

CLINTON-ESSEX-FRANKLIN LIBRARY SYSTEM
Minutes for Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Held July 28, 2014

Call to Order

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 4:41 p.m. on Monday, June 30, 2014 at Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System, 33 Oak Street, Plattsburgh, New York, by Mary “Lisa” Minnich, President.

Roll Call

Present: James “Jim” Bennett (departed after roll call), Nicole “Nicky” Bryant, Emily Castine, Chris de Grandpré, Thomas “Tom” Mandeville, Mary “Lisa” Minnich, Charles “Kip” Thompson

Present via video conferencing from Saranac Lake: Gary Alexander and Barbara Stowe

Present via video conferencing from Schroon Lake: Fran Filshie

Absent: Donna Fulkerson

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

Others Present: Francie Fairchild, Director at Chazy Public Library, and David Minnich

Consent Agenda:

Approval of Excused Absences

Approval of Agenda - As distributed prior to this meeting

Approval of Minutes of June 30, 2013 Meeting

CEFDA - No report at this time

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

Approval of Consent Agenda

It was motioned by Emily Castine, seconded by Kip Thompson, to approve Consent Agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Reports

Nicky Bryant moved that the following financial reports be approved as presented by Michael Spofford, Principal Account Clerk, seconded by Chris de Grandpré.

- Over and Under Report for period ending 06/30/14
- Budget-to-Date Report from 01/01/14 through 06/30/14
- Balance Sheet from 06/01 to 06/30/14
- Revenues vs. Expenditures from 06/01/14 to 06/30/14

- Grants/Non-Current Aids Status Report from 01/01/14 to 06/30/14

Kip Thompson complimented staff for the excellent handling of vehicle expense and maintenance and for the expansion of the e-book collection. He commented on line item 5102, Compensated Absences which is related to Basic Aid doesn't seem to grow. Michael Spofford responded that this item is funded in anticipation of future retirements when CEFLS must pay back unused vacation and sick leave. Brief mention was then made of line item 5317, regarding the contractual agreement with North Country Library System, the grant CEFLS received from Clinton County to assist with that transition and money that has also been set aside for contract negotiations that will begin later this year.

Barbara Stowe questioned the seemingly unpredictability of State Correctional Aid and questioned how the budget will be adjusted. Ewa Jankowska responded funding is received per capita based on the number of inmates. She is hopeful that we will get Basic and Supplementary Aids very soon and that aid amounts will be very similar to last year. When we know what the aid will be, the budget will be adjusted. For instance, the Outreach staff's salaries can be broken down to have different percentages from Basic Aid and from State Corrections. Michael Spofford pointed out that no money has been spent yet from State Corrections for books, though there is money in that line item that can be transferred when the amount of grant is known to cover salaries of the Outreach staff.

Lisa Minnich then asked about the Revenues vs. Expenditures Report that is showing deficits. Michael stated that before this week there was about \$150,000 left from last year's funding and that is what we are operating with, so when this year's funding is received, in particular Basic Aid which is about \$686,000, we will be back in the blue.

With no further discussion, the motion to approve the financials as presented by Michael Spofford was passed unanimously.

Public Comment Period

There were no comments from the public.

President's Remarks

Lisa Minnich, President, thanked the CEFLS staff for their diligent work on the Annual Report and for all the outreach they have been doing. She also expressed appreciation to those who set up the workshop earlier this afternoon on trustee advocacy presented by Sara Kelly Johns of New York Library Association.

Director's Report

In addition to her written report, Ewa Jankowska reported:

Last week she attended a fantastic PULISDO conference in Utica along with Michael Spofford and Betsy Brooks. Betsy attended sessions on internet technology and Michael's and Ewa's sessions were on human resources and finances. They learned a lot about what other systems are doing, for instance, theoretically though we cannot charge fees for mandated services, there can be charges for cataloging and circulation computer system. Among the library systems in New York State, the percentage of funding of this source that CEFLS receives is ranked very low. Ewa stated it is not

easy to change that, as our local libraries operate on very small budgets. She feels strongly that we must help them to be better funded locally, while raising our ILS fees only a little at a time. The additional income is necessary to fulfill our annual contractual obligation with North Country Library System. We will look into services that can be performed for fees, such as developing library websites or doing member library comptroller reports.

Kip Thompson feels that CEFLS should have as a financial goal to raise income by charging member libraries for services and over time that would have a huge financial impact. Fran Filshie stated that it doesn't help when the State recommends library funding at \$20 per capita because clearly more is needed, to which Ewa Jankowska added that some libraries don't even get that. Fran feels that advocacy with the State Education Department is needed to get the per capita recommendations changed. She suggested that the State could be responsible for funding automation expenses because libraries would be lost without automation; furthermore, automation systems across the state vary and that complicates the issue. She would like the State to take a look at reality in rural areas such as ours.

