

CLINTON-ESSEX-FRANKLIN LIBRARY SYSTEM
Minutes for Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Held August 25, 2014

Call to Order

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 4:40 p.m. on Monday, August 25, 2014 at Dodge Memorial Library, 144 Lake Street, Rouses Point, New York, by Mary “Lisa” Minnich, President. She asked everyone to introduce themselves for the benefit of Wallace Day who is on the agenda to take the Oath of Office as a new trustee.

Oath of Office

Lisa Minnich administered the Oath of Office to Wallace Day as a new trustee of CEFLS representing Clinton County. She welcomed him to the Board.

Roll Call

Present: James “Jim” Bennett, Nicole “Nicky” Bryant, Emily Castine, Wallace “Wally” Day, Chris de Grandpré, Donna Fulkerson, Thomas “Tom” Mandeville, Mary “Lisa” Minnich, Barbara Stowe

Absent: Gary Alexander, Fran Filshie and Kip Thompson

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

Others Present: Anne de la Chapelle, Director at Plattsburgh Public Library, 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 July 28, 2014 Meeting

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

Approval of Consent Agenda

It was motioned by Nicky Bryant, seconded by Barbara Stowe, to approve Consent Agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Reports

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

- Over and Under Report for period ending 07/31/14
- Budget-to-Date Report from 01/01/14 through 07/31/14
- Balance Sheet from 07/01 to 07/31/14

- Revenues vs. Expenditures from 07/01/14 to 07/31/14
- Grants/Non-Current Aids Status Report from 01/01/14 to 07/31/14

With no further discussion, the motion to approve the financial reports as presented carried unanimously.

Public Comment Period

There were no comments from the public.

President's Remarks

Lisa Minnich, President, offered comments on the following topics:

Thank you to Dodge Memorial Library for hosting this meeting.

Congratulations to System staff for receiving approval of the Annual Report.

The Negotiating Committee has communicated that they need at least two additional members. Chris de Grandpré will be leaving the Board on December 31, 2014 at the end of his second full, and the other members of the committee as it is now are Kip Thompson, who goes away for the winter months, and Tom Mandeville, who is a new member. They would like new members to learn the negotiating process who can be available during the winter months. Chris stated that the chief spokesperson is usually the System attorney, Jaci Kelleher, and that basically members are needed as witnesses to what is being done, to offer suggestions and to be able to communicate the status of the process to the Board. Negotiations are expected to begin in the fall, with the committee meeting once or twice a month, until a contract is agreed upon. Lisa asked the trustees to seriously consider serving on this committee.

Director's Report

In addition to her written report, Ewa Jankowska reported:

She recently attended two conferences, PULISDO in Utica and NYALS in Albany.

Basic Aid and Supplementary Aid from the State have been received, as well as 90 percent of Local Services Aid and 90 percent of Systems Aid. We still do not have the tables so we do not know exact disbursement of State funding. Ewa and Michael Spofford are discussing an issue with the State regarding their claim that our unserved areas have decreased by 5,000 people. This translates into \$500 less for that particular aid.

We received a \$10,000 three-year grant from Lake Placid Education Foundation (LPEF) to be used for training. We would like to divide it up to use for library staff and trustees. Ewa learned at a Board meeting in Schroon Lake that they have several new trustees who would like to have training. We had a conversation today with Cali Brooks from Adirondack Foundation regarding construction grants. They match construction grant money that comes from the State and include funding for technology related projects.

We are applying for a technology grant from Northern New York Library Network (NNYLN) for hardware and software for creating short 10-minute webinars so training sessions could be recorded for access at different times.

We are proceeding with plans for an Annual Luncheon to be held on November 7th at Lake Forest in Plattsburgh. The next committee meeting will be on August 28th. Canadian best-selling author from Toronto who has written two novels about Catherine the Great, Eva Stachniak, will be the guest speaker. We will cover the cost of her trip to Plattsburgh. Ginny Brady, a former PPL trustee, has offered to host the author in her home. Luncheon pricing has not been determined yet.

Every year Ewa attends Library Advocacy Day in Albany and speaks with our local legislators at their offices about funding and increased service expectations of the System. She feels it would be much more helpful for the faces and voices of library trustees to become known, so she encouraged Board members to become active advocates for the System. This would be a particularly good year to speak to legislators who are running for reelection. In the past there were member items, or discretionary state funding, allocated by the Senate and Assembly to be used for a public purpose. They were to be divided among the two houses of the New York State Legislature per agreement with the governor. Ewa explained that since the governor eliminated whatever was considered *extra*, member items are no longer available. However, a couple of years ago we learned that some schools, libraries and institutions were getting this “little known” money from the Senate for which you couldn’t really apply, called Bullet Aid. It is apparently supposed to aid institutions that are not doing well and the senators of the party in power determine how it is allotted, which makes this a good time for trustees to speak with Senator Little.

