

**CLINTON-ESSEX-FRANKLIN LIBRARY SYSTEM**  
**Minutes for Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Held January 23, 2012**

**Call to Order**

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 4:07 p.m. on Monday, January 23, 2012, at the Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System, 33 Oak Street, in Plattsburgh, New York, by Dawn Recore, Administrative Assistant.

**Roll Call**

Present: Gary Alexander, James Britell, Nancy Cooper, Chris de Grandpré, Richard Kibben, Mary “Lisa” Minnich and Charles “Kip” Thompson

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

Absences: Frances Filshie, Jennifer Henry, Martha Spear, Dr. Barbara Stowe and Deborah Wells

Others Present: Stan Ransom, Plattsburgh Public Library and Maiko Barcomb, new Trustee to be sworn in at this meeting

**Swearing In of Officers for 2012**

Nancy Cooper, Vice President, administered the Oath of Office for the office of President to Chris de Grandpré, who then administered the Oath of Office to Mary “Lisa” Minnich, Vice President, and Nancy Cooper, Treasurer. Jennifer Henry and Dr. Barbara Stowe will be sworn in at the February 2012 meeting for the respective offices of Secretary and Member-at-Large.

**Swearing in of New Trustee**

Chris de Grandpré then administered the Oath of Office to Maiko Barcomb who is a new Trustee representing Clinton County.

**Consent Agenda**

Consent Agenda includes Approval of Excused Absences (Frances Filshie, Jennifer Henry, Martha Spear, Dr. Barbara Stowe and Deborah Wells), Approval of Amended Agenda for Today’s Meeting, CEFDA Report (there is none), the following committees for which there are no reports at this time: Advocacy, Health Plan, Nominating, Personnel, and Property and Strategic Planning, and Communications (there are none).

A motion was made by Dick Kibben to approve Consent Agenda, seconded by Nancy Cooper. Motion carried.

**Financial Report**

Chris de Grandpré stated the following reports were received from Michael Spofford:

- Over and Under Statement for November 2011
- Budget-to-Date for January 1, 2011 through November 30, 2011
- Balance Sheet as of November 30, 2011
- Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for November 2011
- Status of Grants and Aids as of November 30, 2011
- Over and Under Statement for December 2011
- Preliminary Budget-to-Date for January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011
- Preliminary Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2011
- Preliminary Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for December 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011
- Preliminary Status of Grants and Aids as of December 31, 2011

Gary Alexander moved to approve the Financial Reports as presented. Michael Spofford explained that the December reports are all “preliminary” at this time because we are still receiving bills for December that he is expensing back into 2011. At next month’s Board meeting, his reports will better reflect how things were expensed out for 2011 and what can be moved into the 2012 Budget. Lisa Minnich seconded the motion to approve the Financial Reports as presented. Motion carried.

### **Public Comment Period**

There were no comments.

### **President’s Remarks**

Chris de Grandpré welcomed Maiko Barcomb to the Board of Trustees and thanked her for her willingness to serve.

Dr. Nancy Church, who was a CEFLS Trustee for seven years, stepped down December 31, 2011 to follow other pursuits. To thank Dr. Church for her years of service, the Board will be giving her a Certificate of Appreciation and a gift card for Arnie’s Restaurant. Dr. Church will be missed.

Trustees are encouraged to consider serving on two or three committees during 2012. Please let Dawn Recore know your choices soon so a Committee List for 2012 can be developed for the February meeting.

Dr. Barbara Stowe, who could not be with us today, has been charged with putting together the materials for the Director’s evaluation. Initially the evaluation was to be addressed today but with several Trustees not present, we will try to do it at the February meeting. Trustees were asked to get their performance criteria document back to Dr. Stowe in the next week to ten days. Chris thanked Ewa Jankowska for getting the Strategic Plan and her goals to Dr. Stowe.

Another great edition of the Trailblazer has gone out. Chris complimented all those who are associated with it, particularly Julie Wever and Karen Batchelder. Kip Thompson commented that the Trailblazer is very well done. He feels it should be provided to new Trustees as a wonderful overview of CEFLS.

