

CLINTON-ESSEX-FRANKLIN LIBRARY SYSTEM

Minutes for Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Held August 26, 2019

Call to Order

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, August 26, 2019, at Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System, 33 Oak Street, Plattsburgh, New York, by Nicole Bryant, President.

Roll Call

Present: Mary Abendroth (entered 4:53 p.m.), Nicole “Nicky” Bryant, Linda Crosby, Liz DeFonce, Dorothy Latta, Gayla LePage, Tom Mandeville, Scott McDonald, Mary “Lisa” Minnich, Doreece “Darcy” Purick (entered 4:48 p.m.) and Charles “Kip” Thompson

Excused Absences: Margo Gold, Andrew Lomanto, Steve Novacich and Tim Rowland

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

Others present: Sarah Spanburg, Librarian at Plattsburgh Public Library

Consent Agenda

Gayla LePage motioned approval of Consent Agenda, seconded by Kip Thompson.

Consent Agenda includes:

- Approval of today’s excused absences
- Approval of today’s agenda
- Approval of the minutes of the July 22, 2019 meeting
- Committees for which there are no reports at this time: Advocacy, Executive, Health Plan, Negotiating, Personnel and Property

Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Communications

A thank you email was received from Christen Cardina, Senior Librarian at Altona Correctional Facility. She expressed appreciation for the CEFLS anniversary pin and clock, adding that both are wonderful reminders of the fantastic services CEFLS provides and she congratulated us on 65 years of making the North Country a better place to live and learn.

A thank you card was received from Maureen Babbie, Librarian at Upstate Correctional Facility. She also expressed appreciation for the anniversary pin and clock, and added appreciation for our outreach services and support, particularly ILL, rotating collections, delivery, reference services, training and meetings.

President's Remarks

Nicky Bryant reminded everyone that the September meeting will be held at Black Watch Memorial Library in Ticonderoga and will begin at 2:00 p.m.

Nicky extended thanks and appreciation to Steve Kenworthy for organizing CEFLS's 65th anniversary celebrations. What she experienced when she attended the event in Plattsburgh was indeed a celebration and from what she saw in the video it looked like the same was happening in Schroon Lake and Saranac Lake.

Plattsburgh Public Library Director's Report

Sarah Spanburg, PPL Librarian, stated:

- They are hopeful that the City will fund PPL at the same level in 2020 as in 2019.
- Minimal work will be done on the roof this year.
- The summer reading program went well and a lot of fun was had.
- They received grant money in the amount of \$2500 to update their computers.

Director's Report

Steve Kenworthy reported:

He believes in giving credit where credit is due. He thinks staff did a wonderful job pulling off the 65th anniversary celebrations. Trustees were encouraged to take whatever leftover swag that they want and the rest will be used at future outreach events. The purpose behind the swag was to get our name and website out to people, and he believes that was accomplished.

We have talked internally about changing our open hours to 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., year round. In the past, from Labor Day until June 25th, open hours have been 8 to 5 with our primary hours being 8 to 4. Because we have wanted at least two employees in the building any time it is open, we have had to schedule two people for the 4:00 to 5:00 hour. The purpose of that hour has been to basically make ourselves available to member libraries whose hours extend later than 4:00, though experience has shown that we are called upon very rarely during that hour.

In changing our open hours to 8 to 4 year round, we would like to allow employees to flex time between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. so if they need to come in early or stay late to accommodate a doctor appointment or other such event, they would still have that flexibility.

One concern is that PPL pages make afternoon deliveries and pick-ups usually about 4:15 in the winter so we would request they come before 4:00 as they always do in the summer. The other concern is that the CSEA contract describes our work week as it currently exists. Steve will speak with Karen Batchelder, CSEA President, to ask her to arrange a vote among union staff. Then a memorandum of understanding (MOU) will be written for Karen and Steve to sign. With the union's approval and an MOU, this would become an agenda item requiring a resolution.

For the safety and security of staff, between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m., and 4 p.m. and 5 p.m., all building doors would be locked and the building would be closed to the public. These two flex hours would not have the interruptions that occur during the regular hours of 8 to 4 and would likely be very productive.

The staff has found some very nice t-shirts that they would like to buy on their own and they would like to open up the offer to Board members. A flyer with details was passed around.

There is also a purple t-shirt that most of the staff already have that they wore to the 65th anniversary celebrations. In case any trustees want to order this shirt on their own, the website was provided.

The work on the tunnel and the railing in the garage were put out to bid and two bids were received for each job. For the safety railing, bids were \$7,979 and \$9,350. These are a little higher than the original estimates that were received almost two years ago. For the tunnel work, the bids were further apart. One came in at \$17,500 and the other was about \$25,000. Interestingly, awarding the contracts to the lowest bidders means that there will be two different contractors. We are hopeful that the work can be done before the ground freezes this year, and according to the terms of the construction grant, it has to be done by June 30, 2020.

Questions or Comments from the Board:

Kip Thompson is very pleased that the staff seems to be attending more outside training events. Steve responded that we like to do a train-the-trainer type of thing, where our staff go out and learn projects and methods, then we bring that information back to share it with our libraries. Dorothy Latta added that it speaks very highly of our system to have the staff known for their profession.

Steve then responded to Nicky Bryant's inquiry regarding the status of the legislative bills regarding library funding and library construction grants, stating that they have passed the legislature and are on the Governor's desk. They are not expected to be vetoed.

Regarding construction grants, Steve stated that CEFLS is looking at being nicely funded and smaller libraries will especially benefit. The final deadline for applications for this year is October 31st. Right now the grants are 50-50 matches. If certain criteria are met for need, they could go to 75-25, or with a higher level of need, they could go higher than that. That is being worked on with the State right now.