Comments and Questions Directed to Ewa Jankowska:

Barbara Stowe commented on the increase in e-books, adding that according to the charts in Betsy Brooks’ Automation Department report, it looks like they are really taking off. Ewa responded, thanking Anne de la Chapelle of PPL for recently having purchased a large number of e-books. Ewa encourages all member libraries to purchase e-books, even just one, so that there is 100 percent participation in the effort to increase the collection.

Barbara Stowe then inquired how participating libraries were selected for the literacy project. Ewa explained that in addition to a literacy component, this grant requires a component to assist with finding employment. Betsy and Julie Wever polled libraries to find out which ones would be willing to participate. Wead Library and Elizabethtown Library volunteered for Year One, and for Year Two two additional libraries in identified high-need areas will be sought.

Plattsburgh Public Library (PPL) - Central Library Report

Anne de la Chapelle reported on:

PPL’s e-book circulation is up about 280 percent over last year. It seems that allowing four books to be checked out at a time has helped to increase circulation. So far they have spent about \$2,500 of \$5,000 allotted for e-books in this year’s budget.

Local history librarian, Kelly Sexton, has resigned to relocate. The historical collection is now available by appointment only.

Elizabeth Rogers is working with PPL to evaluate their non-fiction collection so they can be a better central library with a desirable collection, and also to help determine how to best spend Central Book Aid money.

PPL's building projects are ready to begin. They just closed out their 2012 Construction Grant.

E-rate funding was approved in the amount of \$2,900. This is federal money to be applied to telephone and computer costs.

There have been over 62,000 visits to the library this year, with increased lending and over 14,000 computer sessions. They are spending a lot of money on the adult DVD collection and that circulation is up 36 percent.

Jesse Feiler, PPL's new Board president, is part of the Saranac Lake River Trail Group and they are sponsoring an engineering bridge design project that will tie in classes at local schools. PPL will have software loaded on their lab computers, as well as related books, to assist with bridge design.

Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library Directors Association (CEFDA)

Francie Fairchild reported that:

CEFDA met recently at Elizabethtown Library with eight directors present and from CEFLS Ewa Jankowska, Betsy Brooks and Julie Wever present.

Lara Langston, the new Elizabethtown Library director, was welcomed and concerns and ideas were shared on topics such as collection management, specifically large print books, and the newly formed Lewis volunteer library.

Directors confirmed the consensus that CEFDA meetings allow the sharing of successes and challenges, and keep each other informed of other libraries' activities.

The next CEFDA meeting will be held on September 22, 2014 in Champlain.

Special thanks went out to Karen Glass, Director of Keene Valley, for getting CEFDA back together and scheduling meetings.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

Chris de Grandpré reported that the Finance Committee met on August 11, 2014 with Ewa Jankowska, Michael Spofford, Kip Thompson and himself in attendance.

Budget 2014 was first approved in August 2013 in the amount of \$1,324,716, and this August an amendment (Budget 2014-01) with an increase of \$10,578 was prepared. On behalf of the Finance Committee's recommendation, Chris de Grandpré moved approval of Budget 2014-01, seconded by Nicky Bryant.

Michael Spofford then stated that after the Finance Committee meeting, an estimated bill for retirement was received. Usually it is paid around the end of December to save approximately \$800 to \$900. We expected the bill would be about \$90,000, but due to some reconciliations based on

actual salaries, there is an additional \$3,500, and additionally there are two prior years' adjustments, from 1979 and 1985 when retirement contributions were figured incorrectly and there was a \$780 shortage which over time accrued \$7,183 in interest. In the aforementioned years, CEFLS paid the items based on what we were told to pay. We know now that there were apparently errors made by a previous principal account clerk. Ultimately, our estimated amount that we will pay in December will be \$104,200, about a \$14,000 to \$15,000 increase. Of that amount, about \$4,000 is for adjustments to actual March 31, 2014 salaries. Almost \$8,000 is for prior years' adjustments. The invoice is for April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015. Michael stated that there is money in the budget that can be moved around to cover this unexpected expense, taking it from Account Code 5303 - Capital Expense-Building. That is a reserve fund set up for unexpected expenses on our aging building. Michael mentioned that last year we thought we were over these little adjustments to retirement expenses after we were hit with \$5,000 or \$6,000 in interest which was also an error made by a previous principal account clerk.

Michael then stated that the Union recently requested information in preparation of the upcoming negotiations, such as salaries, number of positions, and budget figures. In putting this together, he realized an error from 2012. When a van driver left suddenly that year, the position was offered to Bob Welch, a previous employee who had been our bookmobile driver. Bob's first day as a van driver was December 21, 2012. At that time, CEFLS was in the midst of contract negotiations, with the contract eventually being signed in June 2013, which created a new payroll schedule. With the rehiring of Bob happening very suddenly, he was put on the payroll schedule for the new contract, but should have been on the old one, although it was at first thought that he would begin working in the new year. As a result, a gross payment was recently made to Bob for \$1,800, net about \$1,300, and he is now being paid his correct rate.