At the PULISDO conference there was also a session with two lawyers from Whiteman Osterman and Hanna who specialize in education law. It seems that the Comptroller's Office is interested in auditing libraries, particularly municipal libraries. Ewa sent a list of policies to library directors that should be on the books and she will follow up by sending the list to the presidents of the Boards. She learned that CEFLS should have a policy on Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) because we are public (Civil Service) employees. Because we have a staff of less than 50, we thought we did not.

In mid-August, Ewa will be attending a 3 Rs conference, for a combination of school and public library systems. It is being held in Albany and is sponsored by New York Alliance of Library Systems.

Comments and Questions Directed to Ewa Jankowska:

Kip Thompson commented that according to the department reports in this month's Board packet, it is clear that the trend in book circulation is down. He asked what it will look like three years from now. Ewa responded that every system is reporting decline in circulation of books, partly because people are getting more used to e-books. She stated that everyone is aware of it and it needs to be addressed. Unfortunately, CEFLS doesn't really have a big book budget, either in e-books or in paper books, so participation by all member libraries to build the e-book collection is very important.

Kip then inquired whether CEFLS has downloadable videos, to which Ewa responded that CEFLS does not due to expense but she is hopeful that will change in the future, but also because downloadable videos require a lot of bandwidth which is not available to many in surrounding areas. She is watching what is happening with bandwidth and fiberoptics in the area. A brief discussion of pros and cons ensued on various methods for the public to obtain videos. Ewa wrapped it up by saying that we have to be very careful in spending our limited resources to see that they are available to as many people as possible.

Plattsburgh Public Library (PPL) - Central Library Report

Anne de la Chapelle submitted a brief report for Ewa Jankowska to present in her absence.

At PPL's Board meeting on July 22, 2014:

- CEFLS Direct Access Plan was approved.
- 2014 budget for Central Book Aid (CBA) and Central Library Development Aid (CLDA) were approved.
- A tentative 2015 budget for PPL was approved for submission to the City of Plattsburgh in August.

Local history librarian, Kelly Sexton, has resigned and will be relocating.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

Chris de Grandpré reported on the outcomes of the Finance Committee meeting that was held on July 11, 2014. Those present for the meeting were Ewa Jankowska, Michael Spofford, Kip Thompson and Chris. Other members of that committee were away at that time.

The Committee approved the preliminary budget for 2015 for Franklin County as they wanted budget numbers by July 18, along with a completed application requesting 2015 funding. The committee agreed upon requesting a five percent increase for next year.

The committee chatted a bit about the impact that upcoming negotiations will have on next year's budget.

Chris expressed appreciation to the staff for the excellent brochure that was put together for Franklin County.

The funding tables from the State should be available soon, so the Finance Committee will meet again on August 11 at 10:00 to talk about Budget Amendment #1 that will involve reapportionment.

Nominating Committee

Emily Castine reported that Wallace H. Day of Clinton County has expressed interest in serving as a CEFLS trustee and has submitted a brief biography which was distributed to the Board prior to this meeting. A motion was made by Emily Castine to forward his name to the Clinton County Legislature to request consideration of appointment to the Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System Board of Trustees, seconded by Chris de Grandpré. Chris commented that he has known Mr. Day for probably 30 or 40 years and feels he would make a fine trustee.

Motion passed unanimously.

Emily stated that there remain two trustee positions open for Franklin County and one for Essex County. She commented that each trustee has the responsibility to seek out qualified individuals to serve the System.

Communications

There are no communications at this time.

Old Business

Discussion of the potential of having a range of trustees

Ewa Jankowska sent a request to the NYS Library to learn if it would be possible to have a variable number of trustees on the Board, with differing numbers from each county. To date, no response has been received. Kip likened a variable number to a natural ebb and flow, as right now there are 4, 4 and 3 trustees from each county, further stating that he feels that each trustee represents all library constituents from the three counties, rather than only those from their own county. Ewa responded that NYS Library doesn't really like so many vacant seats and it causes difficulty with getting approval of the Annual Report. Fran Filshie questioned if the State approves it would we then have to seek approval from each county to which Ewa responded that we would. General consensus of the trustees is that the counties may not favor a variable number of trustees.

New Business

Review and Approval of Central Book Aid (CBA)/Central Library Development Aid (CBLA) for 2014 Expenditure Plan

A motion was made by Nicky Bryant to approve Central Book Aid and Central Library Development Aide for the 2014 Expenditure Plan as distributed for review prior to this meeting, seconded by Barbara Stowe. With no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Executive Session

Kip Thompson motioned to go into Executive Session to discuss upcoming negotiations, seconded by Nicky Bryant. Executive Session was entered at 5:21 p.m.

Return to Regular Session and Adjournment

The Board returned to Regular Session at 5:48 p.m. There being no further business to come before the trustees, Lisa Minnich adjourned the meeting at 5:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Alexander
Secretary