

CLINTON-ESSEX-FRANKLIN LIBRARY SYSTEM

Minutes for Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Held April 22, 2019

Call to Order

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m. on Monday, April 22, 2019, at Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System, 33 Oak Street, Plattsburgh, New York, by Charles “Kip” Thompson, Vice President.

Roll Call

Present: Liz DeFonce, Margot Gold (entered 5:11 p.m.), Dorothy Latta, Andrew Lomanto (departed 5:52 p.m.), Tom Mandeville, Steve Novacich, Doreece “Darcy” Purick, Tim Rowland and Charles “Kip” Thompson

Excused Absences: Nicole “Nicky” Bryant, Linda Crosby, Gayla LePage, Scott McDonald and Mary “Lisa” Minnich

Staff Present: Steve Kenworthy, Director; Michael Spofford, Finance Manager; and Dawn Recore, Administrative Assistant

Others present: Sarah Spanburgh, Plattsburgh Public Library (entered 4:41 p.m., departed 4:58)

Public Comment

There were none.

Plattsburgh Public Library (PPL) Report

There was no representative of PPL present at this time, so Kip Thompson asked Dawn Recore to read Anne de la Chappelle’s written report that was received prior to the meeting. Summarizing:

- Anne met with Stan Ransom to discuss placing a Wayside sign on the library lawn.
- Anne has started getting quotes for the construction grant program.
- PPL received a \$25 donation from the former Tuesday Club.
- PPL hosted a full day, well attended program, *Preservation Planning for Collecting Institutions*, presented by Documentary Heritage & Preservation Services for New York.
- PPL has three special events planned to celebrate Earth Day this week.

Sarah Spanburgh, PPL Librarian, arrived at 4:41 p.m. She added:

- In May they will put together their summer reading programs. They have been working with David Fuller on a VR session to use as part of their kickoff.
- They are working on streamlining patron enrollment procedures to make it as accommodating as possible. The form can be filled out and submitted online or printed and brought in. Then a patron must present an ID in person. Enrollment is for three years, at which time PPL wants to verify that the patron’s contact information is still correct. Having a large patron base that includes a transient population, they try to be as accommodating as possible. Steve Kenworthy added that some libraries are open a limited number of hours, so patrons can call CEFLS for a temporary extension that will allow them to access things online, such as place requests, download audiobooks and e-books, etc.

- The number of DVDs that can be checked out for a week at PPL has been increased to 10.

Communications

A thank you letter was received by David Fuller following a virtual reality presentation he did at the Schroon Lake Senior Center. A copy of their recent Schroon Lake Senior Center Newsletter containing an article and photographs recapping David's presentation was also received.

The director of Sherman Free Library in Port Henry has been ill for some time now. In her absence Betsy Brooks has provided assistance to substitutes and volunteers at the library. Last month Betsy received a thank you card from Sherman Free Library.

The letter, newsletter and card were passed for all to see.

Vice President's Remarks

Kip Thompson reported that Nicky Bryant had a recent fall and broke her shoulder. Subsequently, she has had surgery and is recuperating at home. Kip recapped the following in Nicky's absence:

- All trustees are encouraged to please RSVP as soon as possible after receiving meeting packets.
- The first of three Board meetings to be held at member libraries in 2019 has been scheduled. It will be at E.M. Cooper Memorial Public Library in Wilmington and will begin at 1:30 p.m. We will be communicating with the directors of Peru Free Library and Black Watch Memorial Library in Ticonderoga to request meetings there in July and September. The meetings will be scheduled to begin between 2:00 and 4:00. The alternate meetings, for June and August, will take place at CEFLS in Plattsburgh. This will allow for an Executive Session if one is needed during the summer months.
- CEFLS is promoting AmazonSmiles, a program that allows customers to select a registered nonprofit group to receive a small percentage of purchase amounts. Amazon itself makes the donation. CEFLS is registered as a nonprofit, as are several member libraries. CEFLS has been receiving quarterly checks from Amazon since 2014, and is encouraging member libraries to register for and to promote the program.
- A CEFLS trustee resigned in March. Darcy Purick will talk about this when she gives a Nominating Committee report.

Director Report

Steve Kenworthy reported:

He attended the State Library Advocacy Day. On that day, the response of our assembly people felt positive; however, a week later, voting for library budgets went very poorly. Of particular concern was the reduction in construction aid. Last year almost two and a half times the amount that was requested was provided. This year the request was for the amount that was awarded last year, but they went back to the smaller amount that was requested last year. The other budgeting was flat, but fortunately no decrease.

