

CLINTON-ESSEX-FRANKLIN LIBRARY SYSTEM
Minutes for Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Held November 23, 2015

Call to Order

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, November 23, 2015 at the Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System, 33 Oak Street, Plattsburgh, New York, by Charles “Kip” Thompson, President.

Oath of Office

The Oath of Office as a new trustee was administered by Kip Thompson to Scott McDonald. Scott is from Jay, representing Essex County.

Roll Call

Present: James “Jim” Bennett, Nicole “Nicky” Bryant, Emily Castine, Wallace “Wally” Day (departed at 5:11 p.m.), Dorothy Latta, Thomas “Tom” Mandeville (entered at 4:36 p.m.), Scott McDonald, Mary “Lisa” Minnich, Barbara Stowe and Charles “Kip” Thompson

Present at Saranac Lake Free Library: Gary Alexander

Present at Schroon Lake Public Library: Fran Filshie

Excused Absence: Rita Quinn

Staff Present: Ewa Jankowska, Executive Director; Dawn Recore, Administrative Assistant; and Michael Spofford, Finance Manager

Others Present: Phyllis Magnus (at Saranac Lake Free Library)

Amendment to Today’s Agenda

Kip Thompson asked Ewa Jankowska to briefly recap what has been going on with Mooers Library in light of the fact that approval of a waiver for that library (#13.D) is being removed from today’s agenda. Ewa and Julie Wever are intensely working on the situation. Ewa stated that Mooers Library was closed for at least four weeks this past summer because they ran out of money, then their Board resigned without providing official letters of resignation. Before resigning, they should have appointed at least three people to a new Board. The question has been raised whether the library has been open the number of hours required to receive the remaining 10 percent of their State Aid. For that reason, they have been asked to submit a variance request to the CEFLS board and then the request will be submitted to the State. The request would need to include a financial plan for next year’s operation. Currently, CEFLS has not received such a request. It is possible that the library can make up for hours that they have been closed because now it is open more hours than required. Discussion ensued regarding the financial situations of member libraries, specifically the percentage of library directors’ salaries as compared to their budgets, measures of checks and balances, whose responsibility it is to handle various financial tasks, sources of funding for association libraries, and library staffing. Ewa stated that there are people willing to serve on the new Mooers Library Board but they would need to be appointed by the old Board so the old Board needs to have a meeting.

Nicky Bryant inquired how much of this is the responsibility of CEFLS, to which Ewa responded that it is our responsibility to approve their variance request and that the remaining portion of State Aid, approximately \$10,000 for all the member libraries, depends on the variance. However, if Mooers can prove that they were open a sufficient number of hours, the variance would not be needed.

Lisa Minnich motioned approval of removing #13.D from today's agenda, seconded by Nicky Bryant, due to complications in preparing the waiver for the number of hours that Mooers Library is required to be open. Motion approved unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Excused Absences

Approval of Newly Amended Agenda

Approval of Minutes of October 23, 2015 Meeting

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

CEFDA Report

Approval of Newly Amended Consent Agenda

Lisa Minnich motioned approval of the newly amended Consent Agenda, seconded by Nicky Bryant. Motion carried unanimously.

Communications

There were none.

Financial Reports

Lisa Minnich motioned approval of the Financial Reports prepared by Michael Spofford as presented, seconded by Scott McDonald.

The following Financial Reports were provided for review prior to this meeting:

- Over and Under Report for period ending October 2015
- Grants/Non-Current Aid Report as of September 30, 2015
- Budget-to-Date as of October 31, 2015
- Balance Sheet as of October 31, 2015
- Revenues vs. Expenditures Comparison Report
- Grants/Non-Current Aid Report as of October 31, 2015

With no further discussion, motion to approve the Financial Reports as presented carried unanimously.

Public Comment Period

There were none.

President's Remarks

A proposed schedule of meeting dates for 2016 was provided for review prior to this meeting. Kip Thompson and Nicky Bryant will not be available for a March meeting and historically that has been a difficult month to reach a quorum. Kip suggested cancellation of the March meeting. Emily Castine motioned approval of the proposed schedule, with the cancellation of the March meeting, seconded by Wally Day. Motion carried unanimously.

