

CLINTON-ESSEX-FRANKLIN LIBRARY SYSTEM
Minutes for Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Held November 25, 2013

Call to Order

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 4:34 p.m. on Monday, November 25, 2013 at Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System, 33 Oak Street, Plattsburgh, New York, by Mary “Lisa” Minnich, President.

Oath of Office

Lisa Minnich administered the Oath of Office as a new trustee to James Bennett and he was welcomed to the Board.

Roll Call

Present: James Bennett, Emily Castine, Judy Cobb, Chris de Grandpré, Thomas Mandeville (entered at 4:40 p.m.) and Mary “Lisa” Minnich

Present via video conferencing with Saranac Lake Free Library: Gary Alexander, Donna Fulkerson and Dr. Barbara Stowe

Present via video conferencing with Schroon Lake Town Meeting Room: Nicole “Nicky” Bryant and Fran Filshie

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

Excused Absences: Martha Spear and Charles “Kip” Thompson

Others Present: Anne de la Chapelle, Director, Plattsburgh Public Library

Consent Agenda:

Approval of Excused Absences

Approval of Amended Agenda - As distributed prior to this meeting

Approval of Minutes of October 28, 2013 Meeting

Committee Reports

Advocacy, Development, Executive, Finance, Health Plan, Negotiating, Property, and Strategic Planning Committees have no reports at this time.

Approval of Consent Agenda

It was motioned by Judy Cobb, seconded by Nicky Bryant, to approve Consent Agenda with the amended agenda as distributed prior to this meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Report

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

- Over and Under Report for period ending October 31, 2013
- Budget-to-Date Report from 1/1/13 through 10/31/13
- Balance Sheet as of 10/31/13
- Revenues vs. Expenditures from 1/1/2013 through 10/31/2013
- Grant/Noncurrent Aid Status as of 10/31/13

Judy Cobb complimented Michael Spofford for having made the changes talked about at last month's Board meeting.

Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment Period

There were no comments from the public.

President's Remarks

Lisa Minnich, President, commented on:

It is time to begin the Leadership Campaign which runs from October 1 through September 30. For the 2012-2013 year, \$930 was received. Anyone who would like to make a donation can give their check to Michael Spofford written to Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System. As trustees, it is important to support the Library System by example.

Lisa suggested that Trustee Discretionary Funds be used to buy something such as sandwich meat and buns for the holiday luncheon for trustees and staff on December 16 at noon. Salad from Panera was also suggested. The luncheon is "potluck" so everyone is encouraged to bring something to share.

Lisa thanked all who have made an effort in the last few weeks to speak with their county legislators as they are working on their 2014 budgets.

Trustees are asked to contribute to the Trustee Discretionary Fund which corresponds with the calendar year though donations can be made at any time. These funds are used for such things as cards and small gifts at the time of birth of a child, illness or hospitalization, and death in the family. A typical donation is \$10 or whatever can be afforded.

Director's Report

In addition to her written report, Ewa Jankowska reported:

Advocacy Day in Albany will be held on February 27, 2014, and there will be a pre-advocacy day that Ewa usually attends. They would like to have a program on the audit done by the Office of the Comptroller. As she has mentioned previously, the Comptroller's Office is getting more interested in libraries and library systems. It would be interesting to know what they are looking for and also the institutions who have already had that kind of audit will share their experiences.

New York Library Association, NYLA, has posted that they have engaged two public relations firms to advocate for libraries.

There will be a PULISDO Retreat in July. Focus will be on finance and business offices performing human resource functions.

Julie Wever and Ewa attended a Keeseville Free Library Board of Trustees meeting on November 19. The village of Keeseville has been dissolved so it important for them to start working with the State Library early to avoid a quick decision regarding a new area of service. Ewa inquired at the State Library about designating the "former village of Keeseville" as the area of service, but they were not interested in that. The question is whether it will be the Town of Chesterfield or Towns of Chesterfield and AuSable. The issue with a larger area of service is that there would be more requirements to fulfill; for example, the director has to have a bachelor's degree.

Julie and Ewa attended a very nice Thanksgiving potluck lunch hosted by Literacy Volunteers last week. Usually people served by Literacy Volunteers are learning English as a second language so it is good to have libraries involved. There was discussion about Mooers Library with a member of Literacy Volunteers who is also on the Board of Mooers Library.

Michael Spofford and Ewa attended the Franklin County Budget Hearing last week, and they are going to the Essex County Budget Hearing immediately following this meeting. Funding with these two counties appears to be level which is great news though there is no increase. We are always worried about cuts because of the Effort of Maintenance Clause which could in turn cut us at the NYS level by 25 percent. Ewa was able to speak with the Franklin County Manager to thank him for keeping the budget level. She and Michael will be attending the Clinton County Budget Hearing on December 4.

We had a very nice staff workshop in November with Bonnie Black of Employee Assistance Services (EAS), Reclaiming Your Work Mojo.

Adirondack Health Institute has held Informational sessions at many of our member libraries on the topic of the Affordable Care Act and the health insurance marketplace. There are two or three more of these sessions coming up in the near future.

