

CLINTON-ESSEX-FRANKLIN LIBRARY SYSTEM

Minutes for Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Held June 24, 2019

Call to Order

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, June 24, 2019, at Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System, 33 Oak Street, Plattsburgh, New York, by Nicole Bryant, President.

Roll Call

Present: Mary Abendroth, Nicole “Nicky” Bryant, Linda Crosby, Liz DeFonce, Margot Gold (entered at 4:50 p.m.), Dorothy Latta, Gayla LePage, Andrew Lomanto, Tom Mandeville, Mary “Lisa” Minnich, Steve Novacich, Tim Rowland and Charles “Kip” Thompson

Excused Absences: Scott McDonald and Doreece “Darcy” Purick

Staff Present: Steve Kenworthy, Director; Michael Spofford, Finance Manager; and Dawn Recore, Administrative Assistant; Anne Jobin-Picard, CEFLS Librarian Consultant (entered 4:48 p.m., exited 5:10 p.m.)

Others present: Anne de la Chappelle, Director at Plattsburgh Public Library (exited 5:53 p.m.)

Consent Agenda

Mary Abendroth motioned approval of Consent Agenda, seconded by Lisa Minnich.

Consent Agenda includes:

- Approval of today’s excused absences
- Approval of today’s Agenda
- Approval of the minutes of the May 20, 2019 meeting
- Committees for which there are no reports at this time: Advocacy, Executive, Finance, Health Plan, Negotiating, Nominating and Personnel

Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

Communications

There were no communications.

President’s Remarks

Nicky Bryant reminded everyone that the next meeting will be on July 22, 2019 at Peru Free Library and will begin at 2:00.

- There are two black binders on the tables, one on each side of the room. They contain articles of potential interest. Please feel free to peruse them.

- There is bottled water and coffee purchased with the Board's Sunshine Fund. Please help yourself.

Director Report

Steve Kenworthy reported:

The CEFLS Annual Report is finalized. Submission of it and the annual reports of the member libraries to the State Library is required to receive State funding. At this time, Michael Spofford is working with several member libraries on corrections to their reports so they can be resubmitted.

The mandated sexual harassment prevention trainings have gone well. Steve will be offering additional live training sessions in outlying areas that will be open to member library staffs and their boards to help them fulfill the training requirement. He will also be sending out the URL of a website offering online training that he has checked out.

We have a new State Librarian, Lauren Moore, who will be taking over on August 1st. Currently Lauren is Executive Director of Pioneer Library System. Having experience as the director of a library system, Steve feels that she will be responsive to our needs.

The PULISDO conference will be held in Ithaca on July 23 to 25. Steve and three others from CEFLS will be attending.

Our Adult and Family Literacy Grant applications have been submitted and approved. You may recall that the governor's budget took away \$20,000,000 from library construction grants. That was restored by the legislature and we are optimistic that the governor will sign it. That will bring us back up to the same level where we were last year at \$34,000,000.

The mother of Glory Cole, Director at Akwesasne Library, passed away recently. The staff signed a card for Glory and CEFLS trustees were invited to sign it also.

Questions and Comments from the Board:

Kip Thompson asked about the pie chart on page 15 of the Board packet that shows that six libraries appear to use our website as a portal to theirs. He inquired about the other 24 libraries. Steve Kenworthy stated that many libraries have their own website, and although many people use the CEFLS website to go to them, they don't have to. The orange piece of the pie at 9 percent are those who are looking for basic library information, like hours so they don't pass through to a site port, or the library doesn't have a website. Steve explained that we have participated in varying degrees in helping to develop some libraries' webpages, particularly the smaller libraries. Some of the larger libraries have developed webpages on their own and are able to market their URL directly.

Staff Presentation – French Conversation Group, Anne Jobin-Picard, Library Consultant

Anne became interested in starting a French Conversation Group when she first began working at CEFLS about a year ago after seeing a Library System brochure in French. She already facilitates similar groups in her community in Vermont so this brochure was the catalyst to do so here. With a high population of French speakers in the North Country and \$8 million in revenue from Canadian companies per year, she feels it is important to demonstrate acceptance by at least attempting to speak their language with them.

Membership for the French Conversation Group, which is held at Plattsburgh Public Library on Mondays, is continually growing and is up to 22, with attendance varying. Statistics show that use of Mango, a database for learning foreign languages that is available on the CEFLS website, has increased tremendously since the inception of the French Conversation Group.