Legislative Advocacy Day (Leg Day) in Albany will be March 6, 2011. Jim Britell will talk about it later in the meeting.

Kip Thompson will talk about different ways we might approach funding Library Systems. He calls his plan “Fix Our Funding”.

There are a few other items on today's agenda that will be moved to the February agenda in order to make time for discussion of Jim Britell's and Kip Thompson's topics.

There are two Trustee seats still to be filled on the Board of Trustees, one each for Clinton and Franklin Counties, respectively to fill the seats of Dr. Nancy Church and Neil Surprenant.

### **Director's Report**

In addition to Ewa Jankowska's written report, she reported:

We are working on setting up OverDrive. Elizabeth Rogers bought some E-books, and we now have 11 E-Readers that were purchased with a grant from Northern New York Library Network. Staff are sharing them now and learning how to use them.

Keene Public Library and Belden Noble Memorial Library in Essex are in the process of automating. Elizabeth Rogers, Betsy Brooks and Kim Fletcher are working with them. Crown Point Memorial Library is not interested in automating at this time. All others are automated.

Tom Mangano, new Director of Belden Noble in Essex, toured CEFLS today and met everyone.

Wells Memorial Library in Upper Jay, heavily damaged by flooding in 2011, will reopen on January 28. CEFLS Library Clerk, Chad Chase, spent some time at Wells last week helping them to set up. Ewa will attend their opening celebration and encouraged others to attend as well.

NNYLN offered to pay half the cost of a bus to Leg Day in Albany on March 6. Our share of the cost would be about \$700. So far there has not been a lot of interest in riding a bus. It is a big commitment due to the very early pick-up time and travel to the pick-up points. If we do not get enough response, we will have to decline NNYLN's generous offer.

We will be applying for a Library Services Technology Act (LSTA) Grant. This is a program to teach library directors and trustees how to approach writing policies, what policies they should have and how to differentiate between a policy and a procedure. Ewa stated that appropriate policies make it easier for everyone when problems arise.

On January 24, Ewa will be going to Clinton Community College for an initiative called STRIDE that she learned about when John Jablonski, President of Noontime Rotary spoke at a recent meeting. STRIDE's purpose is to enhance learning capabilities from cradle to employment, thus encouraging more people to graduate from high school and get jobs, breaking the cycle of poverty. Ewa voiced that she would like to see STRIDE take advantage of what libraries have to offer to aid in their mission, so she was invited to attend the meeting.

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

Stan Ransom reported that PPL has no building problems right now and they are looking forward to a good year.

Their attendance for 2011 was very good, although beginning in March 2011 they had to close on Sundays which has affected their circulation. The circulation of books and DVDs was at 150,000, whereas it was at 163,000 the year before. DVDs were one third of that total. PPL has 21,222 registered borrowers.

The Friends of PPL are working on art shows and other activities.

Stan is looking forward to retiring on May 31, 2012.

## **Committee Reports**

### Executive Committee:

Chris de Grandpré reported that there has been no further action regarding current negotiations for the staff. They are waiting for the appointment of a mediator so the process can be taken a step further and hopefully an agreement can be reached in due course. That will be touched upon later in this meeting.

Chris stated that as mentioned in the President's Report earlier in the meeting, we are in the process of evaluating the Director, setting goals, and so forth.

### Finance Committee:

The Finance Committee met just prior to this Board meeting. Nancy Cooper reported that there have been three proposals from auditing firms submitted for the annual independent audit. The most reasonable proposal, which is the firm that did the previous three years' audits, is being considered. Michael Spofford will inquire of them why their price went up more than it has in the past. Selection of an auditing firm for 2012 through 2014 will be tabled until the February meeting.

### Bookmobile Committee:

Jennifer Henry has met with Ewa Jankowska, and Jennifer's resulting report on selling the bookmobile was distributed to Trustees. Ewa recapped that basically they tried to figure out how much to charge for it. Its cost was a little over \$300,000. Most of that came from the three counties, with Clinton contributing the most. There was also a Betty Little Grant and an anonymous donor. Also the CEFLS Board and Director at the time contributed \$2,700. Depreciation is about 10 percent a year, so at this point the bookmobile is valued at perhaps \$80,000 and they would like to get at least \$50,000. Because it is unique, an actual fair market value has not been obtained.