Didi Remchuk of CVPH Cancer Screening Services approached Ewa for assistance with disseminating material on free cancer screening that primarily targets lower income women. This is an excellent project, and when we are asked to help with things like this, we have an opportunity to talk about what our System does with those who request our assistance.

Comments and Questions Directed to Ewa Jankowska

Dr. Stowe inquired about the status of automating Hammond Library. Betsy Brooks feels some progress has been made and there has been some dialog with their director and Board. Hammond Library is a school district library, and Crown Point is somewhat insulated. The Crown Point School

District is also not automated, and now studies have suggested merging their school district with Ticonderoga. If they merge, Ewa stated that they may have to establish a special library district. Discussion ensued regarding aspects of automation that might be attractive and aspects that are not, and possible ways to fund various components that would be required to run Horizon.

Plattsburgh Public Library (PPL) Report

Anne de la Chapelle, Director of Plattsburgh Public Library, reported:

With no word yet on their 2014 budget, they are planning for all scenarios. A Capital Reserve Fund has been established, they are rebuilding their general Reserve Fund, and they are looking at additional library funding models.

Filling the vacant Clerk position will be held off until the budget is finalized. They are looking at ways to allow their librarians to be more interactive with the public.

They have a candidate who is interested in the AmeriCorps position in the Public Computing Center (PCC), with focus on workshops, training and public access to more computers. It is a 40-hour a week position.

They are in the process of purchasing items with the NNYLN grant for the PCC, and with a memorial matching contribution, they are purchasing reading tables for the reference room.

They are hosting two Affordable Care programs with Julie Rock of Adirondack Health Institute. The dates are December 6 from 12:00 to 1 p.m. and December 12 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

They need to do more promotion of the Ask Us 24/7 Chat reference service which started October 1.

The Cole Historical Collection is in the process of being moved to the new second floor space.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

Chris de Grandpré stated that the Finance Committee met on November 19 from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. with the full committee present. They went over the proposed 2014 budget with Ewa Jankowska and Michael Spofford, requesting a few small changes. The revised budget was provided to all trustees for review prior to this meeting.

A motion to accept the revised budget for 2014 in the amount of \$1,326,279.56 was made by Chris de Grandpré, seconded by Nicky Bryant. Chris feels it is a very thoughtfully prepared budget. The motion passed unanimously. Chris stated further that the amount of State aid is unknown at this time, so in May or June when the figures are known, there will be amendments to the budget.

Chris asked Ewa to reiterate the second topic that the Finance Committee reviewed, which is servers. Ewa stated that CEFLS has four servers, each out of warranty, that serve the integrated Library System with Horizon which is the circulation and catalog system and email. These are extremely important. Purchasing hardware for these servers would be too expensive to consider. Our entire IT department is comprised of only Betsy Brooks, and she is researching options for maintenance of

computers and servers. Use of the cloud is a logical solution. We have spoken with Westchester and North Country Library Systems and a representative of Horizon. North Country is a logical solution, with their five ITs to maintain their cloud service, and they already provide cloud service to another institution. Ewa has spoken with Mike Zurlo, Clinton County Manager, about applying for a grant through the county to assist with this migration. In the meantime, it is necessary to move toward a server solution. Ewa requested Board approval to pursue negotiations with North Country and talk with our attorney, and to allow expenditures up to \$15,000.

Chris de Grandpré motioned to allow the director to engage in negotiations with North Country Library System to house Horizon, the catalog system, to spend up to \$15,000 for CEFLS to eventually migrate to the cloud with catalog services, to draw up a contract for Board approval, and to update the Board as more is known. Tom Mandeville seconded. There was no further discussion. Motion carried unanimously. Chris is very excited about this, as there has been discussion of shared services for some time.

Chris reported that the Finance Committee had in in-depth conversation, at the suggestion of a trustee, about the possibility of investing an unspecified amount of library funds in the Adirondack Trust. Questions and concerns were discussed and it was agreed that they would like to speak with Cali Brooks, the director, in the spring or the summer to explore this a little more. One of the motivations for doing this, as noted by the trustee, is to get more return on the dollars that we might have available from time to time to invest. There are questions regarding once the money is turned over it is a gift and you may not get it back. Chris stated that after viewing the webinar, Basic Library Law for Trustees, earlier today, there are rules about how you can invest. Discussion ensued that it might be a conflict of interest since Adirondack Trust offers grants to the Library System and member libraries. Chris summed up that there will be more discussion in the spring when we meet with Cali Brooks, unless the Board decides they do not want to pursue this.

Chris stated that CEFLS has about \$10,000 worth of Met Life stock obtained when Met Life went public. At one point its value went down to about \$6,000 and now it is back up a little bit. This was discussed by the Finance Committee in the context of the Adirondack Trust conversation; however, he further stated that CEFLS may not even be allowed to invest with a group like Adirondack Trust.

The Finance Committee also talked about establishing reserves for capital services, compensable leave and unemployment. This will be looked into a little further.