Their meetings are driven by whatever holidays fall close to a meeting date. For instance, for Earth Day, Anne came up with a list of 20 vocabulary words in French to use in talking about Green-Up Day. Then they move on to a new topic such as food or the CEFLS “library of things”, trying to make connections to libraries by pointing out books or specific things that are available at libraries with a library card.

Plattsburgh Public Library (PPL) Report

Anne de la Chappelle, Director, reported:

PPL is very pleased to be hosting the meetings of the French Conversation Group.

PPL did a program on Saturday, partnering with the City Police, YMCA, Strand Theater and the Presbyterian Church to get the word out for middle school kids that there are activities available for them. These groups will be working together in the future.

PPL is asking the City for flat funding in their new 2020 budget.

Anne has been working very hard on Erate which is Federal money to help provide internet to libraries and schools. PPL usually gets \$5,000 to bring internet service into the library. Though Erate is very strict, they are hoping to get another \$10,000 to \$12,000 for management of IT services.

PPL would like to support the ALA and NYLA recommendation to do away with monetary fines. They have already done away with children’s fines; however, fines still bring in \$9,700 a year for other materials. They are working to come up with that money elsewhere.

Anne was not aware that CEFLS had applied for a construction grant last year to fill in the tunnel and blacktop the CEFLS portion of the driveway. Although PPL’s roof that was put on in 1988 seriously needs replacing, they are applying for construction funding this year to have their portion of the driveway blacktopped when CEFLS has theirs blacktopped.

Committee Report

Property Committee: Steve Novacich recapped from the May meeting: The title search on the property was done in the spring but a starting point could not be found in terms of where property lines in the driveway are, so it was agreed that up to \$500 could be spent on a survey to find the pins. Steve Novacich and Steve Kenworthy met a couple of weeks ago, then Steve Kenworthy met with Anne de la Chappelle. They determined that the only logical ending place for filling in the tunnel is in line with PPL’s foundation. That may mean that 18 inches the other side of that is technically PPL’s property. Steve explained that two walls will be built, one on each end of the tunnel, then a hole will be drilled down from the top creating the chute where concrete will be poured in. He stated that we don’t expect anything to come of a survey that would change anything substantially, it would just confirm that we have the right answers. Steve Novacich commented that if a survey is needed, perhaps PPL would share some of the expense.

Anne de la Chappelle stated that it makes sense to do the entire driveway at the same time, so PPL is applying for construction grant funds. Steve Kenworthy said that from the curved part at the rear of the PPL building on the CEFLS side, it appears that CEFLS owns that portion of the driveway. He said that although he and Anne have an unspoken, unwritten agreement of access, allowing each other to drive through on the other's property, there has been a question as to whether that ought to be formalized.

Steve Kenworthy stated that there could be one or two contractors involved with the tunnel and driveway jobs, depending how the proposals come in. Proposals could be received for the tunnel job alone, the driveway job alone, or the two combined.

Gayla LePage motioned to proceed with the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the tunnel project, seconded by Kip Thompson. Motion carried unanimously.

Lisa Minnich then motioned approval of putting out an RFP for the installation of railings in the garage, seconded by Tom Mandeville. Nicky stated that there is nothing to prevent anyone from falling from the platform in the garage. Motion carried unanimously.

Upon request for a motion for an RFP for resurfacing the driveway, Mary Abendroth moved, seconded by Liz DeFonce. Motion carried unanimously.

Anne then stated that there seems to be a misguided belief that during snow removal season the City plows one pass through our portion of the driveway to get to PPL's portion. She does not believe that to be true, as she says that the plow comes in through their side. She would like to have this addressed because the City is cutting funding everywhere and she feels that PPL will eventually be billed for plowing CEFLS' driveway since the City is doing a pay-per-department model going forward. She hopes that, since we will definitively know the driveway boundary by the time snow removal season is here, we will stay open to this conversation. From her calculations, PPL owns 120 feet at the most out of 300+ feet of driveway.

Steve Novacich inquired about the status of procuring a lawn care provider, to which Steve Kenworthy responded that we were able to contract with Small Jobs, Steve Dumesnil. Mr. Dumesnil made an application to NYS Worker's Comp and as soon as he did that, our liability for Small Jobs ceased.

Bylaws Committee (Ad Hoc): The committee met over the telephone. As trustees arrived for today's meeting they received a hard copy of the Bylaws that reflect the proposed changes that were the result of their discussion, plus a hard copy of the Bylaws with those changes incorporated. Nicky asked the Board to review the changes and be prepared to vote on them next month. She added that some of the changes involve fine tuning with language that better clarifies, in particular the duties of the treasurer. Scott McDonald, Treasurer, was consulted and he supports the changes as outlined. The other big change is a reduction to only three standing committees: Finance, Nominating, and Personnel, with more detail as to the purposes of each. There are other Ad Hoc committees, and they are referenced.