Kip interjected at this point that for years CEFLS has been advising member libraries to take advantage of construction aid because in future years the funds may not be there, and a large number of member libraries have.

Steve attended a training conducted by NYS Library in Albany for new public systems' directors that was very informative. Originally the training was scheduled for December but was postponed due to weather. Steve feels the delay was a good thing because he has enough experience now to put things he learned into context. He feels that the State Library is an underused resource.

Michael Spofford and Steve attended training on sexual harassment and CEFLS has received a turnkey presentation on sexual harassment from Burnham Benefits Advisors. Steve is ready to offer training for member libraries and their boards, both at CEFLS and at member libraries. The training is mandatory by October 1, 2019. Those who attend this training at their place of employment or as part of another board where they serve can provide a signed form which will carry over for any additional board on which they serve.

Steve has begun visiting member libraries and meeting with directors one-to-one. He has done two visits so far, with five more scheduled in the next couple of weeks. He would like to visit them all by the end of summer. He wants to learn their frustrations and talk about how CEFLS can help.

Steve stated that we have had little luck with lawn care quotes to date. He asked Dawn Recore to elaborate. She stated that since letters were sent out seeking quotes and a CEFLS Facebook post was also made, one quote has been received. The contractor has liability insurance but not worker's compensation insurance, which we require. Discussion ensued regarding possible options revolving around the expense of worker's comp insurance. The deadline for quotes has been extended to April 26. Darcy Purick suggested that if it would cost \$101 to have a contractor go on our policy, we could be very explicit that we will pick up workers' comp on a yearly basis with a clear understanding that it's non-precedent setting for any other contractor. Steve responded that that is one of our options. Steve Novacich stated that ARC clients used to do lawn care. He doesn't know if they still do and suggested that we contact them. Kip brought this discussion to a close by saying that the board will review the topic of lawn care providers at the May 20 meeting in Wilmington.

Oath of Office

Tom Mandeville, Member-at-Large, administered the Oath of Office to Charles "Kip" Thompson, Vice President.

Consent Agenda

Tom Mandeville motioned approval of Consent Agenda, seconded by Dorothy Latta.

Consent Agenda includes:

- Approval of today's excused absences
- Approval of the April 22, 2019 Agenda
- Approval of the minutes of the January 28, 2019 meeting
- Committees for which there are no reports at this time: Advocacy, Executive, Finance, Health Plan, Negotiating and Personnel

Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Report

Tom Mandeville motioned approval of the Finance Reports that were distributed prior to this meeting, as presented by Michael Spofford, seconded by Darcy Purick. Michael stated that:

- The Grant/Aid Status Report was sent out separately from the packet.

- As Steve Kenworthy said earlier, we anticipate receiving the same amount of State funding as last year. The only variable might be the County Jail and State Corrections aid. We receive \$9.50 for each inmate housed in each jail, according to a census conducted last July, and that number fluctuates.
- When it is known exactly what amount we will receive, the 2019 budget will be adjusted; for instance, health insurance was over budgeted based on a high estimate. There is money from that line item that can be moved to another line item. Conversely, a firewall was purchased that was not in the budget, so money will be shifted around.

Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

Property Committee – Steve Novacich, Chairperson

Steve Novacich met with Steve Kenworthy and Michael Spofford earlier today to review the title search that was discussed at the January Board meeting. We are particularly interested in the Court Street corner and the Brinkerhoff Street corner in order to determine exactly where our property line falls within the tunnel. Michael explained that since the property was reportedly surveyed in 1969, pins might be found or we might have to have a new survey done. Steve Novacich said that at some point the Board has to approve enlisting the services of a surveyor. He reports that the blacktopping and filling in of the tunnel should be done simultaneously. There has been some discussion with PPL in terms of what their share of the blacktopping would be. A written agreement of some sort with PPL was suggested so they can continue to use our egress and CEFLS can continue to use PPL's entrance, as the driveway is all one-way.

Dorothy Latta moved, and Tom Mandeville seconded, that up to \$500 can be spent to find the pins, and if the expense will be more than that, further Board approval will be necessary. Motion passed unanimously. Committee meetings will be ongoing.

Nominating Committee – Darcy Purick, Acting Chairperson

Darcy reported that Phyllis Magnus has resigned from the Board of Trustees and has provided a referral for her replacement, Mary Abendroth. Liz DeFonce and Margot Gold know of this person and highly agree with the recommendation. Mrs. Abendroth is from Bloomingdale in Essex County. Darcy Purick motioned, seconded by Dorothy Latta, to send Mary Abendroth's name to the Essex County Board of Supervisors to request their consideration in appointing her to the CEFLS Board of Trustees. Motion carried unanimously. Darcy expressed appreciation for Phyllis' service on the Board and Dorothy Latta expressed appreciation for Phyllis' recommendation for her replacement.