The possibility of doing quarterly budgets was discussed. With only one person to do all the financial reporting, this additional report is not warranted.

The Finance Committee is planning to meet on a more regular basis, maybe every month or every other month.

Tom Mandeville asked where CEFLS banks, to which Ewa responded Community Bank. He stated that they have a very capable investment team. Ewa stated that we are in a difficult situation since we cannot get determination from the state as to whether we are government or not, and if we are there are different banking rules. We do know that we are an educational corporation and we fall under civil service.

Nominating Committee

In light of the recent Board resignation tenured by Martha Spear who chaired the Nominating Committee, Emily Castine checked with her colleagues, Judy Cobb and Lisa Minnich, as to their agreement in asking the current officers if they would be willing to continue if indeed they are able to according to our schedule of terms. Each was contacted and did agree. A motion was made by Emily Castine to close the nominations for the following slate of officers for 2014: Lisa Minnich as president, Barbara Stowe as vice president, Gary Alexander as secretary, Kip Thompson as treasurer, and Emily Castine as member-at-large. Tom Mandeville seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion to close the nominations was unanimously approved. Tom Mandeville then motioned that the secretary cast one ballot to elect the slate of officers of Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System as presented, seconded by Chris de Grandpré. Motion passed unanimously. Secretary, Gary Alexander, then cast the ballot to elect the nominated officers.

Personnel Committee

Dr. Stowe commended Ewa Jankowska for doing a really great job at putting together the new Personnel Handbook. Jaci Kelleher, CEFLS Attorney, has provided input and Judy Cobb has reviewed it and made suggestions. It should be ready soon. Dr. Stowe thanked Judy as well as Ewa for a very good job.

Dr. Stowe announced that it is time to begin the Director's evaluation process and we need to work on a timeline. Ewa's report will be ready in a week, though she stated that it takes a full year to work on evaluating the results of the Service Priorities. A staff meeting is scheduled in two weeks. Lisa Minnich suggested that Ewa's evaluation be based on how close Service Priorities are to being fulfilled and whether progress is where it should be at this point. Ewa agreed, and stated that she can also report on her personal goals, which are personnel manual and PR, on which she also reports monthly.

Lisa Minnich asked that the Personnel Committee look at the evaluation procedures and the timing of them in regard to the Director not having all the facts before writing her report. It would be good for the Director to be able to state factually after meeting with staff what has been accomplished rather than projecting accomplishments or shortcomings. This might involve consideration of changing the timetable for the Director's evaluation.

The Board will fill out performance criteria after they review Ewa's report, then a meeting will be designated when the Board will meet in Executive Session to evaluate the Director's work. This will take place in January, giving everyone time to get their forms to Dr. Stowe before Christmas. Dr. Stowe will have time to collate information in preparation of Executive Session in January. Following that meeting, the president of the Board and the Director will meet to go over the evaluation, and then the Board will meet to set the Director's salary. Lisa stated that she and Dr. Stowe would like the Finance Committee to then meet prior to the February Board meeting to discuss what is possible and what is not so there are guidelines.

Communications

Lisa Minnich read from two communications received at CEFLS.

A letter of resignation from the CEFLS Board of Trustees was received from Judy Cobb, effective December 31, 2013, due to an increase in hours at her place of employment as well as an increase in

other volunteer work. Discussion of filling this January vacancy for Clinton Country trustee will be postponed until the December meeting.

The second communication was an e-mail to the System on November 5, 2013 from Donna Boumil, Director at Rouses Point Dodge Memorial Library, in reference to the *It Takes a Town to Raise a Reader* workshop that was held the previous day at Plattsburgh Public Library. Ms. Boumil was contacted by a teacher from a local elementary school requesting books on Native Americans. She was able to tell her that Dodge Memorial Library does have books on the requested subject matter and she offered assistance to the teacher and the students. The student's Native American houses that they built will be on display at the library during the last week of November.

Old Business

There was no Old Business to be discussed.

New Business

Variance for Sherman Free Library, Port Henry

The Sherman Free Library in Port Henry is applying for a variance because they do not have a long-range Plan of Service. Fran Filshie moved approval of the request for a variance for Sherman Free Library which would allow them to be open while preparing and seeking approval of a long-range Plan of Service, seconded by Emily Castine. Nicky Bryant disclosed that her husband is on the Board of the Sherman Free Library, though she doesn't think this constitutes a conflict of interest. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Approval of Service Priorities for 2014

Trustees received copies of proposed Service Priorities for 2014 for review prior to this meeting. Motion to approve Service Priorities for 2014 was made by Nicky Bryant, seconded by Dr. Stowe. Chris de Grandpré and several trustees agreed that preparation of Service Priorities is a lot of work. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of 2014 Member Library and Reading Center Contracts

Lisa Minnich stated that approval of member library and reading center contracts takes place yearly. The contracts for 2014 are the same as those for 2013. Motion to approve member library and reading center contracts was made by Emily Castine, seconded by Judy Cobb. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the trustees, Lisa Minnich adjourned the meeting at 5:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Alexander
Secretary