Kip stated that with Barbara Stowe's retirement from the Board after serving for many years, the Personnel Committee, which is an important committee, will have only one member. Barbara explained that it is this committee's responsibility to evaluate the Director. To do this, there is a form to be sent to the trustees, the results are tabulated, the committee meets with the Director to review the tabulations, and then goals and objectives for the following year are set with the Director. Kip would like to see 4 or 5 volunteers by January to serve on this committee, and he would like to see every trustee serving on a committee.

When asked by Kip for a show of hands to see how many trustees would be interested in having a holiday party with the staff, several trustees expressed interest. Ewa explained a little about how for the past several years staff 'adopts' a family through JCEO Head Start of Clinton and Franklin Counties. JCEO chooses a family for CEFLS and provides a basic wish list that includes children's sizes, then staff members sign up to purchase items. We wrap the gifts, then deliver them to JCEO for delivery to the family. Fran Filshie suggested that in the future it would be nice to do this for families in another area.

Director's Report

In addition to her written report, Ewa Jankowska reported on the following:

An interesting issue came up this week involving the flying of the American flag in front of public libraries. Ewa stated that it seems an appropriate thing to do, especially if the library's Board of Trustees is requesting it.

Karen Batchelder and Ewa attended a meeting at SUNY Plattsburgh of a group called THRIVE. This program used to be called STRIVE, which is a Cradle to Career Network, involving schools and preparation of kids and young people for work. Although none of the organization's documents mention libraries, libraries play an incredible role for preschoolers and children during the after-school hours, as well as help adults add to or polish their education. THRIVE is planning to have a database of the participating organizations. Ewa is very interested in statistics and very concerned about using everyone's expertise and resources wisely. She would like the database to include what the organizations have to offer, as she is concerned about possible duplication of efforts. CEFLS can provide a database called Learning Express that offers various tests for practice use. As we continue to participate with this program, we hope to play an important role.

At one point we had obtained with a grant a database called Business Decisions that analyzed communities. With it, CEFLS staff prepared an analysis of incomes, ages, and much more for each member library's community. Ewa watched a webinar this month on a database called Analytics on Demand that uses the data from our circulation system. There is a lot about it that she does not know yet, including its cost but she would definitely suggest it to the State and maybe they could buy it. Recently, Plattsburgh Public Library hired a consultant to analyze the users of their library. Ewa would like to also analyze is who is not using libraries and why.

At a recent potluck lunch at Literacy Volunteers, Julie Wever and Ewa spoke with one of that board's members about becoming a new trustee for the Mooers Library.

CEFLS has an active and very interesting Facebook page. Ewa encouraged trustees to *friend* us and take a look at it

CEFLS, together with several other public library systems, provided a written testimony to the Assembly Standing Committee on Libraries and Education Technology at a public hearing on "Funding Public Libraries" in New York City on November 6.

Ewa is trying to arrange for a meeting with Betty Little so that she and John Hammond, the Director of NNYLN, can thank the Senator for the Bullet Aid that was received by our member libraries. So far, we have not received a call back from her office. We will continue our efforts to schedule.

Michael Spofford and Ewa are going next Monday, November 30, and Wednesday, December 2, to Budget Hearings in Essex and Clinton Counties, respectively. She welcomes Board members to accompany them. We do not know what the 2016 funding from Essex County will be. Clinton County is expected to give us a two percent increase, and Franklin County, which has already had their budget hearing, will be funding CEFLS at last year's level. Ewa reminded the Board that if the counties cut our funding by more than five percent, the State will cut us by 25 percent (due to the Maintenance of Effort Clause in Ed. Law).

Questions for the Director

Barbara Stowe inquired what is going on in regard to the LTA event next Spring that the previous president of PPL's Board was organizing. Ewa recapped that when she was at the Northern New York Library Association conference in Lake Placid she was asked by an LTA member if she can guarantee 50 trustees will attend. Ewa responded that she cannot get 50 trustees for training that we have for free, and for this particular LTA training there is expense involved, so it might be very difficult.