Old Business

Discussion of CEFLS Bylaws: Kip briefly went over areas of the Bylaws that are of concern to him.

- Article III: (2) ELIGIBILITY FOR BOARD MEMBERSHIP – May want to consider removing *retired employees of the System or member libraries* from the statement.
- Article III: (3) ROLE OF TRUSTEES – A brief discussion ensued regarding the exercise of financial responsibility.
- Article VII: INDEMNIFICATION – May want to consider adding a sentence stating that the System has insurance to protect directors and officers.
- Article VIII: (8) VOTING – Should teleconferencing specifically be added?

Article X. (9) QUORUM – May want to consider reducing the number required for a quorum.
DIRECTOR – May want to consider adding a sentence, *An interim or acting director may be appointed by the Board in the absence of a director.*

Kip would like Board members to read through the Bylaws and prepare for further discussion at the May meeting. Potentially a vote could take place in June to implement any changes.

New Business

Revision of Discrimination Policy – Steve Kenworthy and Michael Spofford attended a training on sexual harassment presented by Jaci Kelleher, Attorney-at-Law. Steve feels that CEFLS’ general discrimination policy has the required elements regarding sexual harassment. However, the policy was written in 1997 so he would like to make some minimal changes to update the language. He will prepare a draft and redline the changes, and the draft will be sent out for review with the May Board packet.

Annual Report – Margo Gold made a motion attesting that the Board has reviewed and does approve of the CEFLS Annual Report for 2018, seconded by Steve Novacich. Michael Spofford commented that this year the CEFLS staff was more involved in providing data for input into this document. Michael stated that there are four submission requirements for receiving State funding for the year. They are the Annual Report, the member library reports, an assurance of nine questions, and the Maintenance of Effort. Motion carried unanimously.

Family and Adult Literacy, Stewart’s Foundation, The John Cotton Dana Award and Lion’s Club Award – Steve Kenworthy stated the grant reports provided are informational. Kip commented that usually the Board stays out of the realm of approving grants. He feels that if you partner with another entity, as an organization that can administer a grant, you are extraordinarily valuable to the other entity and as far as he can tell, CEFLS does that very, very well. He encourages CEFLS to continue to do so without letting the Board get in the way. Discussion ensued regarding instances when the Board might be consulted regarding a grant, such as when there may be a requirement that the Board has to approve, or contingencies that might be outside the realm of our mission. Margot Gold suggested that a policy on applying for grants would remove the types of concerns being discussed. Steve Kenworthy stated that CEFLS will error on the side of caution until a policy is developed.

Steve reported that three of today’s four grant summaries have little expectation attached beyond the service that we stated in our application. The Family and Adult Literacy Grants are ongoing and administered through the State.

Variance for Dannemora Free Library – Steve Novocich moved approval of the variance for Dannemora Free Library as submitted, seconded by Darcy Purick. The State Library determines how many hours a library should be open based on population of the geographic area. Because the census includes the inmates at Clinton Correctional Facility, Dannemora’s population is inflated, thus requiring the library to be open more hours than is feasible. Therefore the library must receive variance approval from CEFLS and the State Library yearly. Motion carried unanimously.

Central Library Development Aid (CLDA) – Liz Defonce motioned approval of the CLDA 2019 Budget as distributed for review prior to this meeting, seconded by Darcy Purick. Steve Kenworthy explained that it is an agreement for CEFLS to provide money to PPL for the purpose of functioning

as a Central Library. It requires approval by the PPL and the CEFLS Boards of Trustees. Motion carried unanimously.

Amended Member Library Contract – Steve Kenworthy stated that we have learned that we are in the minority of library systems that require member libraries to sign a contract every year. Other systems automatically renew contracts yearly and only redo them when there are new terms. We would like to change to that format. Kip Thompson asked Steve to bring the new language to the Board next month for approval.

Executive Session

Steve Novacich moved approval for the Board to enter into Executive Session to discuss the wages of management confidential staff, seconded by Darcy Purick. Executive Session was entered at 5:56 p.m.

Return to Executive Session at 6:19 p.m.

Darcy Purick motioned approval for the management confidential staff, excluding the director, to receive a four percent increase, retroactive to January 2019, seconded by Steve Novacich. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Kip Thompson adjourned the meeting at 6:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary “Lisa” Minnich
Secretary