bouchard and David Fuller, and Betsy Brooks who assisted on the telephone because she was traveling, for troubleshooting our internet connection when it was down this morning. Ewa commented that she may ask Betsy to provide an emergency book that can be used when she is not present to respond to situations like this.

Tomorrow Julie, Betsy and Ewa are going to Vernon Downs for the annual PULISDO retreat for directors. The focus this year will be on outreach and internet technology, so Julie and Betsy will attend. Success stories will be shared to help others understand what other people are doing. Jeff Cannell, the Assistant Commissioner, Department of Education, will be present and wants to hear what directors would like the State Library to offer.

Ewa pointed out that in Betsy's report it shows the usage of the website and e-books. Since last year, website usage has gone up 30 percent. We are still working on a new website that will be really interesting and a great resource. Our Facebook presence is also increasing, as we continue to post entries involving local, national and even international libraries, ideas and events, books, and we have found that people really enjoy lists, such as links with lists of popular books for summer reading.

With some of our grant money, Julie Wever was able to add five young adult titles to our Flipster subscription so we now have some magazines for youth. She also got some money from NEH for a program called Growing and Aging that will take place in a few libraries in the Fall.

Michael Spofford reported today that all 30 libraries' Annual Reports have been approved by the State, and CEFLS' as well.

Jesse Feiler, the President of the Board of Trustees of PPL, is working on the Trustees Institute for 2016 that will be held here in Plattsburgh on May 6 and 7. Apart from the regular session for trustee training, he would like to have a session called "Every Library is a Small Library".

Jesse Feiler is representing both PPL and CEFLS at a retreat organized by NYLA in September, called Sustainability Initiative Retreat. Topics related to sustainability will be discussed, such as energy and finances, resiliency, how to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions, flexibility and space planning, business continuity planning, regenerative planning to bring new and vigorous life to an area or institution to revive libraries and whole system thinking. Ewa would like to invite Jesse to talk with us after his return to share information.

Questions Directed to Ewa Jankowska

Regarding Flipster, Nicky Bryant asked if there is any way that its usage can be reported in Betsy's monthly report. Ewa said the usage was tracked in the beginning, and at that time it was not very impressive so we are marketing it more. It was introduced with a press release, and we will continue to make Flipster posts on Facebook and distribute bookmarks. Its usage will become a part of Betsy's monthly reports.

Dorothy Latta stated that she read something in the local seniors' paper about CEFLS and the Senior Center and somehow it seemed to be connected to a reading center. Ewa responded that she did not

see it, but she is supposed to do a presentation at the Senior Center in September. Rita Quinn stated that in the draft audit report she read something about CEFLS serving “x” number of libraries and “x” number of reading centers, and Dorothy stated that might be what she was remembering. Ewa added that CEFLS does supply rotating collections to senior centers.

Barbara Stowe reported that Ewa gave an excellent talk at a breakfast meeting in Lake Placid. Many people have told Barbara how very helpful and informative it was.

Plattsburgh Public Library (PPL) Report

Anne de la Chappelle reported:

PPL is now serving as a remote location for City Council meetings and work sessions. IT provided them with a laptop with SKYPE to connect from the new meeting room which has been renamed their “Smart Room”.

PPL recently had an Amnesty Week. Thirty-eight patrons were pardoned for 73 items, with a total of \$112.80 in fines waived.

Caleb Mosier, Librarian, has been doing Pop-Up Libraries at locations such as the Farmer’s Market, the Mall, Koffee Kat coffee shop and Mayor’s Cup where he was set up adjacent to CEFLS’ booth. Using a new iPad Air 2 to demonstrate resources and Bluetooth scanner to facilitate registration, these Pop-Up Libraries have been met with varying degrees of success.

Anne thanked Michael Spofford for his work on the Annual Reports, PPL’s included, acknowledging that it is a tedious job.

The Construction Grant portal is open again and a lot of libraries will be looking to do good things. This year PPL would like to consider replacing fluorescent lighting from the 1970s in the main area with LED lighting, which should not be a hugely expensive project. It would achieve a lot in terms of sustainability and save a lot on the electric bill.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee met just prior to today’s Board meeting.

Request for funding from Clinton, Essex and Franklin Counties: Lisa Minnich stated that it is the time of year when CEFLS has to send a request to the three counties, usually along with our estimated budget and other information, asking for funding for next year. It is very important that our local funding adheres to the “Maintenance of Effort” clause in the NYS Education Law. Last year CEFLS asked for a five percent increase and received it only from Franklin County. The Committee feels that requesting five percent again this year would be appropriate.