At this present time, there are no other budget amendments pending, though it could happen.

The motion to approve Budget 2014-01 carried unanimously.

Draft Independent Audit by Martindale Keysor & Co for the period ending December 31, 2013 and 2012

The Finance Committee reviewed the draft independent audit with Michael Spofford answering their questions. Chris de Grandpré stated that the auditor's letter mentioned, as it has following previous audits, that CEFLS has not determined the cost of certain post-employment benefits in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, which require the cost of employees' post-retirement benefits to be recognized over the employees' respective service periods and a corresponding liability to be shown. This has been a major stumbling block for several years as CEFLS hasn't been able to find a formula to accurately determine those costs. Inquiries have been made to find someone who might do that, and it was learned that the expense would be so high that CEFLS wouldn't be able to afford the services. Chris stated that the Finance Committee feels that the audit is clean and that the library system, primarily Ewa Jankowska and Michael Spofford, have done a great job in looking after funds. A resolution to accept the audit for the period ending December 31, 2013 and 2012 which was done by Martindale Keysor & Co was made by Chris de Grandpré, seconded by Donna Fulkerson. With no further discussion, motion approved unanimously.

IRS Form 990 as submitted by Martindale Keysor & Co

Chris de Grandpré stated that Martindale Keysor & Co prepared and submitted to the IRS for CEFLS a Form 990. It is a required tax return for a not-for-profit institution. A copy of it was provided to trustees for review prior to this meeting. Chris motioned approval of the Form 990 as submitted by Martindale Keysor & Co, seconded by Barbara Stowe. With no further discussion, motion carried unanimously.

Nominating Committee

Emily Castine welcomed Wally Day to the Board, emphasizing his leadership role for public service as indicated by his resumé.

Emily then reported that a resumé and letter expressing interest in becoming a trustee were received from Rita Quinn from Franklin County. Her resumé was distributed for review prior to this meeting. She is a graduate of SUNY Plattsburgh with a Bachelor of Arts, Environmental Science major, Geography minor. Most recently, for 17 years she worked for the Adirondack Park Agency.

It was motioned by Emily Castine to send the name of Rita Quinn to the Franklin County Board of Legislators to be considered for appointment as a trustee to the CEFLS Board of Trustees, seconded by Nicky Bryant. Brief mention was then made of there being two open seats remaining on the Board, one in Franklin County and one in Essex County. With no further discussion, motion passed unanimously.

Communications

There are no communications at this time.

Old Business

Discussion of the potential of having a range of trustees

Lisa Minnich recapped that discussion of having a potential range of trustees was tabled at a previous meeting in lieu of more information from the State. We have now learned that there can be a sliding scale, with the same number of trustees from each county, and any change to the number must be approved by all of the counties. Lisa stated that the consensus of the Board is to leave the number of trustees as five from each county, with continued efforts to recruit new trustee candidates.

New Business

Adult Literacy: Collaborative Skill Building for Job Search Success, Fiscal Year 2014, Project Year One of Three

Ewa Jankowska explained that this is a literacy project somewhat similar to what has been approved in past years but now it is geared more toward job searching. A summary of the first year of the project, prepared by Julie Wever, Outreach Coordinator, was previously distributed to the Board. The actual report that had to be submitted electronically to the State was 15 pages. Donna Fulkerson motioned approval of the adult literacy project, seconded by Nicky Bryant. With no further discussion, motion carried unanimously.

Variance Request for Wells Memorial Library

Ewa Jankowska explained that one of the State's standards for libraries is that the number of hours a library has to be open is dependent on the population the library serves. According to the last census which was done in 2010, Upper Jay, which is a very small community, had 2,506 people. For up to 2,499 people, a library has to be open 20 hours, and for 2,500 people it must be open 25 hours. At this point, asking the State for a variance to remain open 20 hours while trying to work on opening for 25 hours seems the best path. When a proper count is done, the population will likely be below 2,500 because after the flooding in 2012 it is believed that a few families moved away.

Emily Castine motioned approval of the variance request for Wells Memorial Library in Upper Jay as explained by Ewa Jankowska, seconded by Barbara Stowe. With no further discussion, motion carried unanimously.

Executive Session

Donna Fulkerson motioned to go into Executive Session to discuss upcoming negotiations, seconded by Chris de Grandpré. Executive Session was entered at 5:32 p.m.

Return to Regular Session and Adjournment

The Board returned to Regular Session at 5:54 p.m. There being no further business to come before the trustees, Lisa Minnich adjourned the meeting at 5:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Alexander
Secretary