Plattsburgh Public Library (PPL) Report

Ewa Jankowska reported for Anne de la Chappelle, who could not be present:

PPL's Open House had approximately 300 people attend, with a great turn out for the Teen Extreme Trivia.

The Shen Marketing program is finishing up. They will have time to read the sustainability plan and bring Tara back to answer questions. It has been a wonderful experience poll the community, look at internal operations and plan for the future.

A negotiator will be brought in for contract Negotiations which have come to an impasse.

A new page, Sally Kehoe, has been hired and is training with Sherry Silcio for her first week. Interviews for Youth Services Librarian will be scheduled around the first week of December.

The Smart Room projector has been installed. They are pricing a conference phone for the room which will be paid for with technology grant funds.

Community use of the Auditorium and Smart Room is increasing with very good feedback.

Application for a \$500 Rotary Grant to help build a Maker Program for teens has been made. A focus of the new librarian will be an afterschool maker program since there are a healthy number of middle school students using the library during the week.

Colleen Pelletier has begun an adult coloring program which is a national trend right now. There will be another session on December 5th.

Committee Reports

Nominating Committee: Emily Castine reported on the status of potential candidates for the Board. Clinton County seats are all filled. With Essex, it looks like all seats will be filled in January, with the addition of Scott McDonald at today's meeting and Phyllis Magnus, who will fill Barbara Stowe's seat in January. With Franklin County, there are currently two vacant seats. To that end, a resumé and letter of interest were received today from Liz De Fonce who resides Gabriels which is in Franklin County. Liz is a former librarian and the owner of a book store in Saranac Lake. Lisa Minnich motioned approval of sending Liz De Fonce's name to the Franklin County Legislature to request that they appointment her to the CEFLS Board, seconded by Jim Bennett. Motion approved unanimously. There will then be 14 trustees on the Board, with one vacant seat for Franklin County.

Kip Thompson added that he is awaiting CEFDA's response to a letter he previously sent requesting their assistance by having trustees serving on member library boards volunteer to serve also on the CEFLS Board as needed.

Slate of Officers for 2016: Emily reported on a full slate of officers for 2016. The 2015 officers have agreed to serve another year.

Kip Thompson – President
Nicky Bryant – Vice President
Secretary – Gary Alexander
Treasurer – Lisa Minnich
Member-at-Large – Emily Castine

Jim Bennett motioned approval of the slate of officers as presented for 2016, seconded by Barbara Stowe. Motion approved unanimously.

Sunshine and Leadership Funds: Emily Castine recapped that with the approval of the Trustees Sunshine Fund Policy earlier this year, it was agreed that each trustee will pay \$20 each January. With the price of dish gardens being at least \$40 and floral arrangements being \$50 or \$60, it is important to keep a healthy balance to be ready for emergencies. The fund is for the ailing, the grieving, the celebrating and those retiring. You never know when some of these events will occur. Kip Thompson added that in January when this is due, another reminder will go out.

As Board members, trustees are to be models in leading the way in giving to the organization. Funds donated to Leadership Fund can provide books, e-books and downloadable audiobooks that can be utilized by all member libraries. The purchases that CEFLS makes with these donated funds can be dedicated in memory or honor of particular people. Kip Thompson added that Leadership Fund donations can be thought of as holiday gifts to the System and they are tax deductible.

Finance Committee

Lisa Minnich reported that the Finance Committee met briefly before today's Board meeting to discuss a resolution to allow Michael Spofford, Finance Manager, to spend money when State Aid does not arrive in a timely manner. Lisa Minnich resolved that management, the director and/or the finance manager can approve the transfer of funds during the 2016 calendar year from the reserve money market account and/or line-of-credit up to \$150,000 to be used to pay vendor invoices or payroll if State Aid has not been received on time. When the Aid is received, reimbursement will be made to the fund that was accessed and the interest that would have been accrued. Jim Bennett seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Advocacy Committee