Finance Report

Lisa Minnich motioned approval of the Finance Reports as submitted by Michael Spofford, seconded by Scott McDonald. Michael stated:

- He will be working with the Finance Committee to revise the 2019 budget with the additional .05 percent received from the State, as well as with differing amounts from the counties. He is hopeful that it will be ready for the next Board meeting.
- Two budget requests are due next Friday.
- The outside auditors will be coming in next Tuesday and Wednesday.
- We are still under budget, as shown in the written reports. With encumbrances, we are at 48 percent, and we should be at 58 percent.

Looking ahead, Michael is concerned about the roof that is 22 years old and the HVAC system that is 16 years old. The roof, which consists of plywood, rubber membrane and insulated tile with gravel on top, has leaked on occasion, so Michael asked a company for a roof assessment. He thought they would go up on the roof, but instead they took pictures from PPL and reported that our roof is poorly maintained. They suggested picking up the tiles to do power washing then putting them back down. Michael will be pursuing a more thorough assessment from another company. A replacement estimate for our heating and air conditioning unit from our HVAC company came in at \$80,000 to

\$100,000. Requests for Proposals can be discussed after we have new information from the roofing company. Steve drew this topic to a close, stating that for construction grants, as a system, our matching funds are limited to 50/50.

Kip Thompson referred to a line item in the Board packet, Grant for Member Libraries, which has more than doubled from year to year. Michael stated that it is the timing of the quarterly payment of about \$90,000 to PPL for CLDA. To date this year, PPL has submitted and received payment for the first two quarters. Last year it was later when they received their money. He stated that at the end of the fourth quarter, a review will be done because there may be more paid than allowed by CLDA due to the rising costs of two shared data bases. If this holds true, PPL will be given a little less for the final quarter.

The motion to approve the finance reports as distributed was unanimously approved.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee: The Finance Committee met earlier today to review the proposed 2020 budget that was distributed for review prior to this meeting. Scott McDonald motioned approval of the Draft Proposed 2020 Budget, seconded by Liz DeFonce.

Dorothy Latta asked about the drop in book processing fees. Michael responded that we have increased the budget for book processing fees, so they appear to be less. Also, Baker & Taylor has dropped the processing fees they charge from about \$2 to \$3 a book to about \$.80.

Nicky stated that this proposed budget is a very early projection based on very limited factual information other than expenses historically incurred and expected revenue. Michael added that he adjusted payroll because of an agreement with the union, so the taxes are also adjusted. To make this budget work, he had to dig into capital building expense. He is thinking when we get closer to our first 2020-00 budget, the preliminary use of capital building funds will be less.

For the benefit of the newer members of the Board, Kip Thompson requested an explanation of what our annual cycle looks like, so Michael explained that most of our grants and aids from the State run from January to December, but the money is usually approved on April 1st by the governor and is received somewhere between July and September. This means that at the end of the calendar year, when we should be all spent up, we aren't because we have to compensate by having about \$600,000 or \$700,000 in the bank to carry us over until July. Kip added that the counties from whom we get funding want to see a budget from us very early. This early proposed budget is presented to the counties at this time of the year, then a real budget is put together in January. Some of the variable and potential expenses to be considered are health insurance rates, Medicare Part B payments, and as might happen next year, contract negotiations.

Dorothy Latta asked about county jail aid for books that went from \$1200 to \$0, and the amount for serials that went from \$0 to \$1200. Michael responded that funds have been moved around to support the county jails in more useful ways than in the past by increasing funding for serials.

Nicky Bryant pointed out that on page 3 in the proposed budget are the actual dollar amounts requested from each of the three counties. The figures represent a 4 percent increase from what was requested last year.

- Clinton \$45,780
- Essex \$25,990

- Franklin \$16,139

The motion to approve the Draft Proposed 2020 Budget carried unanimously.

Nominating Committee: Gayla LePage stated that we have a few trustees whose terms are expiring December 31st, 2019. Two are eligible to serve another term and have agreed to do so.

- Liz DeFonce – Franklin County
- Tom Mandeville – Clinton County

The third trustee, Kip Thompson, is not eligible to serve another term. Kip was asked to think about any recommendations he might make for a new Essex County trustee to fill his seat in January.

As for officers for 2020, Nicky Bryant will have served her maximum number of consecutive years as president. Kip Thompson obviously will be done as vice president. Lisa Minnich, Scott McDonald and Tom Mandeville each consented to continue to serve as secretary, treasurer and member-at-large, in that order. Gayla asked board members to please consider serving as president or vice president, and let her know if they are interested.

Old Business

Amendment of Bylaws: Nicky stated that we have submitted to our attorney the bylaw revisions that were talked about last month, with input from Amy Heebner from the State Library. The proposed revisions will be sent by email to everyone for more discussion if needed and possibly adoption at next month's meeting. The revisions are in contrast with the bylaws that were distributed two months ago. Nicky summed up that a few things were clarified, elaboration was done on the role of the treasurer and the finance committee, the committees have a little more purpose to their descriptions, and there are three standing committees – finance, nominating and personnel – the others are as needed. Also, eligibility for board membership was clarified.

New Business

Mary Abendroth asked about keeping track of the hours spent on library system business. Michael responded that this information is required for the IRS Form 990 and he will be asking for it in a couple of weeks. Allowable time includes but is not limited to time attending full board and committee meetings, reviewing packets and email, volunteering at the 65th anniversary events, and time spend on the search for a new director. Travel time is not to be included in this tally.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Nicky Bryant adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

The next meeting will be at Black Watch Memorial Library in Ticonderoga on September 23rd at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary "Lisa" Minnich
Secretary