Lisa motioned to request a five percent increase from each of the three counties, seconded by Fran Filshie.

Rita Quinn asked if the counties each contribute an equal amount. Lisa responded that Clinton County usually supplies the largest share. There is effort to build up the other two, but it is difficult because they are not well off. Michael stated that Franklin is at about \$18,000, Essex at about

\$22,000 and Clinton at about \$40,000. Jim Bennett asked if there is a formula based on population. Ewa said that years ago, they all started at the same level, she thinks at \$7,000, but it is hard to judge them that way. Essex County has 16 libraries. Clinton has 8, but Clinton has bigger libraries. Franklin County has only five, but two of them receive two deliveries per week. Though Essex County has 16 libraries, two years ago they wanted to cut all our funding, so requesting funding is a very delicate challenge.

Jim would like to have an internal discussion on funding formulas to investigate the possible impact. He asked if Ewa could ask at PULISDO this week what other library systems use to determine funding requests. Ewa stated that there are other multi-county systems, but they are different because they are not federated systems. North Country Library System is the largest geographic-area multi-county system and is a cooperative system. Geographically, CEFLS is second largest and we are more government-like. We were started by a resolution by our three counties, so in a way we are their creation.

Motion to request five percent from each of the three counties carried unanimously.

Draft Independent Audit by Martindale Keyser Co.: The Finance Committee had an exit meeting today with the auditors of Martindale and Keyser Co. to review their notes on our financial statements and anything that they thought was significant in the report. The only note is that we don't use the accrual process for post-retirement benefits, as it is not cost effective for us.

Lisa motioned approval of the draft independent audit, seconded by Wally Day. Motion carried unanimously.

Communications

Dawn Recore a thank you card from Kip Thompson for the dish garden and card he received from the Board following his hospitalization earlier this month.

Old Business

Sunshine Fund Discussion: Emily Castine, author of the Trustees' Sunshine Fund Policy, was not present so this discussion was tabled until the August meeting.

New Business

Discussion of quorum issues: Nicky Bryant stated that Kip Thompson is concerned with the difficulty the Board has in having quorums so meetings can occur and business can be conducted. She feels part of the issue is that there are some vacancies on the Board. Ewa Jankowska discussed with Nicky this morning that 50 percent plus 1 is required for a quorum, assuming all the trustee seats are filled. Rita Quinn stated that that is really a super quorum. Kip is requesting that trustees think about this and be prepared for discussion at the next meeting. Recognizing that people are busy and have lives separate from the library system, it is not always feasible to attend every meeting.

There have been two meetings cancelled so far this year due to lack of quorum, and two were cancelled last year. In both years, the month of March did not have a quorum so Ewa suggested that consideration be given to not having March meetings.

Discussion ensued regarding the possibility amending the CEFLS Bylaws. Lisa suggested defining membership as the number of trustees currently in office.

It was decided that the section in the Bylaws pertaining to quorum as well as the section describing the procedure for changing the Bylaws will be distributed to the trustees and this discussion will be tabled until next month.

Discussion of time for October meeting: Ewa Jankowska's suggestion is to have the October meeting at Schroon Lake Public Library and it would be nice if we could meet earlier than the usual 4:30 time. Lisa Minnich asked the Board to consider having all away meetings at an earlier time, perhaps 1:00 or 2:00 in the afternoon, because of the distances required for travel. Due to Tom Mandeville's work schedule, he commented that he can attend away meetings only in the summer.

Discussion ensued regarding potential video conferencing or skyping away meetings. At this time, video conferencing is not typically done for away meetings, and skyping is not allowed for any voting issues, per Open Meetings Law.

Rita Quinn motioned for an earlier meeting time for October, seconded by Tom Mandeville.

Fran Filshie will check on the availability for the Schroon Lake Town Board meeting room for the afternoon of October 26.

Motion for an early meeting time for October carried unanimously.

The August meeting will be in Essex and will begin at 4:30 p.m.

Executive Session

Reclassification of a job title: For the purpose of discussing reclassification of a job title, Lisa Minnich motioned to enter into Executive Session at 5:23 p.m., seconded by Jim Bennett.

Return to Regular Session

Regular Session was re-entered at 5:30 p.m.

Lisa Minnich motioned approval to reclassify Michael Spofford's job title to Financial Manager with a one percent raise, effective immediately, seconded by Fran Filshie. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the trustees, Nicky Bryant adjourned the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Alexander
Secretary