Lisa Minnich stated that Dorothy Latta volunteered to join the Advocacy Committee and met with Lisa to learn what the committee does. One of Dorothy's many ideas is for CEFLS trustees and trustees of member libraries to meet with their county fair associations to discuss the possibility of manning booths at the county fairs in the summertime. Bookmarks and brochures that explain how CEFLS serves each county could be handed out. CEFLS trustees could be asked to spend a couple of hours once or twice during fair week to volunteer alongside trustees of member libraries to show that we are there for them. This would be free publicity and would cost trustees nothing as they would receive a pass to enter the fairgrounds. Dorothy suggested having a short meeting to discuss ways to make elevator speeches interesting and brief, and less involved than they are for more formal purposes. Ewa added that maybe we could have some staff members help to man the booth and have some things for children to do.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

Revision of the Use of Communication and Computer Systems Policy: Ewa Jankowska explained that there has been a policy for Internet and computer use since about 1996. What is being discussed today is E-rate. Since 1996 or 97, the FCC and the Federal Government has been giving libraries and schools some reimbursement money to improve their connectivity with the internet and telecommunication. The Internet was always a little complicated because about the year 2000, CIPA was introduced, the Children Internet Protection Act. This required filters in libraries, even for adults and staff, so basically you would have to ask the librarian to remove the filter when you wanted to look for material on a topic such as breast cancer. Since then, the filters have improved. Now E-rate, or Universal Fund as it is known, is going to be phased out for the telephone connection and the only service you can ask for is some reimbursement for Internet connection which in itself has now been expanded to include reimbursement funds for some other things, such firewalls. In order to apply for E-rate funds, you have to have a CIPA statement in your computer and Internet policy. Although CEFLS is not open to the public and never has children in the building, we have to add the statement to our policy and obtain Board approval at a meeting that is open to the public, plus have prior notice of it published in the newspaper.

Lisa Minnich motioned approval of the revision of the Communication and Computer Systems Policy, seconded by Emily Castine. Motion approved unanimously.

Building Security and Visitors to CEFLS Policy: Ewa Jankowska stated that in the past CEFLS has never had a policy on building security and visitors. With the CIPA statement now in our computer and Internet policy, and although CEFLS is not a public building, it seems appropriate to have a policy pertaining to who and how people enter the building. Aside from CIPA, having a general policy regarding security and visitors seems wise. Scott McDonald motioned approval of the Building Security and Visitors to CEFLS Policy, seconded by Fran Filshie. Motion approved unanimously.

Central Library, Member Library and Reading Center Contracts: The 2016 contracts are the same as the 2015 contracts, with only the dates being changed. Nicky Bryant motioned approval of the 2016 Central Library Contract, Member Library Contract and Reading Center Contract, seconded by Emily Castine. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session

Lisa Minnich motioned to enter into Executive Session at 5:31 p.m. for the purpose of discussing the Director's Contract and to change the timing of an unpaid leave for a particular employee, seconded by Nicky Bryant. Motion passed unanimously.

Return to Regular Session

Nicky Bryant motioned to return to Regular Session at 5:39 p.m., seconded by Tom Mandeville. Motion passed unanimously.

Nicky Bryant motioned approval of renewing the Director's Contract for a period of two years, beginning January 2016, and to amend the contract for \$750 for professional memberships, and under Compensation, rather than to have a salary figure, it will say *annual salary as negotiated*. Barbara Stowe seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Lisa Minnich motioned approval of a two week unpaid leave for a particular employee for surgery in 2016, seconded by Nicky Bryant. Motion carried unanimously.

Retiring Trustee Appreciation

Kip Thompson asked Barbara Stowe to come forward to receive a gift card and thank you card signed by the Board members in appreciation of her 10 plus years of service to CEFLS. When asked for departing words, Barbara said that only really special people come onto this Board and they take good care of the System. Also, she said that she has enjoyed seeing the growth and development of Ewa Jankowska as a Director. Barbara was asked to accept the Board's appreciation and gratitude for helping out for all those years.

Upcoming Trustee Training

Ewa Jankowska reminded the Board of the upcoming trustee training and stated that few people have registered so far. The System will give attendees a copy of the new 2015 Trustee Handbook, lunch will be provided, and one person from each library will receive travel reimbursement.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Kip Thompson adjourned the meeting at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Alexander
Secretary