Kelly Donoghue, Assistant Director of Clinton County Emergency Services, has expressed interest in obtaining the bookmobile to use as a mobile emergency control center. Discussion ensued over whether time should be taken to put the bookmobile out for sealed bids starting at \$50,000. In the meantime, comprehensive and collision insurance on the bookmobile are required in order to take it out for a test drive with prospective buyers.

It was also suggested that the services of a broker on a commission basis could be utilized. A broker could help to find a market.

Kip Thompson made a motion that the bookmobile is surplus to our needs and CEFLS Board charges the administration and Bookmobile Committee to find the best price for it. The motion was seconded by Nancy Cooper. Motion carried.

### Development Committee:

Lisa Minnich reported for Leadership Campaign, which began November 1, 2011 and will end October 31, 2012. We are currently at 60 percent participation. This campaign is supported only by the Trustees and for those who have not contributed since November 1, there are still nine months left.

### Negotiating Committee:

Chris de Grandpré reported that Neil Surprenant who was chairing this committee is no longer, and Nancy Cooper is now doing it. Nancy stated that we are a very small union and there are a lot of other actions taking place within the State and we do not know when we will have a mediator appointed.

### Advocacy Committee:

Jim Britell stated that advocacy is a tremendous subject of discussion at all levels of libraries. In Libraries 20/20, the Regents mention three times that Trustees are responsible for political advocacy in this age of declining budgets. It is painfully clear that little is known about what CEFLS's contribution to our Member Libraries is or essentially what we do.

Jim distributed to Trustees some samples of advocacy from Onondaga Library System. He pointed out that almost every week they have something on their calendar in preparation for Advocacy (Leg) Day. They have continuous interaction with their legislators. Even with all the budgetary cuts this year, Onondaga County made \$5,000,000 more available to their libraries. They have their local elected officials in for lunches at their libraries and other special events every year, and they are in constant contact with them.

Bob Manning, who heads Onondaga's advocacy organization, has offered to meet with us to share ideas. Jim stated that plans are moving ahead for a meeting in the Spring of all the Trustees of CEFLS and the Trustees of Member Libraries. Jim reported that the presidents of the Member Library Boards want to meet with CEFLS Trustees

Jim stated that in New York State, the lack of support of libraries on Advocacy Day is conspicuous. The president of New York State Library Trustees Association (NYSLTA) is adamant that this year we have strong attendance. To help accomplish this, Jim would like to see CEFLS Trustees divide up the list of Member Library Presidents and request that they speak with their Board members to advocate for Advocacy Day attendance. They can explain that we do not know what the climate will be for our small libraries next year, so we must talk to our legislators now. Even though we don't have a big population, we have a big political influence in Albany in people like Betty Little. We need to have a voice so that in the future we don't find ourselves losing our van which would stop us from sharing books among our libraries

Ewa Jankowska stated that our local politicians are always present at Advocacy Day for the breakfast at 8:30 and NYLA is there taking pictures. If that is too early, an option would be to have a large group of people meet later in the legislators' offices. Either John Hammond or Ewa will schedule an appointment for our entourage to meet with our three legislators, and hopefully all together at the same time. It is felt that a big impact is made when a large group of Trustees walk into one of these meetings, versus a group of System employees.

Jim stated that Leg Day and preparation for it is a good time for CEFLS Trustees to get to know the Trustees of the Member Libraries and learn what their problems are.

Gary Alexander agreed to call Trustees from Tupper Lake Goff Nelson Memorial Library and he is willing to fill his car and drive to Albany. Lisa Minnich and Dick Kibben will help to make calls to Trustees in other areas. They will find out how many would like to travel by car and how many would like to ride a bus, and for those riding a bus, how much would they contribute to the cost of the bus. Gary stated that the bus is a tough deal due to the distance Trustees from his area would have to drive to the pick-up point (High Peaks Rest Area), the very early in the morning time they would have to leave, and the fact that they would be expected to contribute to the cost of the bus.