Kip Thompson inquired if the State Library has interest in CEFLS amending the Bylaws or if the CEFLS attorney should review them. Steve Kenworthy stated that we have the authority to change them and when they have been approved by this Board, a finalized a copy will be provided to the State Library. Discussion ensued, and closed with Nicky suggesting that trustees take them home to

review them, and if there are concerns, they can be identified at the next meeting, and we can proceed from there.

Review of Amended Bylaws will be on the July agenda under Old Business.

Finance Report

Lisa Minnich motioned approval of the Finance Reports submitted by Michael Spofford, seconded by Gayla LePage. Michael stated:

- Right now expenditures are 6 percent under budget.
- The State has provided our funding numbers for 2019, a .05 percent increase from last year, totaling \$586. That gives us a revenue of \$1,271,189, which includes Central Library Development, Central Book Aid, and Local Library Service Aid - which is not in our operating budget as it is a pass through to member libraries. Our revenue for county jails is down \$52, likely reflective of a decrease in the number of inmates. Michael will be working with the Finance Committee on a budget amendment.
- We are -5.42 percent beneath NY Education Law which states “In the event that the sum total of local sponsor support raised by local taxation exclusive of the sum raised for capital expenditures for the support of a public library system and participating libraries in a twelve month period is less than ninety-five per centum of the average of the amounts raised for such purposes by local taxation for the two preceding twelve month periods, the state aid to which such library system would otherwise be entitled shall be reduced by twenty-five per centum.”
- The annual field audit is tentatively scheduled for September 3 and 4, 2019.

Questions and Comments pertaining to the Finance Report:

Kip Thompson referenced page 42 in the Board packet, vehicle fuel and maintenance, and inquired about the increase. With a new van, he asked why the expenditure didn't go down. Michael responded that he would have to research it, which he later did while the Board was in Executive Session. Before the meeting was adjourned, Michael handed out a corrected Revenue vs. Expenditures Month-to-Month and Year-to-Date Comparison Report as of May 31, 2019.

Next Kip referenced page 43, liability for Ellenburg Center Reading Center. Michael responded that we contract with the Town of Ellenburg, and they support the Reading Center with a \$500 check yearly that we hold until they spend it. Right now the amount in their account is high because of the Betty Little funds they received last year. Their \$8,000 or \$9,000 balance will decrease to about \$5,000 soon, as there are funds being written off for books that they lost.

Motion to approve the Finance reports as distributed was unanimously approved.

Old Business

65th Anniversary of CEFLS: Steve Kenworthy stated that he got the interested staff together and they have been brainstorming. We would like to have a celebration in each of the three counties. We are looking at Saranac Lake, Schroon Lake and Plattsburgh as the three venues, with the dates being three consecutive Tuesdays in August. We would do this as a birthday party with activities, games,

cake and hopefully ice cream. Some things at each party will be the same, with something unique to each venue. For Saranac Lake we are talking about the William Morris Park with the carousel. The carousel is a huge draw and its rental fee of \$250 seems very reasonable. Schroon Lake has the park that is right on the lake shore with a covered pavilion that is only a block up in case of poor weather.

Steve asked, if these plans meet with the Board's approval, that the trustees of each county attend that celebration, and for those who are available it would be nice to see them at all three. We will encourage each library to have representatives present at their county's party. There will be special invitations for funding bodies, Boards of member libraries and local legislators, as well as Betty Little and Billy Jones.

CEFLS staff will do the planning and work. Swag will be available with information about programs and services that are available. We intend to have a full-court press for publicity.

New Business

There was no new business; however, Tom Mandeville spoke of the recent Library Crawl that was very successful. Over 30 member libraries and three from northern Vermont participated. There were passports that people got stamped at each library they visited on that day. The libraries want to do it again next year and he hopes that CEFLS will be able to promote it more. Steve Kenworthy stated that we became aware of this year's Crawl too late to be able to be very involved, though we did promote it on social media.

Executive Session

Steve Novacich moved to enter into Executive Session at 6:00 p.m. to discuss the retirement benefits of a particular employee, seconded by Gayla LePage. Motion carried unanimously.

Return to Regular Session

The Board returned to Regular Session at 6:10 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Nicky Bryant adjourned the meeting at 6:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary "Lisa" Minnich
Secretary