It was suggested that our Library System's geographic area divided up among the CEFLS Trustees for future advocacy. Jim stated that it is important for the Trustees of all Member Libraries to start building alliances with their own legislators and town supervisors.

## **New Business**

### Independent Auditor

The Finance Committee is deferring the selection of the auditing firm for the annual independent audit until February's meeting. The lowest bid was submitted by the firm who has had the contract for the past three years; however their price has increased, so the Committee has asked Michael Spofford to find out why.

### Contracts for Member Library/Central Library/Reading Center

Lisa Minnich resolved to accept the proposed contracts for the Member Libraries, Central Library and Reading Centers. Ewa Jankowska explained that these contracts are signed yearly for the services that CEFLS provides and basically they remain the same from year to year; however, this year all reference to the bookmobile has been eliminated. Next year consideration may be given to fees for some of the services provided. Kip Thompson seconded the resolution to approve the contracts as presented. Resolution carried.

### Individuals, Entities and Institutions with Whom to Conduct Business in 2012

A resolution to accept Individuals, Entities and Institutions with Whom to Conduct Business in 2012 was made by Nancy Cooper. This is a document listing insurances agencies, attorneys, bank, Clerk of the Board, janitorial services and others with whom we do business. Dick Kibben seconded the resolution; resolution carried.

### Individuals Permitted to Conduct Business in 2012

A resolution to accept Individuals Permitted to Conduct Business in 2012 was made by Nancy Cooper. This document lists specific Trustees and staff members who will sign and be responsible for specific transactions. The resolution was seconded by Lisa Minnich, and carried unanimously.

### Conflict of Interest Statements

The Conflict of Interest Statement goes hand-in-hand with Individuals, Entities and Institutions with Whom to Conduct Business. It must be signed yearly by all Trustees and insures that those doing business will not have any financial interest in the entities with who whom we do business. Signed statements should be handed in before Trustees leave today.

### Check Signers 2012

The check signers for 2012 will be Chris de Grandpré as President of the Board, Lisa Minnich as Vice President, Nancy Cooper as Treasurer, Jennifer Henry as Secretary, Barbara Stowe as Member-at-Large, and Ewa Jankowska as Director. A resolution to accept the check signers for 2012 was made by Dick Kibben, seconded by Kip Thompson. Resolution carried.

### Konica bizhub C360 copier

Ewa reported that the five-year lease for the photo copier is coming to an end. Office Systems is offering a new copier that would additionally have capability to do color copies, with a cost that is about \$150 less per year than the lease on the old copier. Michael stated that basically we would use the \$150 to pay for color copies since they would be at additional cost and billed at the end of the month. Staff would be limited to the number of color copies that can be done for \$150 so that we would not be doing more color copies than we currently are with our laser jet printer. The laser jet is more expensive per copy, its quality

is unreliable, and it has required expensive service calls three times in the last 16 months. With a new copier, we would consider offering color copying service to our Member Libraries. We would figure the actual cost and factor in labor to come up with a reasonable rate.

Nancy Cooper motioned to approve the five-year lease of the Konica bizhub C360 copier. Discussion followed regarding regular maintenance and toner, which are included in the lease agreement. Office Systems will take the old copier away. The motion was seconded by Maiko Barcomb; motion carried.

#### New York Alliance of Library Systems (NYALS)

Chris de Grandpré reported that with Fran Filshie not present today, her requested discussion on NYALS Advocacy Plan will be tabled until the February meeting.

#### Fix Our Funding

Kip Thompson disseminated schematics to illustrate in a simplified manner a plan he is proposing, called Fix Our Funding, which basically involves an alternative business model for CEFLS and would eventually make Library Systems throughout New York State fee-for-service, likening them to for-profit businesses, rather than dependent upon government funding as they are now. Member Libraries would tell their Library System what they need, their Library System would provide it and the Member Library would pay the System for it. If libraries need something and the Library System doesn't have it, they find a way to create it or get it. In this concept, State Aids and mandates would not exist.

With Fix Our Funding, Kip stated that State funding for CEFLS would be given to Clinton, Essex and Franklin Counties. Then individual libraries would be responsible for getting their money from their counties which would motivate them to know their counties better. The projected timeframe for this is five years.

Kip stated that ultimately, the final step in about ten years would be when NYS and the counties would not be directly involved in funding CEFLS, and the libraries would have their own taxing districts. Currently Malone's Wead Library and Chazy Public Library have taxing districts and they are very stable libraries.

Kip stated that a first step in this direction would be to begin talking to the directors of the Member Libraries, people in the various library associations, our legislators, and people at the State Library, explaining that this plan has the potential of being a much superior way of doing business and in general would strengthen local library networks throughout New York State. Kip stated this should be something that we should aspire to, it should be our long range plan.

Discussion from several viewpoints ensued, including what would happen to our Charter from New York State Education Department, whether libraries understand the extent of what their Library System provides, and whether creating taxing districts is a viable option. Ewa Jankowska stated that what Kip is referring to is similar to what was in place before Library Systems were developed. Systems were developed to more or less equalize libraries. Many libraries are staffed with a part-time director, often without a library education, and on their own they may not be able to operate a library and provide quality services.

Jim Britell suggested looking at Libraries 20/20 to see what the financial analysis looks like and what the trend is. One thing we know is that some of our libraries do not have the funds to support a part-time librarian but we need to ask how many libraries have endowments to get a clearer picture of what money the libraries have. We need to know which libraries are genuinely impoverished because they would not have the capability of paying like a library in a taxing district could. Jim stated that charging for our

services is a good idea and suggested that we inventory things that we do for Member Libraries that are outside of our Charter, things that we don't have to do but do, such as annual reporting to the State.

Jim further stated that the Regents want us to create taxing districts out of our libraries, and then we would have someone they could tax. Only we can make our Libraries tax leviers. Jim would like to begin looking at services for which fees can be charged and he would like to work toward creating taxing districts. He stated that these are the duties of Trustees, not the duties of staff.

Jim suggested that first they figure out what libraries we want to make taxing districts. Then their Board Presidents would be asked if they have a way to raise the funds it would require. Funds would allow them to bring in experts and attorneys to guide us. Ewa Janowska interjected that this would eliminate our Charter and the Charters of the Libraries, and without the Charters, the State would have no incentive to provide money. To this Kip stated that his plan would give the approximately 10 to 12 libraries that could become taxing districts independence. Ewa stated that with the financial health of all our communities, what you would get as taxing districts would never replace what the State is providing.

Chris de Grandpré stated that this has been a very interesting discussion and thanked everyone. He suggested that in the interest of time and the long distances some Trustees have to drive home, this discussion be tabled until our next meeting. Jim Britell asked if we could begin looking at services CEFLS can charge Member Libraries for, and is there a way we can learn more about the financial health of Member Libraries beyond what we learn from their Annual Report. More discussion on this topic will continue at next month's meeting.

#### Summer Locations for Board of Trustee Meetings

Ewa Jankowska proposed potential locations for three Summer 2012 Board of Trustee meetings. The directors of those libraries will be asked if they will host us and then the schedule will be determined.

Essex County: Upper Jay - They suffered severe flooding and are just reopening this week.

Franklin County: Tupper Lake - CEFLS has not had a CEFLS Board meeting there yet.

Clinton County: Dannemora or Chazy – Both have moved into newly renovated buildings this year.

By general consensus, the locations were approved, with Dannemora being the Clinton County choice.

#### Calendar Fundraiser

Ewa Jankowska shared a calendar of Vermont libraries. Among the Trustees present, there appeared to be significant interest in doing a similar fundraiser for our Library System with a 2013 calendar.

#### **Adjournment:**

Chris de Grandpré adjourned the meeting at 5:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary "Lisa" Minnich  
Secretary